

More Than 44 Million Americans Change Their Addresses Each Year

Many of them are good customers of yours — customers you value and who are important enough for you to use First-Class Mail® service. But not all of them have told you they have moved.

If you want to keep these customers, make sure your mail reaches them. That's why it's good business to update your address lists now.

The Postal Service™ is committed to increasing customer value. That's one of the key goals of our Transformation Plan. And we do that by working with customers like you to update databases frequently and accurately so addresses are correct. But that's not all. By analyzing your business processes we can identify ways to improve those processes. That's where Move Update comes in. It's one of many ways to help you reach your customers efficiently and cost-effectively.

This publication describes the five methods for updating your mailing list and answers your commonly asked questions.

Move Update

Move Update, the process for updating names and addresses, is required if mailers want to get discounted rates for First-Class Mail service. Mailers who use the exceptional address format (e.g., Jane Doe or Current Resident) do not have to meet this requirement.

Since July 1997, the Postal Service has required that all addresses on mailings receiving discounts for First-Class Mail service, whether Presorted or automation, undergo name and address correction within 185 days of the mailing. The Postal Service offers mailers four approved and two alternative Move Update methods. Mailers can meet the Move Update requirement in the following five ways:

- Ancillary Service Endorsement.
- Address Change Service (ACS).
- National Change of Address Linkage (NCOA^{Link™}) System.
- FASTforward®.
- Alternative Move Update Methods (Legal Restraint or 99 Percent Accurate).

A mailer wishing to enter mail at a discounted First-Class Mail rate must certify, on the postage statement submitted, that the names and addresses on each mailpiece have been updated within the previous 185 days.

Updating Reduces Waste

Every mailpiece, regardless of class, has two things in common: the intended recipient and the address. When both are accurate and complete, the Postal Service can deliver quickly and easily.

If the recipient has moved, or the address is incorrect or missing an addressing element, the mailpiece could become undeliverable-as-addressed (UAA) mail — a waste of time, effort, and money for mailers and for the Postal Service.

Approved Move Update Methods

Ancillary Service Endorsements

Any mailer may use an ancillary service endorsement to (1) request a hard-copy notification of the addressee's new address and (2) tell the Postal Service how to handle UAA mail. You may combine ancillary service endorsements with other approved Move Update methods.

Mailers can meet the Move Update requirements for First-Class mail service by using the following endorsements to update addresses:

Return Service Requested. The Postal Service returns UAA mailpieces with a new address or the reason for non-delivery at no charge.

Temp-Return Service Requested. The Postal Service forwards the mailpiece at no charge but does not provide a separate notice of a new temporary change of address (COA).

Address Service Requested. Address service requested varies by the time period, as set forth in the following table:

For these months...	the Postal Service...	and your fee is...
1-12	forwards the mail	\$0.00
	provides a separate hardcopy notice of new address	\$0.75 address correction fee
13-18	returns the mail with a new address attached	\$0.00
Greater than 18 months or undeliverable	returns the mail with the reason for non-delivery attached	\$0.00

Mailers using electronic ACS may use either the *Change Service Requested* or *Address Service Requested* endorsement to qualify for First-Class Mail automation discount rate. For more details see Publication 8A, *Address Change Service — Traditional*, at www.usps.com/publications/pubs/welcome.htm.

Mailers wishing to meet the Move Update requirement while using an ancillary service endorsement must send at least one letter or card to the address: (1) with an approved ancillary service endorsement; and (2) within 185 days of the reuse of the address in a First-Class Mail discounted mailing.

Mailers should keep address-correction records for up to 2 years in case the Postal Service asks them for documentation showing that they have met the Move Update requirement.

To complete the Move Update process, mailers who used the ancillary service endorsement must make the address changes before remailing.

Address Change Service

There are two versions of ACS, one using the traditional alpha Participant Code and the other using an Intelligent Mail Barcode encoded with a Business Entity Identifier (BEI) Code. Both versions notify mailers electronically of a COA or a reason for non-delivery. ACS is available for all classes of mail but must be used with either an ancillary service endorsement and a participant code or an Intelligent Mail Barcode containing a BEI. If the mailer uses an ancillary service endorsement for manual notifications and does not participate in ACS, the Postal Service charges a higher fee per mailpiece. For the fee structure, see the *Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service Domestic Mail Manual*.

Mailers who wish to participate in ACS must acquire either an ACS participant code or BEI code from the National Customer Support Center (NCSC) and apply it on their envelopes, address labels, or address blocks in the required format.

Mailers using ACS may choose how frequently they receive address correction notifications — daily, weekly, biweekly, monthly, or bimonthly. They can get COA information through a secure Web site, identified during the ACS application process, or on a CD-ROM. Processing COA information electronically speeds entry, reduces errors, and lowers processing costs.

For more details about participating in ACS go to <http://ribbs.usps.gov/files> and select ACS or contact the NCSC at 800-238-3150.

National Change of Address Linkage System

The National Change of Address Linkage (NCOA^{Link}) System is available only through companies licensed by the Postal Service. Licenses are available for either an 18- or 48-month database. The mailer's electronic list is matched with permanent COA orders sent by individuals, families, or businesses to the Postal Service within the license period. The COA records are updated and provided to NCOA^{Link} licensees weekly or monthly, based on their license. The NCOA^{Link} system gives mailers ZIP+4[®] Codes with two extra digits for delivery point barcoding.

Before using the list processed through NCOA^{Link}, the mailer must apply the address changes. By using NCOA^{Link} before mailing, the mailer prevents items sent by First-Class Mail service from being UAA, reducing rehandling costs for the mailer and for the Postal Service. The First-Class Mail discount (for both Presorted and automation rates) is at least \$50 per thousand and can be as high as \$95 per thousand.

The NCOA^{Link} system also provides mailers with documentation showing the date the record was updated and that the Move Update requirements have been met, if the address for which a move was indicated has been updated.

Three types of licenses are available:

- A "Full Service License" provides a 48-month COA database with weekly updates.
- A "Limited Service License" provides an 18-month COA database with weekly updates.

- An “End User License” provides an 18-month COA database with monthly updates.

For more details about these NCOA^{Link} licenses and how you can acquire one, go to <http://ribbs.usps.gov/files> and select NCOA^{Link} or contact the NCSC at 800-238-3150.

Mailers who do not wish to acquire a license or who believe they cannot use NCOA^{Link} because disclosing their address lists would be illegal or would violate corporate policy can comply with Move Update requirements using on-piece ancillary service endorsements or internal FASTforward matching, neither of which require that the list be provided to a third party.

FASTforward

Mailers may comply with the Move Update requirement using FASTforward (Multiline Optical Character Reader (MLOCR) which updates each mailpiece as it is being processed as long as it is automation-compatible. Licensed FASTforward MLOCR users must get an approved interface from their MLOCR vendors. As a mailpiece runs through the MLOCR the names and addresses are checked against a national Postal Service database that is encrypted, contains updates from the previous 13 months, and contains only permanent COA records. If a COA is applicable, the correct address and barcode are sprayed on the mailpiece.

Mailers using this option can receive daily electronic files of COAs matched during the MLOCR run. This process is called FFMUN (FASTforward Move Update Notification). Please visit <http://ribbs.usps.gov/files/FASTforward> for details.

Alternative Move Update Methods

In addition to the four previously described methods for updating mailing addresses and complying with the Move Update requirement, mailers have two other methods:

- Legal Restraint
- 99 Percent Accurate

Both of these methods must be approved by the NCSC. If you are uncertain about qualifying for the alternative methods, call the NCSC at 800-238-3150.

Legal Restraint Method

Mailers who claim they are restricted from incorporating Postal Service COA information into their mailing lists without permission from the addressees may request approval, from the NCSC, to meet their Move Update requirements through the Legal Restraint method. Unless the mailer is a federal, state, or local government entity, the request must be accompanied by citation of the specific legal restriction, including copies of the statutes or regulations. Federal, state, or local government entities must still make a request but will receive a letter of approval without having to submit a citation.

Mailers wishing to use the legal restraint method must follow steps 1 through 4 below:

1. Get Postal Service COA information using one of the authorized methods (ACS, NCOA^{Link}, FASTforward, or on-piece ancillary service endorsement) no more than 185 days before the mailing.
2. For each address identified as a COA (as in 1 above), contact the addressee within 30 days after receiving the COA information to request confirmation of the move in a format that will satisfy your legal requirements. You choose the format — written, telephoned, or electronic. Written notification must be sent to the new address. Any enclosed reply piece must be barcoded.
3. Incorporate into the list within 30 days of receipt all COA confirmations received in response to 2 above.
4. Keep documentation of the process described in steps 1 to 3 above for 2 years, including dates on which each step was performed, number of COAs identified, number of confirmation requests, and evidence that demonstrates the updates have been incorporated into the list. Provide documentation to the Postal Service upon request.

99 Percent Accurate Method

Some mailers believe their customers diligently notify them of address changes, making their COA as accurate as the Postal Service's. They claim, therefore, that 6-month or 185-day matching wastes their time and money and adds no value.

Mailers who believe their lists are already accurate may meet their Move Update requirements by:

- Using an on-piece ancillary service endorsement (which should have a minimal cost if the list is up-to-date), or
- Getting approval from the NCSC and following the validation process described in 1 through 4 below:
 1. Provide an address list in an electronic format that meets Postal Service guidelines. The mailer must identify the list name and include 100 percent of the addresses in the list. The Postal Service will match the list against the Postal Service COA information for an initial charge of \$1 per thousand addresses with a minimum charge of \$100. If a mailer needs help to format the files, the mailer must pay a setup fee of \$500. For a minimum fee of \$6,000 a Postal Service representative will visit a mailer's site to format the files.
 2. If the mailing list contains 1 percent or fewer COAs the mailer will be permitted to mail based on the validation process and will receive written documentation from the Postal Service NCSC that the list has met the Move Update requirement. The documentation will identify the list by name as well as the number of addresses that matched the NCOA^{Link} file and the percentage of the address list that those addresses represent. Addresses that match will be identified so the mailer may update the address information.

If COAs exceed 1 percent, the mailer must use one of the four approved Move Update methods and will be permitted to reapply for an alternative method after 6 months.

Mailers whose lists meet the 1 percent requirement may mail using the validation process for the next year. If the list does not remain in compliance, the mailer will be notified in writing that approval for alternative Move Update processing has been withdrawn. The mailer must then use one of the four approved Move Update methods and will have to wait 6 months to reapply for the alternative method.

3. Steps 1 and 2 will be repeated annually.
4. If the mailing list is in compliance after the third year, the mailer will be permitted to mail based on the validation process for the next 4 years. However, at the end of each 4-year cycle the mailer must show that the mailing complies with current standards. If the list doesn't meet compliance standards it will have to be revalidated using the initial verification process.

Mailers who have reached the 4-year cycle must submit an annual letter to the Postal Service confirming their current eligibility and identifying any changes to their business, as outlined in the following five bullets:

- Any merger or acquisition of the company whose list is validated.
- Any annual increase in the customer base, or address data that make up the mailing list, that is greater than 1 percent of the total list.
- Any changes in, or modifications related to, the address matching tools used (CASS, NCOA^{Link}, FASTforward process).
- Any change in the type of business originally validated.
- Any change in the systems that maintain address information that requires customers to change how they update their addresses.

After receiving and reviewing the mailer's annual update letter, the Postal Service will determine if the list needs to be revalidated. If revalidation is needed, the Postal Service must test within 90 days of receiving the annual update letter.

Newly Acquired Addresses

When a customer purchases goods or services or obtains information and as a consequence is added to a mailing list, the new address can be used; however, it must be verified during the next Move Update cycle along with the rest of the addresses.

Using Mailing Lists for Other Classes of Mail

Publishers with an address list for mailing Periodicals may use First-Class Mail service to mail invoices.

If in Doubt, Ask

The Postal Service is eager to guide you through each Move Update method. Our goal is to give you the best service at the least cost.

For answers to questions or for additional information, visit the Postal Service Web site at www.usps.com/ncsc/services/ or call the NCSC at 800-238-3150.

Move Update

Questions and Answers

1. **Q:** I operate my businesses on a quarterly basis, and sometimes two quarters exceed 185 days. How am I affected by the Move Update requirement to update addresses no more than 185 days before mailing?

A: The Postal Service recognizes this issue; however, addresses must be updated within 185 days before the date of mailing.

2. **Q:** My business does not maintain a mailing list with an address-update cycle. How does the address-update standard apply when my customer provides an address?

A: If you send the mailpiece to the address within 185 days of the date the address was provided, the address complies with the Move Update requirement. If you use the address 185 days or more after it was provided, you must use an on-piece

ancillary service endorsement for address correction (or another update tool such as FASTforward). In most instances, if the mailpiece is mailed shortly after the address was provided, the address will not change, and the mailpiece will be delivered as addressed.

3. **Q:** What documentation must the list owner furnish to a mailer, in addition to the address list, for use on a First-Class Mail Presorted or automation rate mailing?

A: The list owner is obligated to prove it is aware of the requirements of Move Update and that the addresses on the list comply with those requirements. The list owner should keep the following for 2 years:

- Move Update output reports documenting that the address list went through the Move Update process within 185 days before it was submitted to the Postal Service.
- Proof that names on the list added since the last update came directly from customers.

4. **Q:** I am a mailing agent. If, when I accept mail, my clients cannot prove that they have updated their addresses within the last 185 days, may I still include those mailpieces in First-Class Mail Presorted or automation rate mailings?

A: No, unless you are a FASTforward licensed MLOCR user using FASTforward to update the addresses. Otherwise those mailpieces must be mailed at the single-piece rate.

5. **Q:** My letter shop prepares and enters mail for customers. If the customers cannot provide Move Update documents can I enter this mail at discounted First-Class Mail rates?

A: No, unless you process the list of addresses through a Move Update method within 185 days before mailing.

6. **Q:** If I believe my list is accurate, when should I submit my files to the NCSC in Memphis for testing?

A: This verification process takes approximately 7 to 10 business days. Therefore, you should submit an application for approval as soon as possible, keeping in mind your preparation needs and desired mailing date.

7. **Q:** If my mail is processed for Move Update using FASTforward MLOCR, which mailpiece design issues, other than general automation compatibility, do I need to be concerned about?

A: The name of the addressee must be in the optical character reader (OCR) read area. Mailpieces with exceptional address formats (such as "Or Current Resident") are not eligible for FASTforward processing. All mailpieces must have a barcode clear zone that is completely free of any text, images, or windows so the MLOCR can spray the delivery point barcode and the new address on the lower right bottom of the mailpiece if a move is identified.

8. **Q:** I do not want my mailpieces forwarded to the new address if the addressee has moved, but I want to receive the new address from the Postal Service. If I endorse my mailpieces with an approved ancillary service endorsement and give them to a presort bureau licensed to use FASTforward on their MLOCR, what will happen to the mailpiece, and what information will I receive from the Postal Service?

A: The Postal Service provides COA information when a move occurs and the mailpiece is addressed for delivery to the old address and bears an approved endorsement for an address correction to be provided. If a mailpiece is processed using MLOCR FASTforward and a new address is identified, the new address and its associated delivery point barcode are sprayed

on the mailpiece and the mailpiece is sent directly to the correct new address. The Postal Service will not return the mailpiece to the sender or provide information about the new address because it is considered to be addressed correctly.

If you want to receive updated address information for a mailpiece and do not want the mailpiece mailed directly to the addressee's new address, you need to advise the MLOCR service bureau to turn off the FASTforward logic when processing your mailpieces when they bear an endorsement indicating that the piece should not be forwarded. Alternatively, you may use the nonforwardable endorsed mailpiece option for these mailpieces. This option requires that the presort bureau run the "Do Not Forward" mode and return the mailpieces to which FASTforward applied new address information.

If you choose to use only ancillary service endorsements to meet the Move Update requirements, you must use them at least every 185 days. In addition, you must update your addresses within 185 days of using the addresses.

9. **Q:** If I am mailing a promotional mailpiece at First-Class Mail rates and I use an exceptional address format (e.g., "Jane Doe or Current Occupant"), must the recipient name have been updated within the previous 185 days?

A: No. Each mailpiece will be delivered to the address appearing on the mailpiece whether or not the named addressee resides at that address. However, the addresses must have been updated.

10. **Q:** Can a mailer who constantly polls for correct address information meet the Move Update requirements (e.g., "Check this box to indicate whether you have moved. If you have, provide your new mailing address.")?

A: No. Mailers eligible to use an alternative Move Update method may, however, be able to use this type of polling to maintain the required 99 percent accuracy rate.

11. **Q:** I have Coding Accuracy Support System-certified (CASS) address-matching software that ensures I have good addresses. Does this meet the standards for new names and addresses?

A: No. Address-matching software looks up addresses to correct and standardize the address information and append ZIP+4 Codes. It does not perform a name lookup to determine whether the addressee is still at that address and, therefore, can not be used to meet the Move Update requirement.

12. **Q:** How do I meet Move Update requirements when mailing to an address recently added to my address list?

A: The Move Update process is name-and-address-based, not list-based. When a customer contacts a business and as a result is added to the list, the newly added address can “ride” with the list until the next cycle for update. The address will be added to the list only if the customer has requested services or literature or has purchased merchandise.

If an address is added to the list not because a customer contacted a business but for another reason, the address will not qualify for an automated First-Class discount unless the mailer can provide the Move Update documentation showing proof of the update. Otherwise, the initial mailing must be at the single-piece rate using an ancillary service endorsement. Once this initial mailing has occurred the address can be added to your normal update cycle.

If the address list is rented to another party for the purpose of mailing at discounted First-Class Mail rates and that list has a blend of established and newly acquired customers, the list owner must provide Move Update documentation to prove that all of the addresses on the list have been updated.

If the address list is distributed to additional mailers (e.g. by a second party to others or by a third party), the Move Update documentation must accompany the address list.

13. **Q:** Does a list or an address have to be updated every 185 days?

A: An address can be updated any time, so long as it is updated within 185 days before the address is actually used for a First-Class Mail discounted mailing. If a mailer mails a list once every 2 years, that list would have to be updated using one of the Move Update methods before the mailing.

14. **Q:** Must entire lists be updated every time?

A: Entire lists do not have to be updated at once. The update requirement applies to individual addresses, not to entire lists. Only those addresses that will be used in a First-Class Mail discounted mailing need to meet the Move Update requirement. The list could not be used with an ancillary service endorsement since the addresses would not have been updated within 185 days. However, the list could be used with NCOA^{Link} or FASTforward MLOCR when mailing.

For answers to any other Move Update questions you may have, visit the Postal Service Web site at www.usps.gov/ncsc/services or call the National Customer Support Center at 800-238-3150.