



- E200 Periodicals
- E210 Basic Standards

## E216 Publisher Records

**Summary** E216 describes the information required and types of records publishers need to keep. It also describes the requirements for filling a statement of ownership, management, and circulation.

### 1.0 BASIC STANDARDS

**Purpose** The publisher must keep records that can support the information required on the application for Periodicals mailing privileges (or any other form) and to confirm eligibility for entry of the publication at the requested Periodicals rate. The records must show that the publication is distributed to a legitimate list of requesters (if applicable) or is not designed primarily for free circulation or circulation at nominal rates. If the publication is authorized to carry general advertising, the publisher must keep a list of legitimate subscribers. A publication of an institution or society that is authorized to carry general advertising may keep a list of subscribers or proof of a resolution to distribute to members, similar to that described in [E213](#).

**Information Required** Records must be available so that the USPS can determine:

- 1.2
  - a. Number of copies printed.
  - b. Manner of distribution and disposition of all copies.
  - c. Accuracy of the zone distribution on the postage statement.
  - d. The existence of a list of legitimate subscribers who have paid more than a nominal subscription price for publications authorized to carry general advertising (other than requester publications).
  - e. The existence of a legitimate list of requesters for requester publications.

**Retention** The publisher must keep records for each issue of a publication for 3 years from its issue date, except for records for any year for which postal verification is done by a USPS-authorized audit bureau. A publisher whose records are verified by an authorized audit bureau is not required to keep source records of requests and subscriptions longer than required by the audit bureau.

**Types of Records** These records may be used to meet the standards in [1.1](#) and [1.2](#):

- 1.4
  - a. Print orders and invoices showing the total number of copies printed.
  - b. Individual and bulk orders for subscriptions and nonsubscriber copies.
  - c. Newsstand and vending machine sales and returns.
  - d. Stubs or copies of receipts issued.
  - e. Sales records and returns for over-the-counter sales.
  - f. Cash books, bank deposit receipts, or similar records.
  - g. Records of copies of the publication destroyed.

### 2.0 VERIFICATION

**Purpose** A publisher must make records available for USPS review and verification on a periodic basis to evaluate indications of ineligibility for Periodicals entry, to verify that the postage statement shows the correct number of copies mailed to each

216



zone and the correct postage, and to confirm that publications authorized to carry general advertising meet the applicable circulation standards.

**Authorized Verification** 2.2 Only USPS employees may conduct verifications for an application for Periodicals mailing privileges or reentry. Other verifications of the publisher's records may be done by USPS audit or by USPS-authorized independent audit bureaus.

**Independent Audit Bureau** 2.3 To have an authorized independent audit bureau conduct the audit, the publisher must make that request directly to the bureau and advise the original entry postmaster. The audit bureau coordinates the verification with the original entry postmaster.

### 3.0 STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION

**Filing Form 3526** 3.1 The publisher of each Periodicals publication, including foreign publications accepted at Periodicals rates, must file Form 3526 by October 1 of each year at the original entry post office.

**Content** 3.2 The information provided on Form 3526 must allow the USPS to determine whether the publication meets the standards for Periodicals mailing privileges. This information includes, as applicable, the identity of the editor, managing editor, publishers, and owners; the owning corporation and its stockholders; any further corporations and stockholders that own at least 1% of the stock of a corporation owning the publication; known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders; and the extent and nature of the circulation of the publication, including the number of copies distributed, the methods of distribution, and how much of the circulation is paid in whole or in part.

**Publication** 3.3 The publisher of each publication authorized Periodicals mailing privileges as a general or requester publication must publish a complete statement of ownership, containing all information required by Form 3526, in an issue of the publication to which that statement relates; other publications are not required to publish this statement. A reproduction of the Form 3526 submitted to the USPS may be used. The required information must appear in an issue whose primary mailed distribution is produced not later than October 10 for publications issued more frequently than weekly, or not later than October 31 for publications issued weekly or less frequently but more frequently than monthly; or in the first issue whose primary mailed distribution is produced after October 1 for all other publications.

**Noncompliance** 3.4 If a publisher does not comply with the filing or publishing standards of 3.0 and, after notice from the postmaster, further fails to comply within 10 days, that publisher's eligibility for Periodicals rates is suspended until compliance occurs.

### 4.0 NONSUBSCRIBER/NONREQUESTER COPY DISTRIBUTION

**Multiple Issues— Same Day** 4.1 The USPS may require the publisher to submit Form 3541-C when an issue is regularly published on the same day as another issue of the same publication under the Periodicals authorization of the parent publication. When requested, the publisher must complete Form 3541-C and attach it to the postage statements submitted with the corresponding mailings.

**Multiple Issues— Different Days** 4.2 The USPS may require the publisher to submit Form 3541-E when an issue is regularly published during the same month as another issue of the same publication under the Periodicals authorization of the parent publication. When requested, the publisher must complete Form 3541-E and attach it to the postage statements submitted with the corresponding mailings.