



- P000 Basic Information
- P010 General Standards

P014 Refunds and Exchanges

Summary P014 describes the process of postage refunds and exchanges. There are certain standards under which refunds can be made. A refund may be requested for excess postage, metered postage, and Express Mail.

1.0 STAMP EXCHANGES

USPS Fault 1.1 The post office may correct mistakes in selling damaged, defective, or otherwise unserviceable stamps by exchanging stamps at full postage value.

Damaged in Customer's Possession 1.2 Stamps that are damaged or otherwise unusable for postage (because of humidity, moisture, or other causes) while in a customer's possession may be exchanged only for an equal number of stamps of the same denomination. Unusable stamps accepted from a customer under these conditions must be those on sale at post offices within 12 months before the transaction. Quantities of the same denomination over \$10 must be returned in the same configuration as when bought, i.e., sheets, coils, booklets. Each such transaction is limited to \$100 worth of postage from each customer.

Condition and Quantity 1.3 The stamps presented for exchange must be in substantially whole condition, with the denomination evident. If coils of stamps are partially stuck together and cannot be counted, the postmaster may accept the customer's estimate of the number of stamps left in the coil and give equal quantities in exchange.

Appeal 1.4 Any customer denied an exchange for damaged stamps may appeal the postmaster's decision to the Consumer Advocate, USPS Headquarters (see [G043](#) for address).

Purchase Error 1.5 If a customer bought the wrong denomination stamps (or the wrong kind, size, or denomination envelope), they may be exchanged at full postage value. Only full panes of stamps, coils of stamps in the original sealed wrappers, full boxes of stamped envelopes, or original sealed packs of stamped cards may be exchanged. A customer exchanging \$250 or more of such stock must show proof of identity (e.g., a driver's license) and must present the stock for exchange to the postal unit from which his or her mail is delivered.

Exchange of Spoiled and Unused Postal Matter 1.6 Unusable and spoiled stamped envelopes or stamped cards, if uncanceled, and unused precanceled stamps and stamped cards, are exchanged for other postage-stamped paper. Only the buyer may exchange stamped envelopes or aerogrammes (airletter sheets) with a printed return address and stamped cards with any printed matter of the buyer. If there is no purchaser's printing, any responsible person may exchange them. These conditions apply:

- a. Stamped envelopes (mutilated no more than is necessary to remove contents): postage value plus value of postage added because of a rate increase or for additional service.
- b. Unmutilated aerogrammes (airletter sheets): postage value minus \$0.01 for each aerogramme redeemed.
- c. Unmutilated single and double stamped cards: 85% of postage value, plus full value of postage added because of a rate increase or for additional service. Either half of a double stamped card may be redeemed, if the double



card is printed and cut for use as single cards. Unused double stamped cards printed for reply should not be separated but, if they are separated in error and the buyer presents both halves, the cards may be redeemed. Reply halves of double stamped cards returned to sender outside of the mail are not redeemable by the original buyer, even though the reply half received no postal service.

- d. Sheet stamped cards spoiled when cut to size: 85% of postage value plus full value of postage added because of a rate increase or for additional service, if all cut sections are submitted.
- e. Stamps affixed to commercial envelopes and postcards: 90% of postage value. Envelopes and postcards must be in substantially whole condition and in lots of at least 50 of the same denomination and value.
- f. Unused precanceled stamps in full coils and in full sheets redeemed from precanceled permit holders: 90% of postage value.

Stamps Converted to Other Postage Forms

1.7

A customer may submit postage stamps for conversion to an advance deposit for permit imprint mailings, subject to these conditions:

- a. Only full panes of postage stamps (or coils of stamps in the original sealed wrappers) are accepted for conversion. Accepted stamps include commemorative stamps issued no more than 1 year before the requested conversion date or regular stamp issues not officially withdrawn from sale.
- b. A request for stamp conversions must be made in writing to the district manager of Customer Service and Sales in the district where the customer's post office is located. The customer's request must include:
 - (1) Name, denomination, quantity, and value of stamps for which conversion is requested.
 - (2) Name of the post office where the stamps were bought.
 - (3) Evidence of purchase of the stamps.
- c. The amount of postage applied to a permit imprint advance deposit account through conversion is the full face value of the stamps.
- d. The district manager may ask the customer to submit additional records to support the information in the request. After reviewing the documentation, the district manager approves or denies the request. The customer is notified when the conversion is approved. The postmaster is advised of the procedures for accepting the stamps and making the required accounting entries.
- e. No part of any amount applied to a permit imprint advance deposit account from the conversion of postage stamps is refundable in cash or by any other means.

Not Exchangeable

1.8

The following postage items are not exchangeable:

- a. Adhesive stamps, unless mistakes were made in buying, stamps were defective, stamps were affixed to commercial envelopes and postcards, or under 1.7.
- b. Stamps cut from stamped cards, stamped envelopes, or aerogrammes (airletter sheets).
- c. Parts and pieces of stamped cards.
- d. Stamped cards, stamped envelopes, and aerogrammes received for reply.
- e. Mutilated and defaced stamps.



2.0 POSTAGE AND FEES REFUNDS

Refund Standards

2.1

[3-4-04] A refund for postage and fees may be made:

- a. Under the standards below if postage and special or retail service fees are paid and no service is rendered, or if the amount collected was more than the lawful rate.
- b. Under 3.0 for refund requests for postage evidencing systems and metered postage. Metered postage is printed by a postage evidencing system (P030). Refunds may be requested for unused indicia, unused postage value remaining in a postage evidencing system, and the unused balance in a postage payment account.
- c. Under 4.0 for refund requests for postage made at the time of mailing.
- d. Under P021 for rejected personalized envelopes.
- e. Under the terms of a contract between the contract postal unit (CPU) and the USPS for unused postage printed by the CPU.

Ineligible Matter

2.2

The USPS is presumed at fault and no service is rendered in cases involving returned articles improperly accepted in either domestic or international service because of excess size or weight. Any mailer who customarily weighs and rates mail is expected to be familiar with basic standards. The USPS is not at fault if the mailer is required to withdraw articles from the mail before dispatch.

Torn or Defaced Mail

2.3

If First-Class Mail or Package Services is torn or defaced during USPS handling so that the addressee or intended delivery point cannot be identified, the sender may receive a postage refund. This applies only when the failure to process and/or deliver is the fault of the USPS. Where possible, the damaged item is returned with the postage refund.

Full Refund

2.4

A full refund (100%) may be made when:

- a. The USPS is at fault.
- b. Postage or fees are paid in excess of the lawful rate.
- c. Service to the country of destination is suspended.
- d. Postage is fire-scarred while in USPS custody (including in the letterbox), and the mail is returned to sender without service.
- e. Special delivery stamps are mistakenly used to pay postage, and the mail is returned to the sender without service.
- f. Fees are paid for special handling, certified mail, Delivery Confirmation, or Signature Confirmation and the article fails to receive the special service for which the fee is paid.
- g. Surcharges are mistakenly collected on domestic registered mail or collected over the proper amount, or represented by stamps affixed to matter not actually accepted for registration.
- h. Fees are paid for return receipt or for restricted delivery, and the USPS (through fault or negligence) fails to furnish the return receipt or its equivalent, or makes erroneous delivery or nondelivery.
- i. An annual presort mailing fee is paid for Presorted First-Class Mail, Standard Mail, Presorted Media Mail, or Presorted Library Mail or a destination entry mailing fee is paid for Parcel Select or Bound Printed Matter and no mailings are made during the corresponding 12-month period.
- j. Customs clearance and delivery fees are erroneously collected.



- k. Fees are paid for registry or insurance service on mail addressed to a country to which such services are not available, unless claim for indemnity is made.
- l. Express Mail is not delivered according to the applicable service standard. No refund is made if the mail was properly detained for law enforcement purposes (see *Administrative Support Manual* 274).

Intercepted Mail

2.5

When mail is returned at the sender's request or for a reason not the fault of the USPS, any difference between the amount paid and the appropriate surface rate chargeable from mailing office to interception point and return is refunded.

Unallowable Refunds

2.6

The limits on refunds are not intended to prohibit payments for unused adhesive stamps and adhesive stamps affixed to unmailed matter in connection with an authorized marketing program. Refunds are not made for the following:

- a. An application fee to use permit imprints.
- b. Collect on delivery (COD), Express Mail insurance, insured, and registered fees after the USPS accepts the article, even if the article is later withdrawn from the mail.
- c. Unused adhesive stamps (may be exchanged under 1.1 through 1.5).
- d. Adhesive stamps affixed to unmailed matter.

Applying for Refund

2.7

[3-4-04] For refunds under 2.0, the customer must apply for a refund on Form 3533; submit it to the postmaster; and provide the envelope, wrapper, or a part of it showing the names and addresses of the sender and addressee, canceled postage and postal markings, or other evidence of postage and fees paid. Refunds for metered postage are submitted under 3.0.

Ruling on Refund Request

2.8

[3-4-04] Refund requests are decided based on the specific type of postage or mailing:

- a. Refunds under 2.0. The local postmaster grants or denies refunds under 2.0. The customer may appeal an adverse ruling through the postmaster to the Pricing and Classification Service Center (PCSC) manager who issues the final agency decision.
- b. Dated metered postage, except for PC Postage systems, under 3.0. The postmaster at the licensing post office grants or denies requests for refunds for dated metered postage under 3.0. The licensee may appeal an adverse ruling within 30 days through the manager, Postage Technology Management, USPS Headquarters (see G043 for address), who issues the final agency decision. The original meter indicia must be submitted with the appeal.
- c. Undated metered postage under 3.0. The manager, business mail entry at the district post office overseeing the mailer's licensing post office, or designee authorized in writing, grants or denies requests for refunds for undated metered postage under 3.0. The customer may appeal a decision on undated metered postage within 30 days through the manager, business mail entry, or designee, to the PCSC manager who issues the final agency decision. The original meter indicia must be submitted with the appeal.
- d. PC Postage systems under 3.0. The system provider grants or denies a request for a refund for dated indicia printed by PC Postage systems under 3.0 using established USPS criteria. For dated PC Postage indicia only, the licensee may appeal an adverse ruling within 30 days through the manager, Postage Technology Management, USPS Headquarters, who issues the final agency decision. The original indicia must be submitted with the appeal.



- e. Optional procedure (OP) mailings. Mailer's request for a refund must be submitted to the manager, Business Mailer Support, USPS Headquarters (see [G043](#) for address).

Semipostal Stamps
2.9

Customers may exchange or convert semipostal stamps for their postage value (i.e., the price of the stamps less the contribution amount) to the extent exchange or conversion of postage stamps is permitted under [P014](#). The postage the customer exchanges or converts is equal to the First-Class Mail single-piece rate in effect at the time of exchange. However, if the customer provides a receipt showing the date of purchase, the postage exchanged or converted is equal to the First-Class Mail single-piece rate in effect at the time of purchase. The contribution amount is not refundable and is not included in the exchange or conversion value.

Business Reply Mail
2.10

A business reply mail (BRM) permit holder may request a credit or refund for postage affixed to returned BRM pieces. Only the value of the postage affixed may be credited or refunded. Refunds are not given for foreign postage affixed to BRM. To receive a refund for postage affixed to returned BRM pieces, the permit holder must submit a completed Form 3533 to the postmaster, documenting the excess postage payment for which a credit or refund is desired. The permit holder also must present to the designated office properly faced and banded bundles of 100 identical BRM pieces with identical amounts of postage affixed. A charge of \$35 per hour, or fraction thereof, is assessed for the workhours used to process the refund. With permission from the postmaster, a BRM permit holder may submit a bundle with fewer than 100 BRM pieces. Refunds are not given for any BRM or QBRM per piece charges, annual accounting fees, quarterly fees, or monthly maintenance fees.

3.0 REFUND REQUEST FOR POSTAGE EVIDENCING SYSTEMS AND METERED POSTAGE

Unused Postage Value in Postage Evidencing Systems
3.1

The unused postage value remaining in a postage evidencing system when withdrawn from service may be refunded, depending upon the circumstance and the ability of the USPS to make a responsible determination of the actual or approximate amount of the unused postage value. If the postage evidencing system is withdrawn because of faulty operation, a final postage adjustment or refund will be withheld pending the system provider's report of the cause to the USPS and the USPS determination of whether or not a refund is appropriate and, if so, the amount of the refund. No refund is given for faulty operation caused by the licensee. When a postage evidencing system that is damaged by fire, flood, or similar disaster is returned to the provider, postage may be refunded or transferred when the registers are legible and accurate, or the register values can be reconstructed by the provider based on adequate supporting documentation. When the damaged system is not available for return, postage may be refunded or transferred only if the provider can accurately determine the remaining postage value based on adequate supporting documentation. The licensee may be required to provide a statement on the cause of the damage and to attest that there has not been reimbursement by insurance, or otherwise, and that the licensee will not seek such reimbursement. Refunds for unused postage value are granted as specified in [P030](#) in accordance with the following procedures:

- a. All postage evidencing systems except for PC Postage systems. The postage evidencing system must be examined to verify the amount before any remaining funds are cleared from the meter, and a refund or credit is initiated for unused postage value or additional money is collected to pay for

postage value used, based on what is found. Licensees may also submit their own transaction records, if any, or a system-generated register as supporting documentation.

- b. PC Postage systems. The licensee must notify the provider to withdraw the system. To determine the remaining postage value on the PC Postage system, the licensee generates a refund request indicium for transmittal to the provider for verification. A refund can be issued only when the system's postal security device (PSD) is in the provider's possession. The USPS refunds the entire unused postage value remaining on the PSD for the user's system, but the refund is issued through the licensee's provider.

**Unused, dated
Postage Evidencing
System Indicia,
Except PC Postage
Indicia**
3.2

[3-4-04] Unused, dated postage meter indicia are considered for refund only if complete, legible, and valid. PC Postage indicia refunds are processed under 3.3. All other metered postage refund requests must be submitted as follows:

- a. The licensee must submit the request. The refund request must include proof that the person or entity requesting the refund is the licensee for the postage meter that printed the indicia. Acceptable proof includes a copy of the lease, rental agreement, or contract.
- b. The licensee must submit the request, along with the items bearing the unused postage, to the licensing post office. The items must be sorted by meter used and then by postage value shown in the indicia, and must be properly faced and bundled in groups of 100 identical items when quantities allow. The request is processed by the USPS. The postmaster approves or denies the refund request.
- c. The licensee must submit the refund request within 60 days of the date(s) shown in the indicia.
- d. When the unused metered postage is affixed to a mailpiece, the refund request must be submitted with the entire envelope or wrapper. The unused metered postage must not be removed from the mailpiece once applied.
- e. Indicia printed on labels or tapes not stuck to wrappers or envelopes must be submitted loose and must not be stapled together or attached to any paper or other medium. However, self-adhesive labels printed without a backing may be submitted on a plain sheet of paper.
- f. If a part of one indicium is printed on one envelope or card and the remaining part on one or more, the envelopes or cards must be fastened together to show that they represent one indicium.
- g. Refunds are allowable for indicia on metered reply envelopes only when it is obvious that an incorrect amount of postage was printed on them.
- h. The refund request must be submitted with Form 3533. A separate Form 3533 must be completed for each meter for which a refund is requested. All identifying information and all sections related to the refund requested must be completed. Charges for processing a refund request for unused, dated meter indicia are as follows:
 - (1) If the total face value of the indicia is \$350 or less, the amount refunded is 90% of the face value. USPS may process the refund payment locally via a no-fee postal money order.
 - (2) If the total face value is more than \$350, the amount refunded is reduced by a figure representing \$35 per hour, or fraction thereof, for the actual hours to process the refund, with a minimum charge of \$35. The postmaster will submit the approved Form 3533 to the USPS



Imaging and Scanning Center for payment processing through the Accounting Service Center.

Unused, Dated PC Postage Indicia
3.3

[3-4-04] Unused, dated PC Postage indicia are considered for refund only if complete, legible, and valid. The refund request must be submitted as follows:

- a. Only the PC Postage licensee may request the refund. The licensee must submit the request, along with the items bearing the unused postage, to the system provider. The request is processed by the provider, not the USPS.
- b. The licensee must submit the refund request within 30 days of the date(s) shown in the indicia.
- c. The refund request must be submitted as required in 3.2d through 3.2g.
- d. The provider may, at its discretion, charge for processing a refund request.

Undated Metered Postage
3.4

[3-4-04] Unused, undated postage evidencing system indicia are considered for refund only if complete, legible, and valid. The refund request must be submitted as follows:

- a. Only the meter licensee or the commercial entity that prepared the mailing for the licensee using the licensee's meter may request the refund. The request must include a letter signed by the meter licensee or the commercial entity that prepared the mailing for the licensee explaining why the mailpieces were not mailed.
- b. The minimum quantity of unused, undated metered postage that may be submitted for refund is 500 pieces from a single mailing or, as an alternative, indicia with a total postage value of at least \$500 from a single mailing.
- c. The meter licensee, or the commercial entity that prepared the mailing for the licensee using the licensee's meter, must submit the request, along with the items bearing the unused postage and the required documentation, to the manager, business mail entry at the district post office overseeing the mailer's licensing post office, or to a designee authorized in writing. The manager or designee approves or denies the refund request.
- d. The request must include the items bearing the unused postage, sorted by meter used and then by postage value shown in the indicia. The items must be properly faced and bundled in groups of 100 identical items, when quantities allow, and must meet the requirements of 3.2d through 3.2g.
- e. The request must be submitted within 60 days of the date the mail was metered. Supporting documentation must be submitted to validate the date. Examples of supporting documentation include the job order from the customer, production records, the USPS qualification report, spoilage report, and reorders created report, as well as customer billing records, postage statements, and a sample mailpiece.
- f. The refund request must be submitted with Form 3533. All identifying information and all sections related to the refund requested must be completed. When more than one meter was used to prepare the mailing, a separate Form 3533 must be completed for each.
 - (1) If the total face value of the indicia for a single mailing submitted for refund is \$350 or less, the amount refunded is 90% of the face value. USPS may process the refund payment locally via a no-fee postal money order.
 - (2) If the total face value of the indicia for a single mailing submitted for refund is more than \$350, the amount refunded is reduced by a figure representing \$35 per hour, or fraction thereof, for the actual hours to

process the refund, with a minimum charge of \$35. The manager, business mail entry will submit the approved Form 3533 to the USPS Imaging and Scanning Center for payment processing through the Accounting Service Center.

Ineligible Metered Postage Items
3.5

[3-4-04] The following metered postage items are ineligible for refunds:

- a. Reply envelopes or cards paid at the proper postage rate.
- b. Indicia printed on labels or tape removed from wrappers or envelopes.
- c. Loose indicia printed on labels or tape that have been stapled together or attached to paper or other medium in any manner.
- d. Indicia lacking identification of the licensing post office or other required information.
- e. Indicia printed on mail dispatched and returned to sender as undeliverable as addressed, including mail marked “no such post office” and mail addressed for local delivery and returned after directory service was given or delivery was attempted.

Rounding
3.6

Any fraction of a cent in the total to be refunded is rounded down to the whole cent (e.g., \$4.187 is rounded to \$4.18).

4.0 REFUND REQUEST FOR EXCESS POSTAGE (VALUE ADDED REFUND) AT TIME OF MAILING

Value Added Refund
4.1

Subject to the standards in 4.0, a *presenter* (i.e., the mailer or other party, such as a presort service bureau), who prepares letter-size First-Class Mail or Standard Mail under 4.12 and 4.13 for their customers and presents it to the USPS in their behalf, may request a *value added refund* (VAR) for postage affixed to mail in excess of the rate applicable to that mail when presented to the USPS. A presenter must be authorized by the USPS to seek the refund. Any refund is issued to the presenter, and the disposition of any such refund is a private matter between the presenter and the presenter’s customer.

Application
4.2

The presenter must make a written application to the postmaster serving each location where VAR mailings are to be deposited, verified, and paid. The application must describe the presenter’s mail preparation system and the documentation that it can produce. The application must also show that the presenter can produce the postage statements and the refund documentation required by 4.17. The postmaster forwards the application and supporting documentation for approval to the Business Mailer Support manager, USPS Headquarters.

Mailer System
4.3

Eligibility to submit requests for VARs requires that the presenter process and document mail through a fully automated mail sorting system. The system must include barcoding equipment (e.g., multiline optical character readers) to read the address information and determine the correct ZIP+4 code; an ink jet or laser printer to apply the correct POSTNET barcode in the required location; and a barcode reader (BCR) to read the POSTNET barcode, verify it for accuracy, and sort the mailpiece to the correct location.

Presenter Agreement
4.4

In applying for authorization to make VARs, the presenter agrees:

- a. That verification samples taken by the USPS represent the entire mailing and are to be used to adjust the total refund amount requested.



- b. To provide the USPS with advance written notice of plans for system changes that affect the calculation of postage, amount of refund, generation of required documentation, or mail presorting.
 - c. To cooperate with the USPS during mail verification or system audits, and to process sampled mail through barcode readers (BCRs) when requested.
- Authorization**
4.5

If the application is approved, an authorization to make refund requests is valid for a period not to exceed 2 years, subject to renewal after USPS review.
- Appeal**
4.6

If the application is denied, the presenter may file a written appeal within 15 days through Business Mailer Support, USPS Headquarters, to the Business Mail Acceptance manager, who issues the final agency decision.
- Suspension**
4.7

The Business Mailer Support manager may suspend an authorization after determining that the presenter does not meet the standards in 4.0.
- Cancellation**
4.8

The Business Mailer Support manager may cancel an authorization for any of these reasons:

 - a. The presenter consistently provides incorrect information and is unwilling or unable to correct the problem.
 - b. The presenter continually fails to meet the standards in 4.0.
 - c. No mailings are made under these procedures during any 12 consecutive months.
- Appeal of Cancellation or Suspension**
4.9

A cancellation or suspension takes effect 15 days from the presenter's receipt of the notice unless, during that time, the presenter files a written appeal with the Business Mailer Support manager, USPS Headquarters, stating why the authorization should not be canceled or suspended. If the manager upholds the action, the appeal is forwarded to the Business Mail Acceptance manager, USPS Headquarters, who issues the final agency decision. A final cancellation takes effect 15 days after receipt by the presenter.
- Form 8096 Required**
4.10

The presenter must provide the USPS with an original Form 8096 completed and signed by each of the presenter's customers who meter any pieces in the mailing for which a VAR is requested, and a list of those customers. If postage is affixed to the pieces using a postage evidencing system by an intermediate agent (not the presenter of the mailing) for the owner of the pieces, a signed Form 8096 must be on file from the agent whose postage evidencing systems were used to affix the postage. Refund requests are denied if all required Forms 8096 are not provided.
- Form 8096 Not Required**
4.11

Form 8096 is not required for a customer whose mail is metered by the presenter with the presenter's own postage evidencing system. In such cases, the presenter must provide the post office where it submits refund requests with a list, in ascending numeric order, of its own postage evidencing system serial numbers and those of any intermediate agent used for affixing postage to the pieces included in the mailing.
- First-Class Mail**
4.12

If a VAR request is submitted when a First-Class Mail mailing is presented to the USPS, each piece in the mailing must be:

 - a. Letter-size and weigh less than the applicable maximum weight for automation rate mail as required in C810.
 - b. Part of an automation rate mailing prepared by the presenter.



- c. Metered by the presenter or the presenter's customer at the Presorted First-Class or automation rates applicable to a piece of that weight, including the full postage for the second and third ounces, if applicable.

Standard Mail
4.13

If a VAR request is submitted when a Standard Mail mailing is presented to the USPS, each piece in the mailing must be:

- a. Letter-size and weigh less than the applicable maximum weight for automation rate mail as required in [C810](#).
- b. Part of an automation rate mailing prepared by the presenter.
- c. Metered by the presenter or the presenter's customer at a nonautomation rate or at any automation minimum per piece rate. Pieces for each entry must be prepared as a separate mailing if the destination entry rates are claimed.

Criteria for Mailing
4.14

A mailing for which a VAR request is submitted must meet these criteria:

- a. The presenter must process the mail for each customer so that the rate of postage affixed on each piece can be documented by customer, unless otherwise authorized by Business Mailer Support, USPS Headquarters, and rate category.
- b. Documentation must be kept showing internal quality control procedures done for each mailing submitted for which a VAR is claimed.
- c. Mail must be prepared by the standards corresponding to the First-Class Mail or Standard Mail rate claimed.
- d. The presenter must be authorized by Business Mailer Support to submit Standard Mail mailings that contain both Regular and Nonprofit rate pieces under the applicable standards.
- e. Each piece in the mailing for which barcodes are applied by an MLOCR must bear an automation marking that also describes the method of postage payment and the rate of postage affixed for metered and precanceled stamp mail or other postage information for permit imprint mail as described in [P960](#).

Postage Statement
4.15

The presenter must provide a complete and accurate postage statement with each mailing annotated to show the presort option used to prepare that mailing, and reporting postage data based on the rate category for which each piece qualifies when presented to the USPS.

Applying for Refund
4.16

To request a VAR, Form 3533 and supporting documentation as described below must be provided with the corresponding mailing at the time of mailing. After the time of mailing, refund applications are not considered. The entry office postmaster pays refunds weekly or on another schedule agreed to with the mailer.

Documentation for Mailing
4.17

[3-4-04] Mailers are required to submit or generate the following reports:

- a. Each mailing must be accompanied by all of the following documentation to enable the VAR request and the specific and efficient USPS verification of that request:
 - (1) Form 3533, if a net VAR refund is due.
 - (2) The applicable postage statement.
 - (3) The USPS qualification report in standardized format detailing by ZIP Code the number of pieces qualifying for each rate by presort level. If plant-verified drop shipment (PVDS) is used for Standard Mail, a separate USPS qualification report must be generated for each entry destination.



- (4) The USPS Summary ZIP Destination report in one of two standardized formats that lists by tray destination and rate category: each mail category, postage payment type, weight and rate affixed (report all postage affixed First-Class Mail pieces as weighing one ounce); number of pieces; dollar amount of postage affixed to those pieces; cumulative postage affixed; total postage; net postage due; cumulative postage due; and a running total of the number of pieces. If plant-verified drop shipment (PVDS) is used for Standard Mail, a separate USPS Summary ZIP Destination report must be generated for each entry destination. This report is not required if there is only one metered rate in the mailing. Business Mailer Support, USPS Headquarters, may authorize submission of only portions of this report.
- (5) The USPS Postage Summary in a standardized format. This report shows, by type of payment method, the total postage claimed for all pieces in the mailing by rate level and the total postage affixed by rate level. It also shows a grand total summary of postage affixed, postage claimed, and total postage due. If plant-verified drop shipment (PVDS) is used for Standard Mail, a separate USPS Postage Summary report must be generated for each entry destination.
- (6) Other documentation that may be required by other standards for the rate claimed.

- b. The USPS Customer Mail Report must be generated for each mailing, but is required to be submitted to the USPS only when requested by USPS personnel for the resolution of errors (shortpaid and potential MLOCR profiling) detected in a specific mailing. The Customer Mail Report must list each customer by name and provide the following information about their mail: rate affixed, mail category including postage payment type, weight, total postage, postage affixed, number of pieces, cumulative number of pieces, number of pieces rejected, and total pieces fed.

5.0 EXPRESS MAIL POSTAGE REFUND

Who May Apply	A claim for a refund for Express Mail postage may be made only by the mailer (the sender of an Express Mail item or the holder of the Express Mail Corporate Account used to pay for postage).
5.1	
Conditions for Refund	A refund request must be made within 90 days after the date of mailing as shown in the "Date In" box on Label 11. Except as provided in D500.1.6 , a mailer may file for a postage refund only under one of the following circumstances:
5.2	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The item was not delivered or made available for claim as guaranteed under the applicable service purchased. b. The item was not delivered or made available for claim by the guaranteed delivery time applicable to the service purchased, and delivery was not attempted by the guaranteed delivery time applicable to the service purchased.
Refunds Not Given	A refund claim will not be given if the guaranteed service was not provided due to any of the circumstances in D500.1.6 .
5.3	
Applying for a Refund	The mailer must complete Part I of Form 3533 in duplicate and submit it, along with the original customer copy of Label 11, to any post office.
5.4	



- Immediate Refund**
5.5 If the USPS can determine immediately that the mailer is entitled to a refund and the Express Mail item had postage affixed, then the USPS refunds the postage immediately in cash or with a no-fee money order.
- Deferred Refund**
5.6 If the USPS cannot determine immediately that the mailer is entitled to a refund, then the USPS researches the application and, if appropriate, issues a refund to the mailer within 5 business days.
- Refunds Through a Corporate or Agency Account**
5.7 If the USPS determines that the mailer is entitled to a refund and postage was paid through an Express Mail Corporate Account or a federal government agency account, then the USPS refunds the postage by issuing a credit to that account within 5 business days.