

- S900 Special Postal Services
- S910 Security and Accountability

S917 Return Receipt for Merchandise

Summary S917 describes return receipt for merchandise, lists the classes of mail that may include this service, and the associated procedures to follow.

1.0 BASIC INFORMATION

Description Return receipt for merchandise service is a form of return receipt service that provides the sender with a mailing receipt and a return receipt. After delivery, the return receipt is mailed back to the sender. A delivery record is maintained by the Postal Service, but no record is kept at the office of mailing. A return receipt for merchandise also supplies the recipient's actual delivery address if it is different from the address used by the sender. Mail using this service is dispatched and handled in transit as ordinary mail. This service does not include insurance coverage. A return receipt for merchandise may not be requested after mailing, and restricted delivery service is not available.

Eligible Matter Return receipt for merchandise is available for merchandise sent as Priority Mail, Standard Mail pieces subject to the residual shape surcharge, and Package Services.

Additional Services The following services may be combined with return receipt for merchandise if the applicable standards for the services are met and the additional service fees are paid:

- 1.3
 - a. Delivery Confirmation.
 - b. Insurance (for up to \$50).
 - c. Parcel airlift service (PAL).
 - d. Special handling.

Fee and Postage The applicable fee for return receipt for merchandise service must be paid in addition to the correct postage and the fees for any other service selected. The fees and postage may be paid with stamps, meter stamps, or permit imprint. The fees and postage on official mail of federal government agencies and departments are collected under applicable reimbursement procedures.

2.0 MAILING

Where to Mail A mailer must mail articles at a post office, branch, or station or give them to a rural carrier. Articles must not be placed in post office maildrops or in or on street collection boxes. They may be placed in, but not on, rural mailboxes.

How to Mail A mailer can obtain Form 3804 and Form 3811 (return receipt) at the post office or from any rural carrier. Observe these procedures:

- a. Enter on the receipt part of the return receipt for merchandise, the name and complete address of the person or firm to whom the mail is addressed.
- b. Affix the numbered part of the gummed label from Form 3804 to the mailpiece.

- c. Place the correct endorsement on the address side. Enter the return receipt for merchandise number on Form 3811. Address the form to yourself and attach it to the front of the mailpiece. If the Form 3811 would cover the address, attach it to the back of the mailpiece. The name of the person to whom the return receipt is to be returned must be the same as that of the sender. If the return receipt is to show the address where the article was delivered, check the block at the top of Form 3811.
- d. Attach to the article, enough postage to pay for the postage rate desired, the return receipt for merchandise fee, and the special handling fee.
- e. Attach the return receipt for merchandise label to the address side of the article and give the completed receipt to a USPS employee. If asked to do so, the USPS employee must show on the receipt the time the article is accepted for mailing. If given to a rural carrier, the carrier returns the postmarked receipt to the customer.
- f. By signing the waiver on Form 3804, customers may instruct the USPS to deliver without obtaining a signature. This option allows the delivery employee to sign for the article on the first delivery attempt to the listed address, if the addressee or the addressee's agent is not available to accept the shipment. Customers who waive the signature requirement must accept the delivery employee's signature and date of delivery as proof of delivery. To waive the signature, detach both parts of the gummed label and attach to the mailpiece.

Points to Which Mailable

2.3

Return receipt for merchandise mail may be addressed for delivery only in the United States and its territories and possessions, through Army/Air Force (APO) and Navy (FPO) post offices, or through the United Nations Post Office, New York.

Form 3804

2.4

Return receipt for merchandise mail must bear a barcoded brown Form 3804 (see [Exhibit 2.4](#)). The label part of the form and the endorsement "Return Receipt Requested" must be placed above the delivery address and to the right of the return address, or to the left of the delivery address on parcels.

Form 3804

Exhibit 2.4

The image shows a sample of the USPS Form 3804, Return Receipt for Merchandise. It features a vertical barcode on the left with the text "RETURN RECEIPT FOR MERCHANDISE" written vertically. To the right of the barcode is a human-readable number: 8099 3400 0000 5773 9080. Below the barcode is a "WAIVER OF SIGNATURE" section with a checkbox and text: "I, the addressee or the addressee's agent, authorize the delivery employee to sign that the shipment was delivered and understand that the signature of the delivery employee will constitute valid proof of delivery." To the right of this is a "CUSTOMER SIGNATURE" line. The main form area is titled "U.S. Postal Service RETURN RECEIPT FOR MERCHANDISE (Domestic Mail Only; No Insurance Coverage Provided)". It includes fields for "Article Sent To:", "Postage \$", "Return Receipt for Merchandise Fee (Endorsement Required)", "Special Handling Fee", and "Total Postage & Fees \$". There is a "Waiver of Signature" section with "YES" and "NO" checkboxes. Below that is a "Name (Please Print Clearly) (to be completed by mailer)" section with fields for "Street, Apt. No., or PO Box No.", "City, State, ZIP+4", and "Postmark Here". At the bottom, it says "PS Form 3804, July 1999" and "See Reverse for Instructions".

Privately Printed Form 3804

2.5

If authorized, a mailer may use a privately printed Form 3804. The privately printed form must be nearly identical in design and color to the USPS form with a barcode and human readable numbers that meet the USPS specifications in Publication 109. A minimum of three preproduction samples must be submitted to the business mail entry manager serving the mailer's location for review by the mailpiece design analyst. Once approved, the mailer must print sample labels with barcodes to be certified under the technical requirements in Publication 109.

- Firm Sheet** 2.6 If three or more return receipt for merchandise articles are presented for mailing at one time, the mailer may use Form 3877 (firm sheet), provided by the USPS at no charge, or privately printed firm sheets. Privately printed or computer-generated firm sheets that contain the same information as Form 3877 may be approved by the local postmaster. The mailer may omit columns from Form 3877 that are not applicable to return receipt for merchandise mail. The mailer must present the books with the articles to be mailed at a post office. The sheets of the books become the mailer's receipts. All entries made in firm sheets must be made by typewriter, ink, or ballpoint pen. Alterations must be initialed by the mailer and accepting employee. All unused portions of the addressee column must be obliterated with a diagonal line.
- Receipt Not Received** 2.7 A mailer who does not receive return receipt for merchandise service for which the mailer has paid may request information from the delivery record, at no additional charge, by using Form 3811-A. Any request must be filed within 2 years after the date of mailing. Mailers cannot request a delivery record unless the item originally was sent with return receipt for merchandise.
- 3.0 DELIVERY**
- Delivery of return receipt for merchandise mail is subject to [D042](#).

