

UNIVERSITY *of* HOUSTON  
MANUAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

**SECTION: Administrative Operations**  
**AREA: Postal Services**

**Number: 03.02.00**

<b>SUBJECT: Glossary of Postal Services Terms</b>
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I. PURPOSE

This glossary defines terms that apply to University of Houston Postal Services documents.

II. DEFINITIONS

Address Service Request (ASR): An endorsement which, when printed below the return address on a mailing piece, authorize the USPS to provide the new address (when known) of a person at the address on the mailing piece. Undeliverable and unforwardable mail is returned to the sender. There is a fee for this service.

Attention Line: A prefix added prior to an address.

BRC: Business Reply Card

BRE: Business Reply Envelope; a postage paid envelope in which a customer may return his check and/or order.

BRM: Business Reply Mail

BRMAS: Business Reply Mail Accounting System. It provides an automated method of processing and payment of business reply pieces. Mailers must pay an accounting fee, and their mail must meet all automation requirements. Applications are approved through local mailing requirements offices.

Bulk Rate Mail: A special rate classification of Standard A class mail covering a large quantity of the same pieces addressed to different people and specially prepared and sorted by ZIP Code prior to delivery to the post office.

Business Reply Card (BRC): A specially formatted postcard that businesses provide to customers and/or prospects to enable an easier response. These cards may be used only by Business Reply Mail permit; First Class postage and a surcharge per piece (\$.10) are paid by the addressee instead of the sender.

Business Reply Mail (BRM): Enables business to receive First Class mail back from customers, prospects, etc. The businesses pay postage and a surcharge only on the mail that is returned to them from the original distribution of BRM pieces. A permit is required; an annual fee is required to maintain the permit, and a deposit must be maintained for payment of postage on receipt by the USPS.

Camera-ready: Finished art that is proofed and ready to be shot for printers plate negatives.

Certificate of Mailing: A USPS form that verifies that an item was mailed. It does not provide insurance coverage for loss or damage. No record is maintained at the post office.

Certified Mail: A USPS form that provides a mailing receipt. A record of delivery is maintained at the recipient's post office.

Consignee: The concern to whom goods are shipped.

Dead Letter: Mailing piece that can neither be delivered as addressed nor returned to sender.

Deliverability Guarantee: A guarantee issued by a mailing list owner as to the cleanliness of his list.

Departmental Mailing Card (DMC): UH Postal Services form that must accompany all outgoing permit and non-permit mailings. The form is an official expenditure document and contains the departments budgetary account number and authorized signatures. All permit mailing and any non-permit mailing of \$100.00 or more must have a certifying signature on the DMC.

Faced Mail: Mail arranged so that addresses face the same way.

FIM: Facing Identification Mark. Used for automated facing and presorting business reply, courtesy reply and certain OCR readable mail pieces. A specific series of parallel bars printed near the top of return envelopes or cards.

First-Class: USPS designation for mail that receives the fastest delivery. Written communication between two people or companies. Bills, statements or other matter having the characteristic actual and personal communication.

Flat: A piece of first- or third-class mail too large to be distributed in a regular letter case. An oversize piece of mail (e.g., a retail advertising circular). A flat exceeds one or more of the dimensions for letter-size mail (11.5" x 6.125" x .25") but does not exceed 15" x 12" x .75".

Fourth Class Mail: See Standard Mail B. The name change took place during the USPS Classification Reform on July 1, 1996.

General Post Office (GPO): Main post office in a city with several branch post office locations which provide complete services not necessarily provided by the branches.

Gummed Labels: Labels that require moisture to activate the adhesive backing; replaced for all practical purposes by pressure sensitive labels.

Indicia: A preprinted endorsement on a mailing piece that indicates postage has been prepaid by the mailer.

Inserting: The lettershop function that involves putting package components into the carrier envelope.

List Cleaning: The process of removing old and inaccurate addresses.

List Maintenance: Process of updating a list to keep it current through additions, deletions and changes.

Machinable: Labeling, inserting, etc. that can be processed by machine.

Meter Tape: A tape on which postage is printed, by an approved meter; for use on letters and packages.

Metering: The process of imprinting postage on a mailing piece using a postage meter.

National Change of Address (NCOA): A list enhancement process that matches mail file records against a database of recent movers with their forwarding address. The database is compiled by the USPS from change of address cards; it contains the last 18 months of movers and is updated twice each month. Selected private sector vendors who meet USPS criteria may be selected to perform this process for a fee.

Nine-digit ZIP Code (ZIP+4): An extension of the five digit ZIP Code offering More precise destination information to facilitate handling of mail. Of the four additional digits, the first two denote a sector and the last two denote a segment within a sector.

Non-Permit Mail: All outgoing UH departmental USPS mail that is collected on the daily pickup and delivery runs performed twice each day by Postal Service staff.

Nixie: An inaccurate name or address that is undeliverable.

Nonprofit Bulk Mail: Nonpreferential second- and third-class mail sent by mailers, that are accorded special nonprofit status and discounted postage rates by the USPS (e.g., churches, charities, and educational foundations).

OCR: Optical Character Reader. A machine used by the USPS that identifies printed characters. It reads the ZIP code, converts it to a binary bar code and sprays that bar code onto the mail piece.

Parcel Post: See Standard B Mail (formerly fourth-class).

Periodicals (formerly Second-Class Mail): Newspapers and magazines are mailed under this mail class.

Permit Mail: Mail with a printed indicia instead of a stamp or meter imprint, showing that postage was paid by the mailer.

Postage Statement: an official USPS form that must be completed and presented to the USPS when processing any permit or discounted mailings.

Postal Card: A card sold by the USPS having a printed indicia and sent first class. Also (incorrectly) referred to as a post card which is an unofficial card, often a picture card, that can be sent through the mail when postage is affixed.

Postmark: A cancellation imprint on letters and packages showing the time, date, and post office or sectional center of origin.

Pressure-Sensitive Label: Label with a gummed adhesive that can be peeled off the backing material and applied permanently to another surface simply by pressing.

Priority Mail: Mail with service comparable to first class service that weighs more than first class mail (currently 11 ounces); principally flats and parcels. Rates are based on piece weight and delivery zone.

Private Express Statutes: Laws giving the USPS the exclusive right to carry letters over postal routes. With specific exceptions, the carrying of letters by any person or organizations other than the USPS is unlawful.

Purge: The process of eliminating duplications and/or unwanted names and addresses from one or more lists.

Registered Mail: The most secured option offered by the Postal Services to provide added protection for valuable and important documents. Registered articles are controlled from the point of mailing to delivery. First-Class postage, as well as fees for registered mail, are required on registered mail. This service can be used on international or domestic mail.

Salting: The process of putting “dummy” or “decoy” names on a list.

Second-Class Mail: See Periodicals. The name change took place during the USPS Classification Reform on July 1, 1996.

Seeding: Placement of dummy names on an in-house list in order to trace list usage.

Skew: The malalignment or slant of a character, bar, line of characters, or barcode with respect to the bottom edge of the mail piece.

Standard A Mail (formerly Third-Class Mail): Mail with delayed handling (first- and periodicals are processed first) requiring a minimum of 200 pieces or 50 pounds per mailing. To qualify as third-class, each piece of mail must weigh less than 16 ounces. Most direct mail promotional material is sent by third-class mail.

Standard B Mail (formerly Fourth-Class Mail): USPS designation for parcels (non-letter mail) weighing 16 ounces or more.

Third-Class Mail: See Standard A Mail. The name change took place during the USPS Classification Reform on July 1, 1996.

Turnaround Time: Elapsed time between submission of a job to a processing center and the delivery of a specific output.

Undeliverable as Addressed (UAA): Mail that cannot be delivered as addressed and must be forwarded, returned to sender, or referred to the dead letter office.

Unique ZIP Code: A ZIP Code exclusive to one firm, or institution, or address. There are approximately 4,200 unique ZIP codes nationwide that belong to public utilities, banks, large office buildings, direct mail fulfillment companies, universities, and other such organizations that receive a large volume of mail.

ZIP Code: Zoning Improvement Plan. ZIP codes were instituted by the USPS to facilitate mail handling and delivery. The first digit represents one of ten areas of the country (0 = New England, 9 = West Coast, etc.). The first three digits together represent a Sectional Center Facility (SCF) or main post office. The last two digits further define the destination point in terms of a post office or delivery center area within a large city or in terms of a small city whose residents share the same ZIP Code.

ZIP+4 Code: A 9-digit numeric code incorporating the original 5-digit ZIP Code, a hyphen and 4 additional digits. The 4-digit add-on identifies specific delivery segments and sectors such as a floor of a building, a department within a firm, a group of post office boxes, etc.

III. REVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITY

Responsible Party: Associate Vice President for Finance

Review: Every three years, on or before August 31

VII. APPROVAL

John M. Rudley  
Vice President for Administration and Finance

Arthur K. Smith  
President

Date of President's Approval: August 12, 2003