



F000 Basic Services

F030 Address Correction, Address Change, FASTforward, and Return Services

Summary F030 describes the address information services available to mailers including address correction, Address Change Service, and *FASTforward*. It also covers the forwarding and returning of mail.

1.0 ADDRESS CORRECTION SERVICE

Purpose If mail cannot be delivered as addressed, address correction service allows the sender on request, using the appropriate ancillary service endorsement under [F010](#), to obtain the addressee's new (forwarding) address (if the addressee filed a change-of-address order with the USPS) or the reason for nondelivery. Address corrections and notices are not provided for customers who file a temporary change of address or for individuals at a business address (see [F020.1.0](#)). Address correction service is available alone or in combination with forwarding and return service.

Invalid Endorsement Any obsolete ancillary service endorsement or similar sender endorsement not shown in [F010](#) is considered invalid. Material bearing invalid or conflicting ancillary service endorsements will not be accepted for mailing. If discovered in the mailstream, pieces bearing an invalid ancillary service endorsement or conflicting endorsements are treated as unendorsed mail. *Exception:* Undeliverable Parcel Post, Media Mail, and Library Mail pieces that bear invalid or conflicting ancillary service endorsements are treated as if endorsed "Forwarding Service Requested."

Periodicals Address correction service is provided automatically for all Periodicals publications (including publications pending Periodicals authorization) and begins 60 days after the effective date of the addressee's change of address. Address corrections are provided as separate notices or, at the mailer's request, on the returned pieces.

Other Classes When possible, "on-piece" address correction is provided for First-Class Mail, Express Mail, Priority Mail, Standard Mail, and Package Services. If the piece cannot be forwarded, it is returned with the address information or reason for nondelivery attached. Generally, when separate corrections are necessary, Form 3547 is returned to the sender with the address correction fee charged and the mail is forwarded. This service is not available for Express Mail, First-Class Mail, or Standard Mail addressed for delivery to the addressee by military personnel at any military installation, including APOs and FPOs.

Fee and Return Postage Unless excepted, the applicable fee for address correction service is charged for each separate notification of address correction or the reason for nondelivery. When "on-piece" address correction is provided, no address correction fee is charged but return postage can be charged, depending on mail class.

2.0 ADDRESS CHANGE SERVICE (ACS)

Description Address Change Service (ACS) is an automated electronic enhancement to the manual method that centralizes, automates, and improves the process of providing address correction or reason for nondelivery notices. ACS is designed to reduce the volume of manual notifications provided for valid participating ACS mailpieces, but it does not completely eliminate manual notifications. ACS involves transmitting



address correction information to a central point where the changes are consolidated electronically by unique publication or mailer identifier. The records are sequentially organized by USPS-assigned codes and distributed to each participating mailer. Mailers must keep their address records in electronic format and mark their mailpieces with the ACS symbols under [M013](#) and the correct endorsement under [F010](#) to obtain address correction. To obtain nondelivery information under [F010.4.1](#) in addition to address correction service, mailers must also use an ACS keyline on mailpieces. ACS also can be used to pay forwarding postage on most Standard Mail and Package Services pieces using Shipper Paid Forwarding under [2.5](#). Additional information for using ACS is contained in Publication 8, *Address Change Service*.

- Availability**
2.2 ACS is available monthly, weekly, or more frequently, depending on the needs and ACS volume of the mailer. Because ACS is associated with USPS computerized forwarding operations, the service is not available at all post offices. Therefore, ACS is not a guaranteed service and the USPS makes no assurance that any minimum percentage of a mailer's address correction notifications will be provided electronically rather than manually. The use of an authorized ACS participant code and the required endorsement on mailpieces does not guarantee the return of all notifications in an electronic format. To participate in ACS, write to the National Customer Support Center (see [G043](#) for address).
- Periodicals**
2.3 Address correction by ACS is provided automatically for 60 days after the effective date of the addressee's change of address for participating Periodicals publications (including publications pending Periodicals authorization).
- Fee**
2.4 Unless excepted, the applicable fee for address correction is charged for each separate notification of address correction or the reason for nondelivery provided.
- Shipper Paid Forwarding**
2.5 Shipper Paid Forwarding is an ACS fulfillment vehicle. It allows mailers of Standard Mail machinable parcels and most Package Services to pay forwarding charges via approved ACS participant code(s). For information about Shipper Paid Forwarding, contact the National Customer Support Center (see [G043](#) for address). Mailers have the option of paying forwarding charges through a postage due advance deposit account. Mailers who choose to do so must pay an annual accounting fee.
- 3.0 FASTforward**
- Purpose**
3.1 *FASTforward* is an automated system that interfaces with addressing and automation systems, such as computer-based mailing list correction processes, multiline optical character reader (MLOCR), or remote video encoding (RVE) technologies, to identify names and addresses for which current change-of-address orders are on file with the USPS. The *FASTforward* Mailing List Correction application updates name and address mailing lists before pieces are prepared for mailing. Approved *FASTforward* MLOCR and RVE systems print an on-piece address correction (text and delivery point barcode of the new address) for identified pieces before entry in the mailstream. Technical and licensing information is available from the National Customer Support Center (see [G043](#) for address).
- Addressing**
3.2 When MLOCR and/or video image technologies are used with *FASTforward*, all name lines and lines of the delivery address as defined in [A010](#) on each mailpiece must have a uniform left margin and be entirely within the OCR read area defined in [A010.1.3](#). The term name lines includes recipient's name, firm name, and



building name. An optional information line (e.g., keyline or optional endorsement line) is permitted if placed above the top line of the address block. Any alternative addressing format under [A020](#) is not permitted.

Barcoding
3.3

When MLOCR and/or video image technologies are used with *FASTforward*, each letter-size piece must have a barcode clear zone meeting the standards in [C840](#), free of any printing and barcode. If a *FASTforward* match is made, the new address and barcode representing the new address are printed in the barcode clear zone and, for mail processing, take precedence over the old address and any barcode in the address block. The new barcode must meet the barcoding standards in [C840](#). An envelope containing a window that intrudes into the barcode clear zone is not eligible for *FASTforward*.

4.0 SENDER INSTRUCTION

Mail Not Forwarded
4.1

The following types of mail are not forwarded:

- a. Mail addressed to “Occupant” or “Postal Customer.”
- b. Mail with exceptional address format.
- c. Mail showing specific instructions of the sender (e.g., “Return Service Requested” or “Change Service Requested”).
- d. Perishable items not marked to abandon that cannot be delivered before spoiling, or day-old poultry that cannot be delivered within 72 hours after hatching. These items are returned to the sender immediately, if the return can be made before spoilage or within the 72-hour period.

Special Services
4.2

A change-of-address order covers certified, collect on delivery (COD), insured, registered, and return receipt for merchandise mail unless the sender gives other instructions or the addressee moves outside the United States. This mail is treated as follows:

- a. COD mail is not forwarded to overseas military post offices.
- b. Ordinary, insured, and COD parcels marked on the envelope or wrapper with the mailer’s instructions to abandon or sell perishable items are treated following the instructions, such as:
 - (1) “Do not forward or return. If not accepted within ____ days, treat as abandoned. Notify mailer of disposition.”
 - (2) “Do not forward or return. If undelivered after ____ days, sell contents to highest bidder and remit proceeds, less commission, to mailer.” (A commission of 10%, but not less than \$0.25, is kept by the USPS from the amount for which perishable items are sold.)
- c. When the mailer so requests, Form 3849-D is sent to the mailer. The mailer then may designate a new addressee or alter the amount of COD charges by submitting a written request to the postmaster and paying the proper fee. The USPS returns the article to the mailer after the holding period if no response is received. The postage charge, if any, is collected from the mailer for returning the mail (but not registration or COD fees). When COD mail is addressed to a person who moved and left no forwarding address, Form 3849-D is not sent, and the mail is returned to the mailer.
- d. Insured Standard Mail is forwarded and returned.
- e. Insured Package Services without any other endorsement is forwarded at no charge locally and postage due nonlocally. (For forwarding, local means within the same post office.) If the mailpiece is undeliverable, the USPS



returns it to the sender with the new address or the reason for nondelivery. The sender is charged for the return of the piece only and the attempted forwarding, when appropriate.

- f. The USPS holds undeliverable certified, insured, registered, and return receipt for merchandise mail for no fewer than 3 days nor more than 15 days (unless the sender specifies fewer).
- g. The USPS holds undeliverable collect on delivery (COD) mail for no fewer than 3 nor more than 30 days (unless the sender specifies fewer).

Express Mail Pouch

4.3

The USPS opens an undeliverable-as-addressed Express Mail pouch to find a delivery address on any envelope or article inside. The USPS does not open the wrappers or envelopes or break the seals of any Express Mail article in the pouch. If no address information is found, the pouch is treated as dead mail. Express Mail is held no more than 5 workdays unless the sender sets a shorter period.

Holding Mail

4.4

At the sender's request, the delivery post office holds mail, other than registered, insured, certified, COD, and return receipt for merchandise, for no fewer than 3 days nor more than 30 days. A specific retention time of not less than 3 nor more than 30 days, if requested, must be included by the sender in the return address on the mailpiece (e.g., "Return in 30 days to" followed by sender's return address).

5.0 RETURNING MAIL**Nonmailable**

5.1

Nonmailable matter is returned to the sender immediately.

Refused Mail

5.2

Returnable mail is returned if refused by the addressee.

Express Mail, Priority Mail, First-Class Mail

5.3

Mailpieces sent as Express Mail, Priority Mail, or First-Class Mail that cannot be delivered as addressed or forwarded to a new address, unless otherwise requested by the sender, are returned when possible to the sender at no additional charge. Excluding pieces containing live animals, the following are disposed of by the USPS:

- a. Priority Mail bearing the appropriate Address Change Service (ACS) participant code and marked "Perishable" and endorsed "Change Service Requested."
- b. First-Class Mail bearing the appropriate ACS participant code and endorsed "Change Service Requested."

Other Classes

5.4

Other returnable mail is treated as appropriate for the class of mail and the sender's instructions except as noted below.

Special Services

5.5

If a return receipt is attached to a certified, collect on delivery (COD), numbered insured, registered, return receipt for merchandise, or Express Mail piece to be returned, the reason for nondelivery is shown on the face of the piece. The receipt stays attached to the piece and is returned to the sender. Registered mail is returned through the registry system. The sender must sign a delivery receipt for returned Express Mail and for certified, COD, numbered insured, registered, and return receipt for merchandise mail.

No Sender Instructions

5.6

Mail without a specific address or instructions from the sender is held:

- a. For 5 days if for delivery by rural or highway contract route carrier.



- b. For 10 days if for general delivery at an office with city carrier service. If the addressee notifies the postmaster of a delay in claiming the mail, the postmaster may hold such mail up to 30 days.
- c. For 15 days if for general delivery at an office without city carrier service.

- Post Office Box**
5.7 Deliverable mail addressed to a post office box is not returned until after the box is declared vacant, except for certified, collect on delivery (COD), insured, registered, postage due, and perishable mail.
- Franked Mail**
5.8 Unclaimed franked mail from a Member of Congress is returned to the origin post office (if known) or the Washington, DC, Post Office.

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