Business Reply Mail

Related QSGs

505a, Courtesy Reply Mail (CRM)
505b, Meter Reply Mail (MRM)

Overview

Business Reply Mail (BRM) service enables a permit holder to receive First-Class Mail, USPS Ground Advantage—Retail, and Priority Mail back from customers and pay postage and a per piece fee for only the pieces returned. BRM cards, envelopes, self-mailers, flats, cartons, and labels may be distributed by a BRM permit holder in any quantity for return to any Post Office in the United States and its territories and possessions, including military Post Offices overseas. The BRM permit holder guarantees payment of the applicable fees and First-Class Mail or Priority Mail postage plus a per piece charge for pieces returned by USPS. (See payment options below.)

When designing a BRM mailpiece or label, mailers must consult with their local Post Office. The piece must conform to a specific format to qualify as BRM, including a unique ZIP+4 code, or equivalent Intelligent Mail barcode assigned by the USPS. Proofs for regular BRM should be approved by USPS before printing. Proofs for Qualified Business Reply Mail (QBRM) must be approved by USPS and must bear an Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb). On page three is a layout example for a BRM envelope. For reusable envelopes using BRM with two-way indicia, see 601.6.5.4 for requirements.

BRM pieces distributed in automation mailings are required to meet the standards in 201.3.0. BRM templates are available on the Postal Explorer Web site at *pe.usps.com* by selecting “Mailpiece Design” under the “Business Solutions” tab in the top frame.

Payment Options (505.1.0)

For a complete listing of Business Reply Mail prices and fees, see Notice 123–Price List.

Basic BRM—Except for BRM parcel (only) permits, an annual permit fee is required.

Per piece charge in addition to the Retail First-Class Mail (stamped letters), USPS Ground Advantage—Retail, or Priority Mail postage. Paid through an advance deposit account or by cash/check on delivery.

Best suited for BRM customers with less than 993 returned BRM pieces expected annually.

High-Volume BRM—Except for BRM parcel (only) permits, an annual permit fee is required, plus a BRM annual account maintenance fee at each Post Office where a permit holder holds an advance deposit account.

Per piece charge in addition to the Retail First-Class Mail (stamped letters), USPS Ground Advantage—Retail, or Priority Mail postage. Paid through an advance deposit account.

Best suited for BRM customers with approximately 993 or more returned BRM pieces expected annually.

Basic Qualified Business Reply Mail (QBRM)—Annual account maintenance fee is required. Basic QBRM permits that meet the requirements under 505.1.6.3 are eligible for waived account maintenance fees and a reduced per-piece fee.

Per piece charge in addition to QBRM First-Class Mail postage. Paid through an advance deposit account.

Used only on barcoded automation-compatible cards and letter-size mail weighing up to 3.5 ounces if design is approved for QBRM by USPS before distribution (505.1.3). A unique ZIP+4 code is assigned by USPS for each price category of QBRM to be returned (one for card-price pieces, one for letter-size pieces weighing up to and including 3.5 ounces).

Best suited if QBRM customer’s return volume is approximately 610 letters or more, or 610 cards or more, expected annually.

High-Volume QBRM—Annual account maintenance fee, and a separate quarterly fee is required. Mailers can pay quarterly fee for any consecutive 3-calendar-month period. High-Volume QBRM permits meeting the requirements under 505.1.6.3 are eligible for waived annual account maintenance and quarterly fees, and a reduced per-piece fee.

Per piece charge in addition to QBRM First-Class Mail postage. Paid through an advanced deposit account.

Best suited if QBRM customer’s return volume is approximately 44,444 pieces or more quarterly or 177,778 pieces or more annually.

Other Post Offices A BRM permit holder can allow its authorized representatives or agents to use that permit number to distribute and receive BRM at any Post Office. The original permit holder must supply the representative with a letter authorizing the use of the BRM permit and if applicable, a copy of the USPS receipt showing the annual fee payment for that permit. See 505.1.7 for additional requirements.

Official Mail Authorized users of official mail may distribute BRM, subject to 703.7.0 and 505.1.0.

Labels (505.1.4.8)

For general use, the minimum size of a BRM label is 2 inches high and 3 inches long. BRM labels are not required to have a FIM or a ZIP+4 barcode. For all other format standards see 505.1.5. In cases where a BRM card or letter is used improperly as a label, USPS treats the item as waste.

Letter-sized Pieces (505.1.4.9)

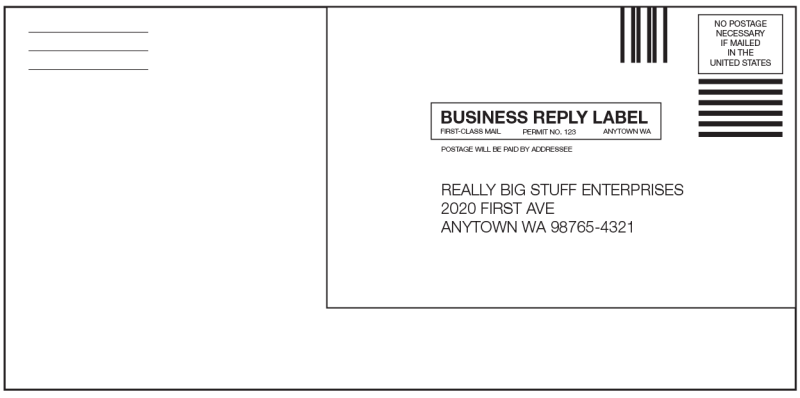
For Business Reply Mail (BRM) labels on letter-size pieces the following standards apply:

- The minimum size of a BRM label is 2-5/8 inches high and 4-1/4 inches long. All format elements, including a FIM, must be printed on the label. The vertical series of horizontal bars must be at least 3/4-inch high. (Exception: Horizontal bars may be omitted on BRM letter-size pieces bearing Intelligent Mail barcodes.) The back of the label must be coated with a permanent adhesive strong enough to firmly attach the label to an envelope.
- The permit holder must provide instructions to the user describing how the label should be applied to a mailpiece and what precautions must be observed when applying the label (see Exhibit 1.4.9). A pictorial diagram showing proper placement of the label must be included with the instructions. At a minimum, the instructions must include the following directions:
  - Place the label squarely in the upper right corner of the envelope.
  - Do not write on the envelope or label.
  - Do not use a window envelope, an envelope that is less than 1 inch higher than the label, an envelope that is more than 4-1/2 inches high, or an envelope with any printing other than a return address.
  - Do not use tape to affix the label.
- When the label is affixed to an envelope, the address must be placed within the OCR read area.
- Pieces with business reply labels cannot qualify for QBRM prices.

Exhibit 1.4.9 Instructions for Affixing Business Reply Label

How to use your business reply label:

Affix label to upper right corner of envelope. Be sure the label is at the edge of the right corner. Do not use tape. Do not write on the envelope or use an envelope with printing other than a return address.



Business Reply Mail

Business Reply Mail Layout Guidelines (505.1.5)

Permit Holder Space: May contain information such as return address, logos, distribution codes, and form numbers.

Company Logo: For barcoded pieces, a company logo is permitted in the address block if it is placed no lower than 5/8 inch from the bottom edge of the mailpiece and does not interfere with the barcode clear zone.

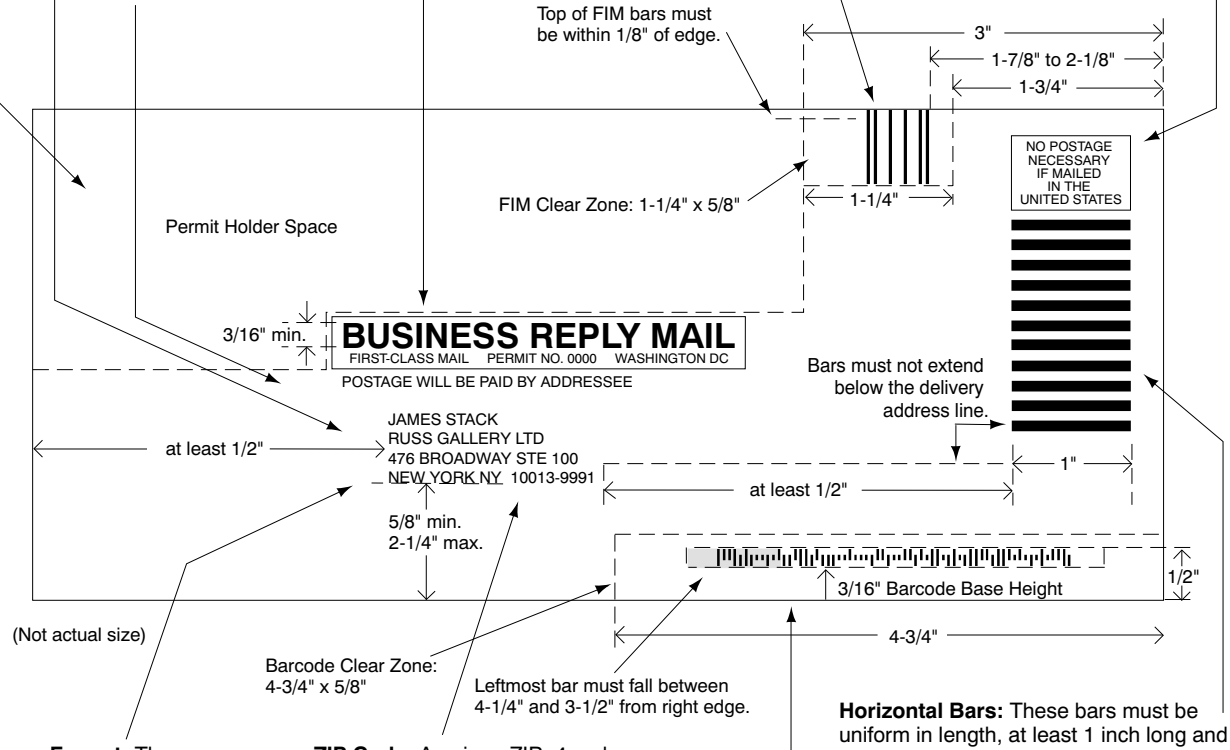
Postage Paid Line: Place the endorsement "POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE" (in capital letters) under the business reply legend box.

Business Reply Legend: The words "BUSINESS REPLY MAIL" are required above the address in capital (uppercase) letters. Immediately below, place the words "FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO." followed by the permit number and the name of the issuing Post Office (city and state) in capital letters.

Facing Identification Mark (FIM): A FIM pattern (specifically FIM B without barcode or FIM C with barcode) is required on all BRM postcards and letter-size mailpieces. The FIM clear zone must contain no printed matter other than the FIM pattern. FIM bars must be between 1/2 and 3/4 inch high and 0.03125 inch (1/32 inch) (± 0.008 inch) wide.

Note: For letter-size mail with IBI printed with nonflourescent ink, see DMM section 202.8.1d.

Postage Imprint: "NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES" must appear in the upper right corner of the mailpiece and must not extend more than 1-3/4 inches from the right edge.



Address Format: The complete address, including the name of the permit holder (company or individual), must be printed on the mailpiece.

ZIP Code: A unique ZIP+4 code is assigned to each piece.

Horizontal Bars: These bars must be uniform in length, at least 1 inch long and 1/16 to 3/16 inch thick, and evenly spaced. The bars may not extend below the delivery address line, which is located directly above the line containing the city, state, and ZIP Code.

Before printing, submit proofs of BRM samples to your local Post Office for advice and approval. Take advantage of this service—it could save you money. Qualified Business Reply Mail pieces must be approved by the USPS before printing.

Barcode Location: The Intelligent Mail barcode may be located here or in the address block. The barcode must be a ZIP+4 barcode (delivery point barcodes are not permitted). This area must be free of any printing other than the barcode. A free camera-ready barcode positive may be obtained from your local Post Office.

Dimensions: Between 3-1/2 by 5 inches and 6-1/8 by 11-1/2 inches. To qualify for the card price, cards must be between 3-1/2 by 5 inches and 4-1/4 by 6 inches and between 0.007 and 0.016 inch thick. Larger card sizes are mailable, but they are charged at First-Class Mail letter price.

Barcoded pieces measuring more than 4-1/4 inches high or 6 inches long must be at least 0.009 inch thick.

- Additional standards apply to QBRM pieces (505.1.3).
- A surcharge is assessed for nonmachinable letters (101.1.2).

Ink/paper Colors and Type Styles: Not all colors of paper and/or ink and type styles are compatible with automated equipment. Contact your local Post Office for guidance.

All letter-size reply cards and envelopes (Business Reply Mail, Courtesy Reply Mail, and meter reply mail) provided as enclosures in First-Class Mail, Periodicals, and USPS Marketing Mail must meet the standards in 201.3.18.