



A900 Customer Support

## A950 Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS)

**Summary** A950 describes use of CASS-certified software for automation and carrier route rate mailings and describes the documentation required for each mailing.

### 1.0 BASIC INFORMATION

**Purpose** The Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS) improves the accuracy of delivery point codes, ZIP+4 codes, 5-digit ZIP Codes, and carrier route codes on mailpieces. CASS provides a common platform to measure the quality of address matching software and to diagnose and correct software problems.

1.1

**Requirement** Any mailing claimed at an automation rate must be produced from address lists properly matched and coded with CASS-certified address matching methods listed below. A mailer using multiline optical character readers (MLOCs) to print delivery point barcodes on mailpieces (or for flats, ZIP+4 barcodes) must also obtain CASS certification (including Multiline Accuracy Support System (MASS)) for the address matching software used on the MLOCs.

1.2

**Methods** [10-1-03] Delivery point or ZIP+4 coding may be obtained by using the National Change of Address (NCOA) process or NCOA<sup>Link</sup>, CASS-certified DPC address matching software; CASS-certified Z4CHANGE process; or Delivery Sequence File (DSF) or Delivery Sequence File, Second Generation (DSF<sup>2</sup>) process.

1.3

### 2.0 SOFTWARE CERTIFICATION

**General** Any user of address matching software that applies ZIP+4 codes to address lists to obtain an automation rate must use address matching software that is CASS-certified. Address matching software used to ZIP+4 code address records must, as part of its process, return a standardized address to ensure that the ZIP+4 code or mailer-applied barcode represents the proper depth of code available. The original input address submitted for coding may also be returned. The CASS-certified address matching software must be used according to specific parameter settings (configurations) as described below.

2.1

**Software Configuration** All address lists used to produce mailings for automation rates must be matched and ZIP+4 coded with current CASS-certified software in line with the configuration standards shown below. Summary output reports or computer-generated facsimile Forms 3553 must contain information about the configuration used when processing the address list on the CASS-certified address matching software.

2.2

**Permissible Configurations** These are permissible configurations for address matching software:

- a. Vendor-Supplied Software With Vendor CASS-Certified Software Configurations. The software vendor is CASS-certified for specific configurations. The user is using that software as prescribed by the vendor and with the CASS-certified configurations obtained by the vendor.
- b. Vendor-Supplied Software With User CASS-Certified Software Configurations. The software user is using vendor-supplied software in a configuration not CASS-certified by the vendor but by the user.

2.3

- c. User-Developed Software for Which User Obtained CASS Certification. The software user obtained individual user CASS certification for self-developed software and is using it as certified.

**Use** [6-12-03] When used for ZIP+4 or delivery point barcoding, the address matching software and coding methods must have a valid CASS certification and use the current USPS ZIP+4 Product updated to include all applicable change transaction files.

**3.0 DATE OF ADDRESS MATCHING AND CODING**

**Update Standards**

3.1 Unless Z4CHANGE is used, all automation and carrier route mailings bearing addresses coded by any AIS product must be coded with current CASS-certified software and the current USPS database. Coding must be done within 90 days before the mailing date for all carrier route mailings and within 180 days before the mailing date for all non-carrier route automation rate mailings. All AIS products may be used immediately on release. New product releases must be included in address matching systems no later than 45 days after the release date. The overlap in dates for product use allows mailers adequate time to install the new data files and test their systems. Mailers are expected to update their systems with the latest data files as soon as practicable and need not wait until the “last permissible use” date. The mailer’s signature on the postage statement certifies that this standard has been met when the corresponding mail is presented to the USPS. The “current USPS database” product cycle is defined by the following matrix.

<b>File Release</b> <i>Use of file released on...</i>	<b>Required Use</b> <i>Must begin no later than...</i>	<b>Last Permissible Use</b> <i>And must end no later than...</i>
February 15	April 1	May 31
April 15	June 1	July 31
June 15	August 1	September 30
August 15	October 1	November 30
October 15	December 1	January 31
December 15	February 1	March 31

**Z4CHANGE List Matching**

- 3.2 [6-12-03] When using Z4CHANGE to match and code address lists for automation rate mailings:
- a. The entire address list must first be matched and ZIP+4 coded with current CASS-certified software and the current USPS ZIP+4 Product (defined in 3.1).
  - b. Every 60 days after the first matching, the address list must be processed through Z4CHANGE using USPS-certified software to identify changed records since the last update.
  - c. The changed records identified through the Z4CHANGE processing must then be matched and coded using current CASS-certified address matching software and the current ZIP+4 Product (defined in 3.1).
  - d. The entire address list must be rematched and ZIP+4 coded every 3 years using current CASS-certified software and the current USPS ZIP+4 Product (defined in 3.1).

**4.0 DEFINITIONS—MAILING AND ADDRESS LISTS**

For this section, *mailing list* or *address list* is the group of names and addresses to which mailpieces in the corresponding mailing are addressed. Whether the



addresses used in a mailing are obtained from a single list or from two or more lists (whole lists or extracts of those lists), each list used to produce a mailing claimed at an automation rate must meet the standards in [A950](#).

## 5.0 DOCUMENTATION

**Form 3553**  
5.1 Unless excepted by standard, the mailer must complete a Form 3553 for each mailing claimed at all automation rates and all carrier route rates. A computer-generated facsimile may be used if it contains the required data elements in a format similar to the USPS form. The data recorded on Form 3553 must refer only to the address list used to produce the mailing with which it is presented. The postage statement must be annotated in the block(s) provided to reflect the date when address matching and coding were performed. When a mailing is produced using multiple lists, the mailer must show the earliest (oldest) date of address matching and coding (shown on Form 3553, section B2). The mailer certifies compliance with this standard when signing the corresponding postage statement.

**Retention Period**  
5.2 Form 3553 and other documentation must be retained by the mailer or the mailer's agent for 1 year from the date of mailing and be made available to the USPS on 24-hour notice.

**Using Output Information**  
5.3 The data recorded on Form 3553 is taken from the summary output report generated by the computer process by which address lists are matched and ZIP+4 coded using CASS-certified software. The summary output information may also be generated as a facsimile Form 3553. Form 3553 may show summary output information for a single address list or consolidate summary output information from multiple address lists combined to produce a single mailing. Figures on Form 3553 are not required to match total mailpiece figures on the corresponding postage statement.

**Providing Required Data**  
5.4 Summary output reports or computer-generated Forms 3553 must contain this information:

- a. CASS-certified company name as it appears on the CASS certificate; name and software version that received CASS certification; and the software configuration used when processing the address list.
- b. Name of the list processor using the CASS-certified software to match and code the address list, the date the address list was processed, the date of the USPS database used to code the address list, the address list name or identification number, the total number of address records on the list submitted for coding, the total number of address records successfully coded to the appropriate depth of code, and the valid dates for the records successfully coded.

**Using a Single List**  
5.5 When a mailing is produced using all or part of a single address list, the mailer must retain one Form 3553 and other required documentation reflecting the summary output information for the entire list, as obtained when the list was coded. When the same address list is used for other mailings within 180 days of the date it was matched and coded, a copy of the Form 3553 must be retained with the documentation for each mailing.

**Using Multiple Lists**  
5.6 When a mailing is produced using multiple address lists, the mailer must retain a consolidated Form 3553 summarizing the individual summary output and/or facsimile Forms 3553 for each list used (and other required documentation). As an alternative, the mailer may combine the addresses selected from the multiple lists

into a single new list, reprocess the addresses using CASS-certified address matching software, and retain one Form 3553 for the summary output generated by that process.

**Using CASS Certificate**

5.7

If the name of the CASS-certified company entered on Form 3553 does not appear on the list published by the USPS, a copy of the CASS certificate for the software used also must be retained by the mailer with the documentation.

**6.0 CASS CERTIFICATION**

**Testing Arrangements**

6.1

To obtain information on standards and arrange for testing of carrier route, ZIP+4, or delivery point address matching software, contact the National Customer Support Center by calling 1-800-238-3150, or by writing to CASS/ZIP+4 Matching, National Customer Support Center (see [G043](#) for address).

**CASS Stage I**

6.2

The CASS certification process is a two-stage procedure. Stage I is a test file with answers supplied on request to customers wanting to certify an address matching software product. The Stage I file contains fabricated sample addresses from address ranges across the country with missing or incorrect address elements. The correct answers supplied on this Stage I test file allow self-assessment of address matching software/hardware accuracy so that software/hardware vendors or users can predetermine product readiness for the actual test.

**CASS Stage II**

6.3

The Stage II file is the actual test without answers. This test measures the accuracy of address matching software/hardware. Similar to the Stage I file, the Stage II file contains fabricated sample addresses from address ranges across the country with missing or incorrect address elements that the address matching software must correct. Software vendors or users process the Stage II file against their address matching products, appending the correct or missing information in each address record. After completing the test, the vendor or user returns the Stage II file to the USPS for analysis, scoring, and, if qualified, certification. For multiline optical character readers (MLOCs) and encoding stations, CASS certification is obtained by barcoding sample mailpieces in a test deck. After completing the test, the vendor or user returns the test deck to the USPS for analysis, scoring, and, if qualified, certification.

**Certification Standards**

6.4

To be CASS-certified:

- a. Delivery point code address matching software/hardware must correctly ZIP+4 code the addresses in the Stage II file or test deck with 98% accuracy and must correctly append the additional two digits of the delivery point code (plus a check digit) to the Stage II file or test deck with 100% accuracy.
- b. A 2-digit utility (separate or stand-alone address matching software that appends only the correct 2-digit DP9019C information) must use the standardized address information returned by DPC address matching software when determining the correct delivery point code. A 2-digit utility must assign the 2-digit delivery point code (plus a check digit) to the addresses in the Stage II file with 100% accuracy.
- c. Address matching software used to assign 5-digit ZIP Codes and carrier route codes must assign the appropriate codes to the Stage II file with 98% accuracy.

**Customer Notification**

6.5

The USPS sends written notice informing the customer of the results of the analysis and the product certification status. Follow-up notification is mailed to remind previously certified vendors and users of the next certification.