

Change in USPS® Saturday Service

What every mailer needs to know

The U.S. Postal Service has announced plans to eliminate Saturday mail delivery in August 2013. While change might be disorienting, mailers who learn the facts and take steps to mitigate service disruptions will soon find there is little cause for worry.



Proposed Changes

- No Saturday letter mail delivery to residences or offices
- No residential or office mail pick up on Saturdays
- No scheduled “blue box” collections on Saturday or Sunday
- Any mail accepted at Post Offices on a Saturday will be processed on Monday

No Changes

- The USPS will still process and transport mail on Saturdays
- Parcels, packages, Priority Mail® and Express Mail® will still be delivered on Saturdays
- Post Offices will remain open for customers as per normal schedule
- Mail will still be delivered to P.O. Boxes on Saturday
- Bulk mail and drop ship at USPS facilities will continue on Saturdays and Sundays
- Remittance mail that is P.O. Box addressed will remain available seven days/week



Consumers are ready for this change. In a recent poll conducted by the USPS, eight out of ten consumers supported the decision to discontinue Saturday mail delivery. When informed that this action will allow the Postal Service to remain financially stable, that consumer support increased to 86 percent. In fact, most consumers claim that the change to 5-day mail delivery will not impact them personally.

As an organization looking to delight every customer, however, you need to understand how you can avoid any instance of customer dissatisfaction, especially in light of the fact that the USPS has already revised the delivery standards for First-Class Mail®—now promising delivery in two to three days (instead of the prior one to three day standard).

With a little forethought and planning, mailers can utilize this change to find new ways to improve efficiency and customer engagement.

Managing 5-day delivery: the silver lining playbook for mail

- 1. PLAN AHEAD** When you have time-sensitive mailings, schedule your mail dates to ensure mail arrives without delay. Mail inducted on Monday or Tuesday, for example, is less likely to be impacted than mail inducted on a Wednesday or Thursday.
- 2. UNDERSTAND DELIVERY TIMES** When you know how long it takes for mail to reach various parts of the country, you can pinpoint in-home dates with precision. Take steps to add IMB-Tracing on your mail now, so you can have the information you need once August arrives.
- 3. WATCH THE CLOCK** How late can you drop off mail? You may have different deadlines depending on whether you induct letters at the corner mail box, your local post office or a regional processing facility. When time is of the essence, a few hours could determine whether or not your mail reaches its intended recipient in advance of the weekend.
- 4. AUTOMATE TO EXPEDITE** Faster preparation of mail means quicker induction into the USPS. Folders, inserters and mailing systems can help eliminate manual processing. For the timeliest delivery, prepare as much automation-compatible mail as possible using the Intelligent Mail® barcode. This will cut processing steps and time at the post office and increase your prospects for speedy delivery.
- 5. ASSESS YOUR INCOMING MAIL FLOW** If your business processes incoming mail on Saturdays, that option will no longer be available unless you utilize a P.O. Box. Therefore, the volume of mail you need to process on Monday will be higher. By planning in advance, and having the right technologies in place, mailers will be ready to handle the shift in volume without losing a beat.
- 6. KNOW YOUR OPTIONS** While mail will no longer be delivered on Saturdays, consumers and businesses can receive Priority Mail® and Express Mail®. While these options are definitely more costly, there may be times when businesses absolutely, positively must have mail delivered on a specific date—an issue of particular interest to those in the legal and financial services industries. With judicious advance planning, and clear criteria for when it's appropriate to use Priority Mail, businesses will be able to meet compliance needs.
- 7. ENGAGE YOUR CUSTOMERS** Change presents a perfect opportunity to engage customers in a dialog. Businesses might even solicit feedback from customers—prior to the implementation of 5-day delivery—as to their current experience and expectations around mail from the business. Increased communication on changes in sales notifications, billing or any other process change will help customers feel more secure, and generate feelings of good will rather than irritation, particularly important if you are making changes to payment due dates. It's easier to suggest changes in behavior in advance—so that customers can acknowledge that they will have to remit payment two days earlier than accustomed.

As mailers work with the priorities of the USPS and its evolving service offerings, a positive attitude can make a world of difference. That's the silver lining approach, in which you can see opportunities within the proposed 5-day service delivery, opportunities to become more efficient, to use advance planning strategies that ensure your business functions smoothly—and no customer misses your mail.



Every connection is a new opportunity™