



# POSTAL FUNDAMENTALS FOR PREPARING COMMERCIAL FIRST-CLASS™ & STANDARD MAIL®

**Christine Erna**  
Engagement Manager

**Stephanie Miracle**  
Solutions Design Consultant

**Pitney Bowes Management Services**



Every connection is a new opportunity™

July 12, 2012

# Your Presenters



**Christine J. Erna MDP, AQS**  
**Engagement Manager**  
**Enterprise Postal Consulting**  
**Pitney Bowes Management Services**  
[Christine.Erna@pb.com](mailto:Christine.Erna@pb.com)



**Stephanie Miracle**  
**Solutions Design Consultant**  
**Enterprise Postal Consulting**  
**Pitney Bowes Management Services**  
[Stephanie.Miracle@pb.com](mailto:Stephanie.Miracle@pb.com)

# Agenda

- Benefits of Automation Mailings
- Requirements to Prepare Commercial Mailings
  - Content Requirements
  - Eligibility Standards
  - Processing Categories
  - Postage Payment Options and Mailing Documentation
  - Mail Preparation
  - Mail Entry and Deposit
- Resources and Tools

# Key Considerations

## Cost influencers regardless of class of mail:

- Automation compatible
- Address quality
- Sorting

## Be aware!

- Intelligent Mail barcode (IM<sup>®</sup> BC) required by Jan 2013, including reply mail

# Benefits of Automation Mailings

**Reduced Costs**

**Increased Revenue Opportunities  
and Market Share**

**Increased Open Rate  
and Response Rates**

# Content Requirements

# Content Requirements

## First-Class Mail® Service

- Any mailable item  $\leq 13$  oz.
- Hand or typewritten material, personal information, bills, statements **must** be mailed First-Class Mail®, Priority Mail®, or Express Mail® service
- Service objective 1 – 3 days

## Standard Mail® Service

- Nonpersonal, < 16 oz.
- Examples
  - Advertisements
  - Flyers
  - Newsletters
- Service objective 2 - 9 days
- Regular and Nonprofit pricing

# Standard Mail® Eligibility

- Personal information may not be included in a Standard Mail®

mailpiece *unless all of the following conditions are met:*

1. The mailpiece contains explicit advertising for a product or service for sale or lease or an explicit solicitation for a donation.
2. All of the personal information is directly related to the advertising or solicitation.
3. The exclusive reason for inclusion of all of the personal information is to support the advertising or solicitation in the mailpiece.

# Nonprofit Standard Mail® Eligibility

- There are strict regulations regarding not only the qualification of organizations, but also the content within the mailpieces.
- Mailer owners must apply for Nonprofit Standard Mail® eligibility and are advised to seek guidance from the Postal Service relative to mailpiece content!

More information can be found:

- Refer to 703 Quick Service Guide, section 703 for more information!
- Publication 417 on the Postal Explorer® Web page at <http://pe.usps.gov/cpim/ftp/pubs/Pub417/pub417.pdf> is another resource.

# First-Class™ & Standard Class® Considerations

First-Class Mail	Standard Class Mail
Faster Delivery Speed	Lower postage costs with entry discounts for even deeper discounts
May be perceived as more personal	Weight flexibility: mail up to 3.3 oz. for a letter shaped piece at the same price
UAA mail is returned mail to monitor	Undeliverable mail is not returned – quantities are unknown

# Eligibility

# Volume Requirements

## First-Class Mail<sup>®</sup> Service

Minimum 500 pieces within the same processing category

## Standard Mail<sup>®</sup> Service

Minimum 200 pieces or 50 pounds within the same processing category

Estimate minimum number of Standard Mail<sup>®</sup> pieces:

- 50 pounds x 16 ounces = 800 ounces minimally required
- $800 \div \text{actual weight of mailpiece} = X$
- Round X to next full number. Result is minimum number required!

# 5-Digit ZIP Code<sup>®</sup> Accuracy and CASS<sup>™</sup> Certification

- **Nonautomation mailings** – use certified process\* within 12 months before mailing to ensure accuracy of 5-digit ZIP<sup>™</sup> Codes
- **Automation-price mailings** – match addresses using CASS<sup>™</sup>/MASS<sup>™</sup>-certified process within 180 days before mailing; 90 days for carrier route mailings

Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS<sup>™</sup>): The CASS<sup>™</sup> system is offered to those that want to evaluate their address-matching software to improve the accuracy of carrier route, five-digit ZIP<sup>®</sup>, ZIP + 4<sup>®</sup>, and delivery point codes that appear on mailpieces.

Multi-line Accuracy Support System (MASS<sup>™</sup>) certification is a process designed for Multiline Optical Character Readers (MLOCRs) and encoding systems. It evaluates their ability to process address information and apply an accurate barcode to a mailpiece.

# Move Update Standard

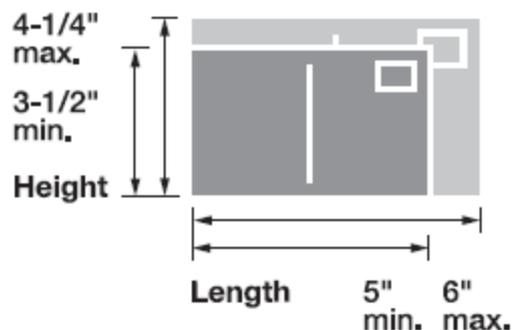
Addresses on all pieces must be updated *within 95 days before mailing* through a USPS-approved method:

- Ancillary Endorsements
- Address Change Service (ACS™, OneCode ACS® and Full Service ACS® services)
- FASTforward® system – MultiLine Optical Character Reader (MLOCR)
- National Change of Address Linkage System (NCOALink® product)
- Alternative Methods – require pre-approval
  - Legal Restraint
  - 99 Percent Accuracy

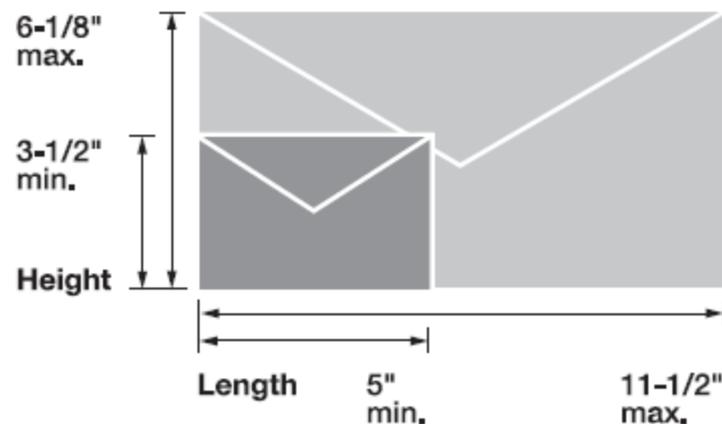
# Processing Categories - Physical Standards

# Postcards and Letter-size Mailpieces

## Postcards



## Letters



Maximum thickness .016"

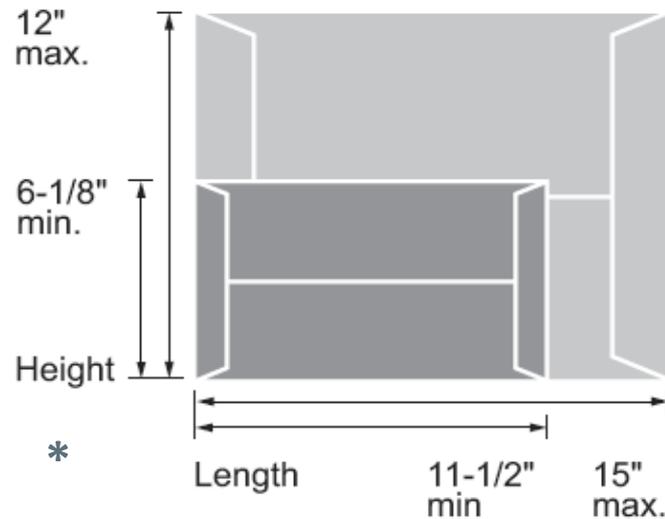
Minimum thickness .007"

Maximum thickness 1/4"

Minimum thickness .007"

Tip: First-Class Mail<sup>®</sup> postcard prices are typically lower than that of Standard Mail<sup>®</sup> letters (an exception being Standard Mail<sup>®</sup> letters mailed at Nonprofit prices).

# Commercial Flat-Size Mailpieces



- Rectangular
- Flexible
- Uniform in thickness
- Meet deflection criteria\*\*

Max thickness  $\frac{3}{4}$  " \*

Min thickness  $\frac{1}{4}$  " \*

\*\* Flat-size pieces mailed at high density or saturation prices, and flats mailed at basic carrier route prices entered by the mailer at destination delivery units (DDUs), are not required to meet these deflection standards.

\* Flats exceed at least one of the MINIMUM dimensions.

Mailpieces that do not meet these requirements may be rated as Not-Flat Machinables (Standard Mail®) or parcels (Standard Mail® and First-Class Mail®)

# Postcards and Letter-size Mailpieces

## Machinable

- Letters and cards having accurate addresses that can be processed on USPS equipment are “machinable” and eligible for “presort” prices
- Max. wt. First-Class Mail® and Standard Mail® 3.3 ounces

## Nonmachinable

- Letters are nonmachinable if they exceed maximum weights and/or if they have one or more nonmachinable characteristics.

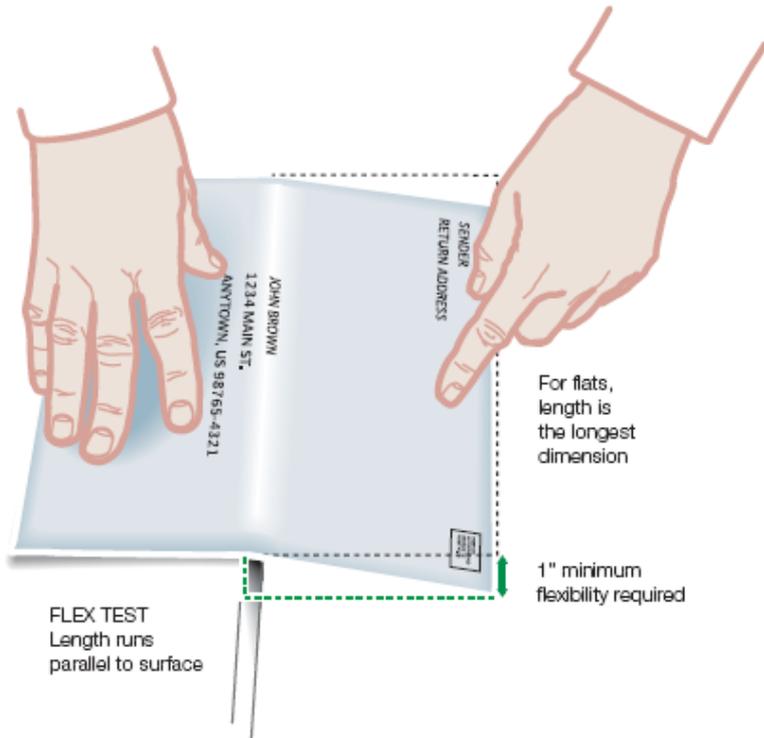
## Automation

- Machinable and display correct barcode
- Max. wt. First-Class Mail® and Standard Mail® 3.5 ounces

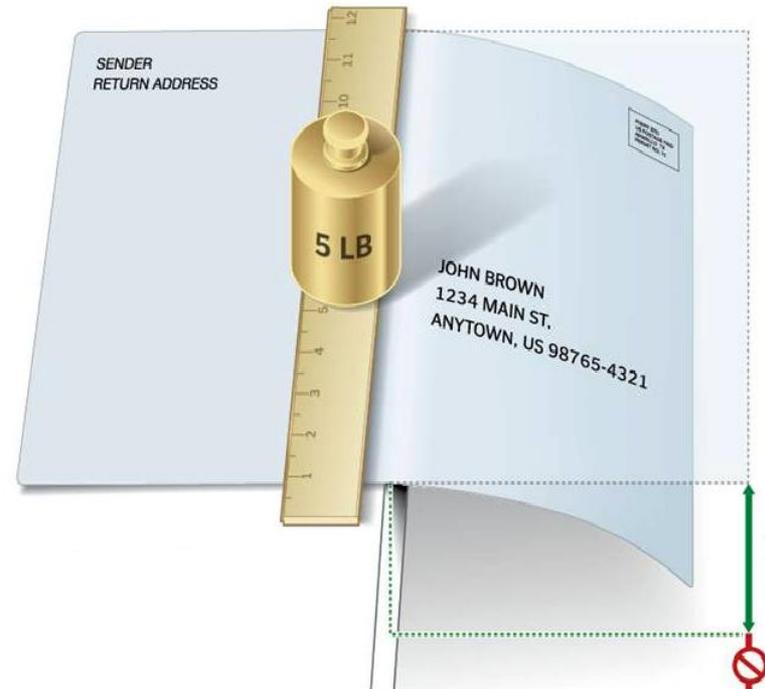
Refer to the Quick Service Guide, section 201 to review the criteria for mailpieces that fall under each of these 3 categories.

# Flat-Size Mailpieces

## Flexibility



## Deflection



Refer to DMM<sup>®</sup> section 301 to review flexibility and deflection testing criteria!

# Additional Requirements to consider

- Heavy Letter Mail: Letters over 3.0 ounces must be sealed, not stiff, barcode in address block
- Letter-Size Booklets Consisting of Bound Sheets: Additional requirements regarding Binding, Size and Weight
- Letter-Size Booklets: Tabbing and Cover Stock requirements
- Self-Mailers: New regulations effective January 5, 2015
- CD's and DVD's

# Enclosures in Automation Letter- and Flat-Size Mailings

- All letter-size reply cards and envelopes provided as enclosures in automation-price mailings must be automation compatible!
- The mailer's signature on the postage statement certifies that this and other standards have been met!

The mailer's signature certifies acceptance of liability for and agreement to pay any revenue deficiencies assessed on this mailing, subject to appeal. If an agent signs this form, the agent certifies that he or she is authorized to sign on behalf of the mailer and that the mailer is bound by the certification and agrees to pay any deficiencies. In addition, agents may be liable for any deficiencies resulting from matters within their responsibility, knowledge, or control. **The mailer hereby certifies that all information furnished on this form is accurate, truthful, and complete; that the mail and the supporting documentation comply with all postal standards and the mailing qualifies for the prices and fees claimed; and that the mailing does not contain any matter prohibited by law or postal regulation.** I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits information requested on this form may be subject to criminal and/or civil penalties, including fines and imprisonment.

*Privacy Notice: For information regarding our Privacy Policy visit [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com).*

Signature of Mailer or Agent

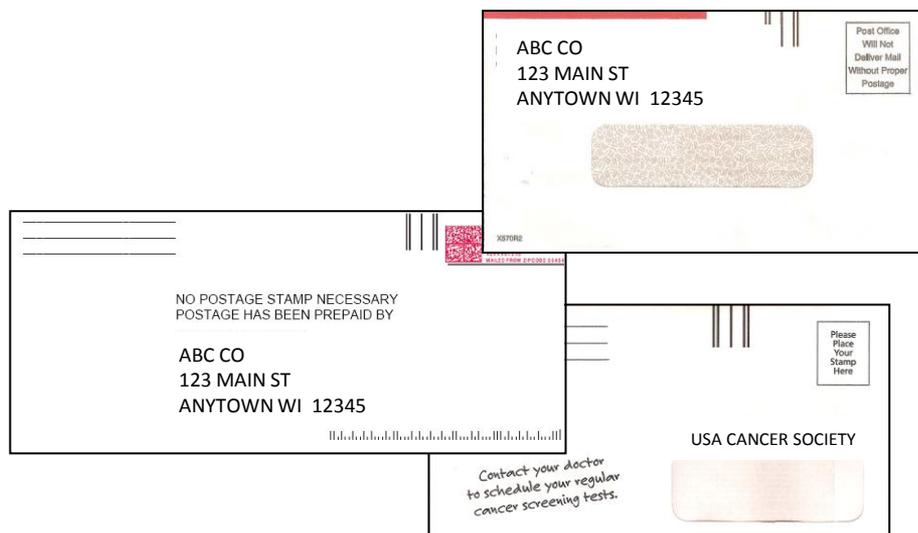
Printed Name of Mailer or Agent Signing Form

Telephone

# A Note Regarding Reply Mail

- Courtesy Reply Mail (CRM) ~ respondent pays postage
- Meter Reply Mail (MRM) ~ mailer pays postage on the outbound
- Permit Reply Mail (PRM) ~ mailer pays postage on the outbound
- Business Reply Mail® (BRM™) ~ mailer pays postage if the piece is returned

Requires IM<sup>®</sup> BC  
Jan 2013!



# Mail Preparation

# Addressing Standards - Letters

## Designing letters and postcards for automated processing

Key elements:

- Barcode location
  - Address block
  - Lower right corner
- Barcode skew
- Clearances
- Address placement

For more information, refer to the Quick Service Guide, section 201a

**Quality Assurance Tip:**  
Ensure that address within window-envelope does not shift out of place!

## Addressing for letter sized mail

Key elements:

- Complete delivery address
- Return address
- Alternative address formats
- Addressing guidelines

For more information, refer to the Quick Service Guide, section 602

**Quality Assurance Tips:**  
Spot check for proper use of capitalization in address and/or variable data fields; check for missing data, blank fields or extraneous data in address and/or variable fields

# Addressing Standards - Flats

## Designing Flats for Automated Processing

Key elements:

- Delivery address
- Address placement
- Barcode placement
- Polywrap<sup>®</sup> sheet regulations

For more information refer to the Quick Service Guide, section 301a

Check the flats fact sheets in the attachments tab to review more on address font and placement

# Address Standards - Flats

## Address font standards apply to all commercial flats

- 8-point type for addresses without delivery point barcodes; 6-point if in all cap's and barcoded
- Sans-serif font in all cap's preferred
  - Monotype Corsiva and Bradley Hand ITC acceptable
- Individual characters cannot overlap
- Lines may not touch or overlap; minimum 0.028" clear space between lines preferred

## Address placement for Standard Mail® flat-size pieces must be:

- In upper portion of flat
- Placed parallel to top edge, but not upside down, or
- Placed perpendicular to top—near or at the open or bound edge
- As close to the top edge as possible, while maintaining a 1/8" clearance from every edge

# Delivery & Return Address Placement and Postage\*

Examples of mailpieces addressed in “landscape”

- Held in “portrait”, the “top” is either of the 2 shorter edges and address within “top half”!



\*Standard Mail® mailed at automation, presorted or carrier route prices

Illustration: USPS® New Address Standards ppt 2008

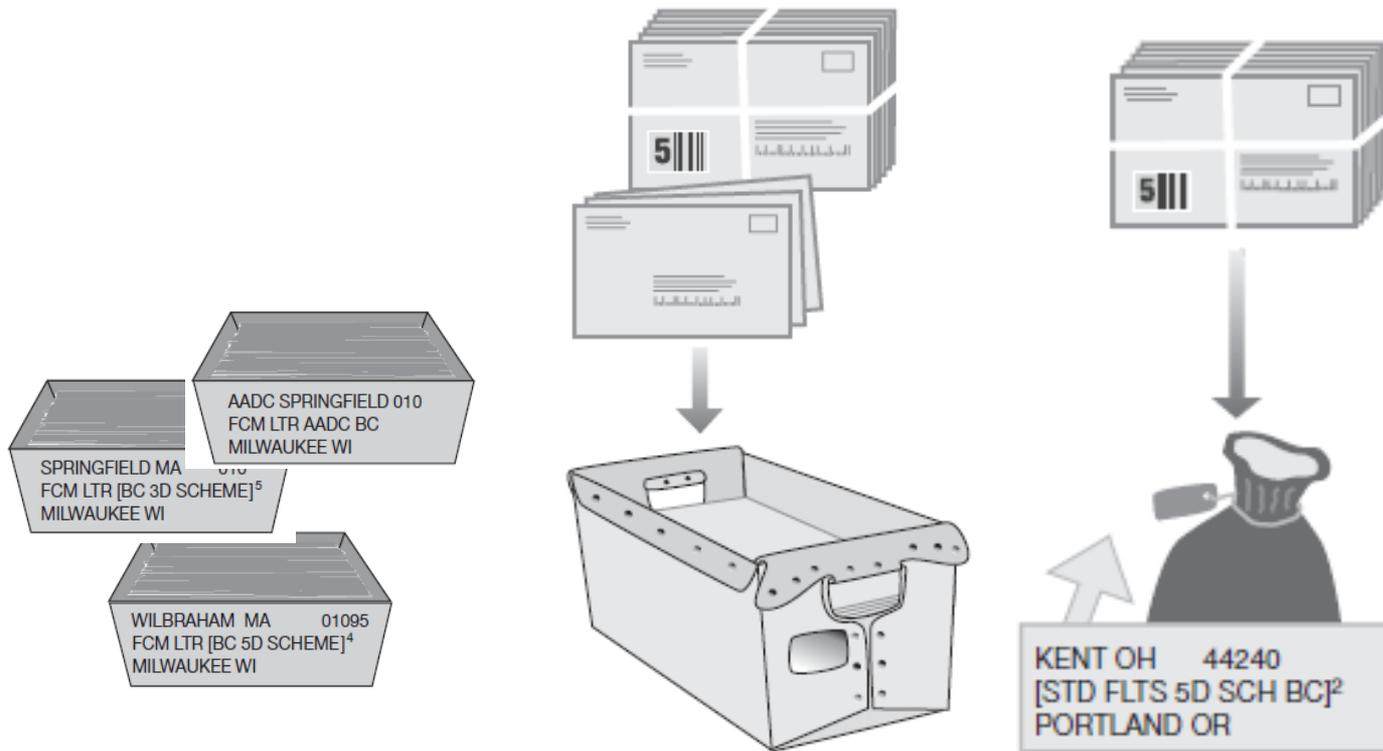
# Inscriptions for Commercial Mail

- Mailpieces must be marked to show class of service and/or rate paid
- Must be printed or produced...
  - as part of, or
  - directly below or
  - to the left... of the permit imprint, meter indicia, or pre-canceled stamp



Note: Refer to the Quick Service Guide, within applicable category, such as commercial letters or flats, and applicable class, such as First-Class Mail® or Standard Mail®, to determine the appropriate meter inscription!

# Traying, Sleeves, Labels, Straps



Refer to the Quick Service Guide, within applicable category, such as commercial letters or flats, and applicable class, such as First-Class Mail<sup>®</sup> or Standard Mail<sup>®</sup>, to review the sorting/traying/sacking requirements.

# Entry and Deposit

# Destination Entry Discounts



DNDC



DSCF



DDU

Note: refer to the Quick Service Guide, section 705f, for more information, AND also see the Notice 123 Price List, to identify Standard Mail<sup>®</sup> mailings that may qualify for these discounts!

# USPS Network Update

# Proposed First Class Delivery Standard Changes

At the same time Outbound Processing facilities are consolidated, delivery standard will also be changing. The first delivery standard changes were effective July 1, 2012.

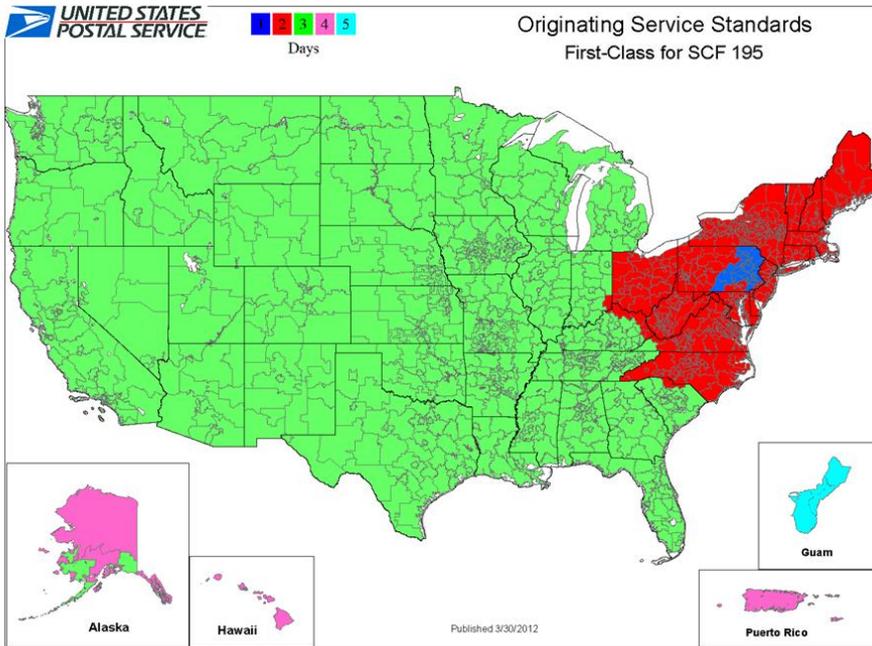
USPS Radius for Overnight, 2-day, and 3-Day Delivery Standards will Shrink

Delivery Standard	Current	Interim Standard (Effective July 1, 2012)	Final Standard (Effective February 1, 2014)
Overnight	All intra-SCF mail & some inter-SCF mail	Only intra-SCF Presort mail entered at the SCF.	SCF CET will be 8am, with a 12pm exception for intra-SCF 5-Digit mail
2-Day	12 hours or less drive time from P&DC/F	6 hours or less drive time from P&DC/F	6 hours between applicable P&DC/F & SCF
3-Day	Beyond 2-Day distance	Beyond 2-Day distance; Will increase due to 2-Day area decreasing	Beyond 2-Day distance; Will increase due to 2-Day area decreasing

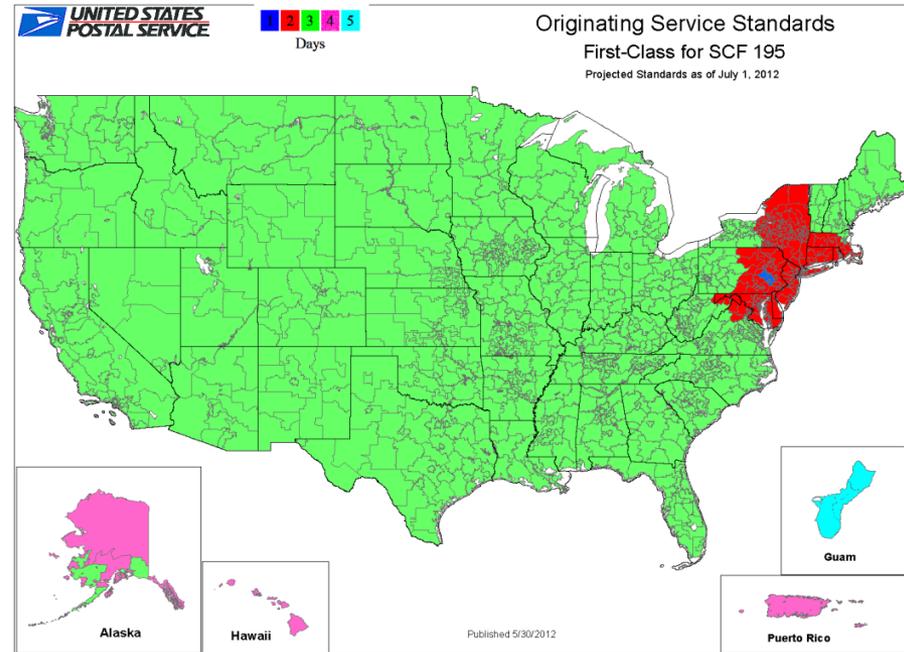
All Full Rate / Stamp Mail will be a minimum 2-Day Service Standard

# Example of Changes for SCF 195

Current Standard from SCF 195:



Proposed Standard from SCF 195:



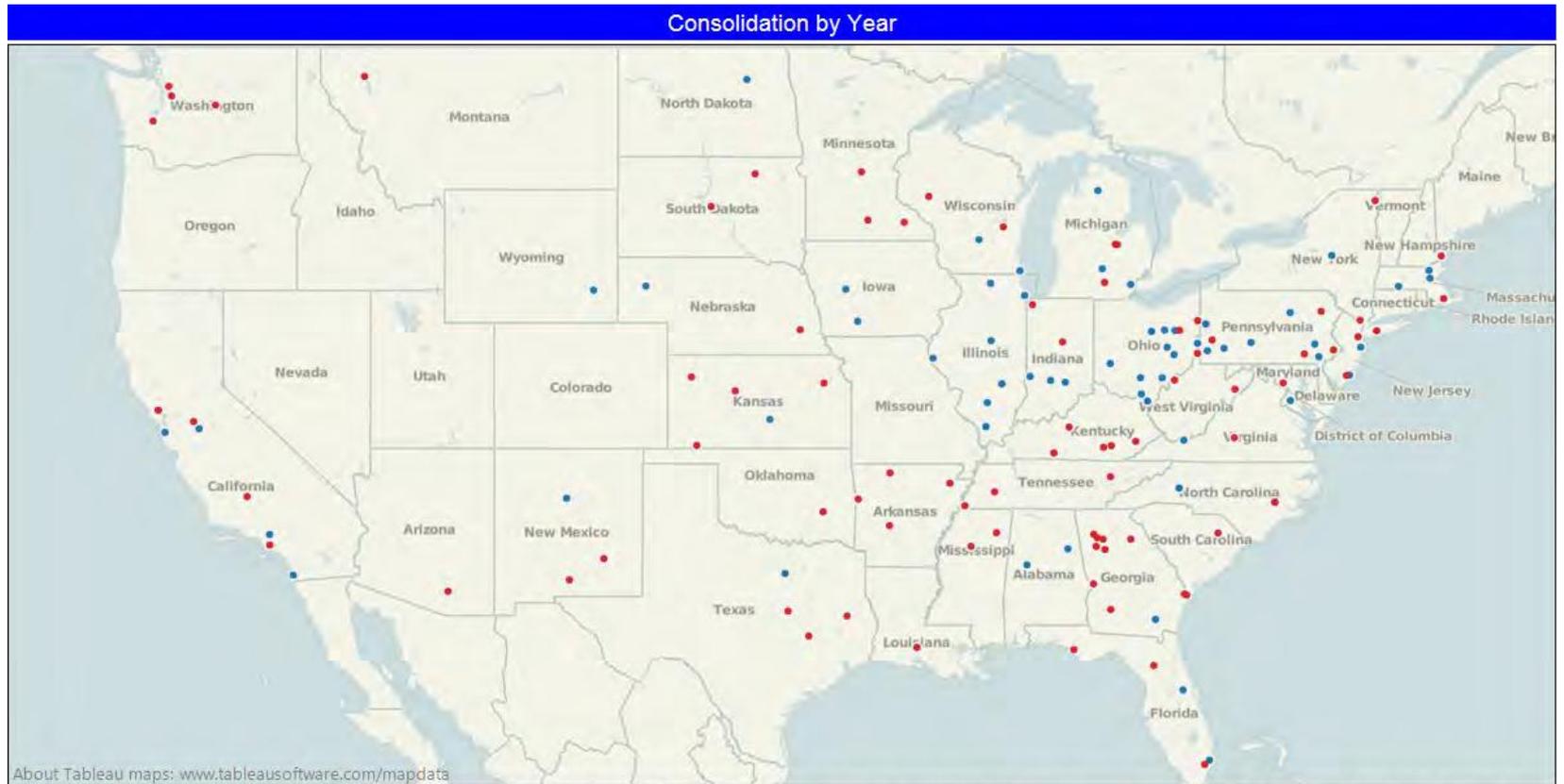
To see more on the proposed changes go to:

[https://ribbs.usps.gov/modernservicestandards/ssmaps/find\\_map.cfm](https://ribbs.usps.gov/modernservicestandards/ssmaps/find_map.cfm)

# Mitigating the Impact of Changes

- Sort outbound mail to a finer degree
- Case in Point: USPS reports an 82% higher likelihood of on-time delivery for Standard Class letters sorted to 5-digit NDC
- Consult with your local Presort Services Customer Service Manager to discuss changes that may impact you

# Consolidation Plan 2012 - 2013

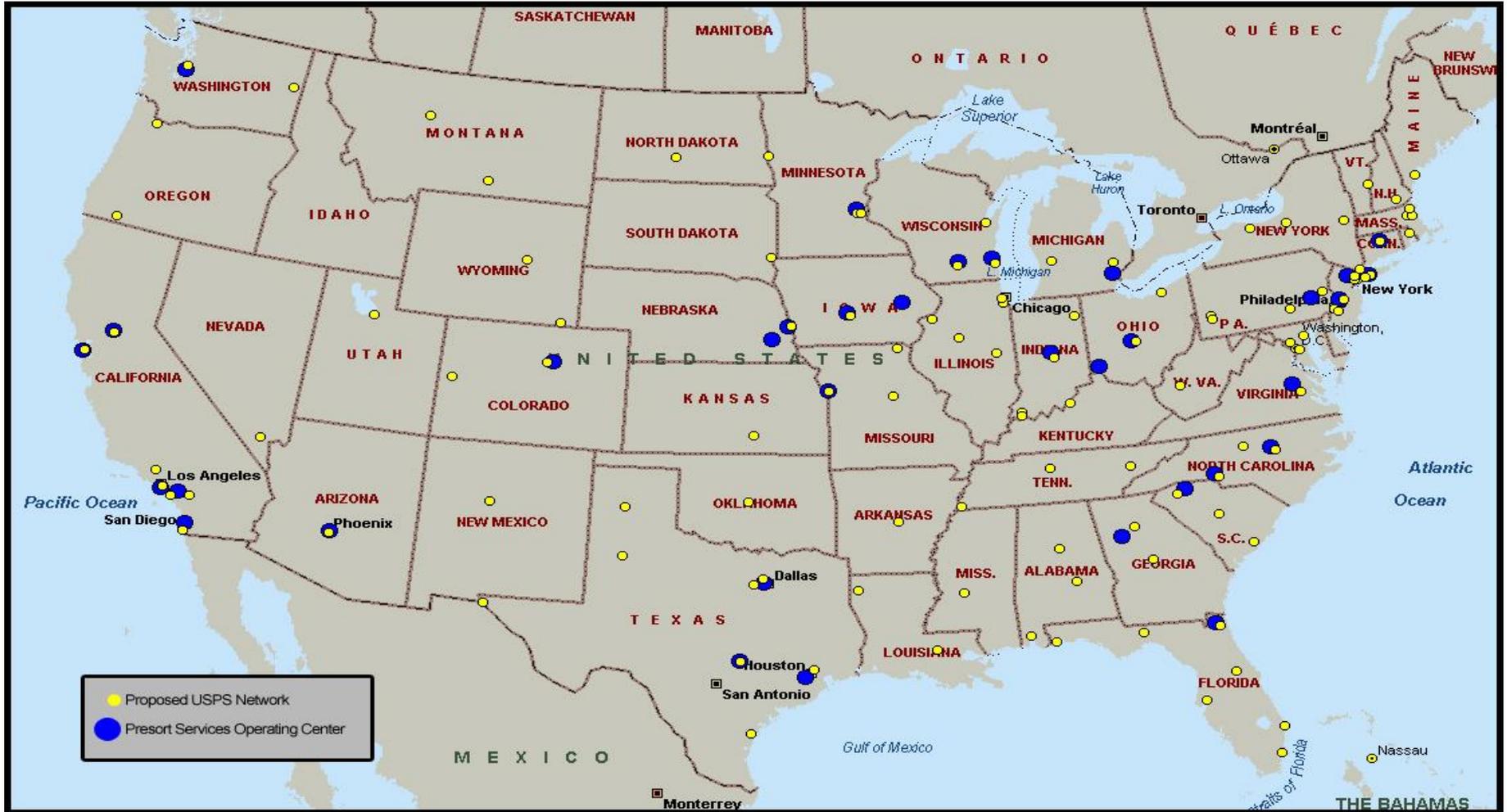


Map based on Longitude (generated) and Latitude (generated). Color shows details about Consolidation Data. Details are shown for various dimensions. The view is filtered on Facility Type, District, Consolidation Data and Area. The Facility Type filter excludes Null. The District filter keeps no members. The Consolidation Data filter excludes Null. The Area filter has multiple members selected.

#### Consolidation Data

- February 2013
- Summer 2012

# USPS Processing Network/PB Locations



# Benefits of Mail Services

- Nationwide Network
  - Expansive network of 35 presort locations throughout the country
  - Mail Exchange program enables most efficient processing of mail by leveraging all facilities
- Postal Knowledge
  - Close relationship with the USPS to keep you informed about upcoming changes.
  - Help you remain compliant with rules, regulations and codes.

# Roadmap to IM<sup>®</sup> BC Success: Time, Budget, ROI

Strategic and Tactical Guidance for your IM<sup>®</sup> BC strategy:

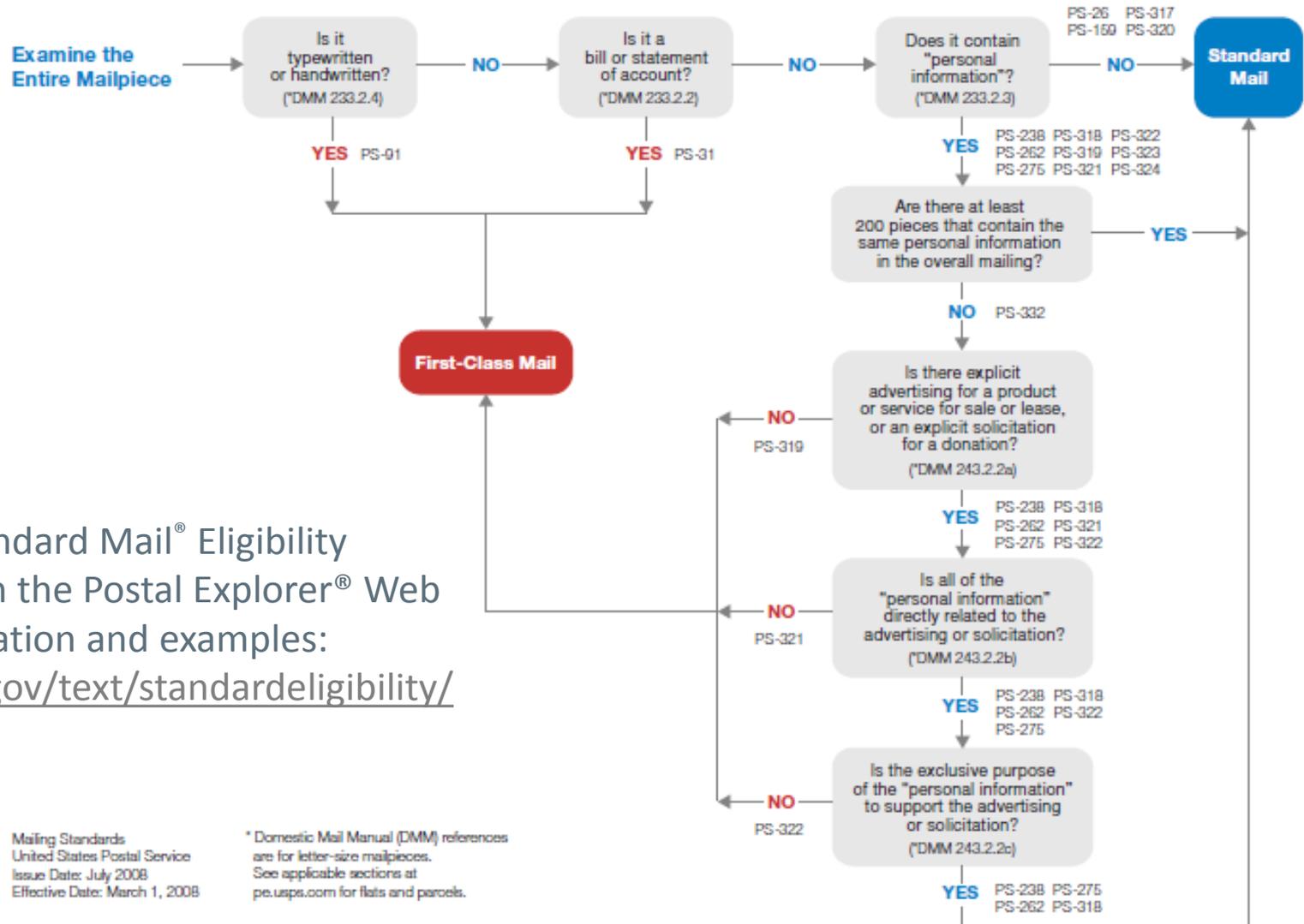
- **1:1 Coaching from postal experts: analysis, best practice, UPSS requirements, components of a business case demonstrating ROI**
- **IM<sup>®</sup> BC roadmap: including Postal Compliance requirements for Full Service and Basic IM<sup>®</sup> BC**
- **Identify opportunities for cost-savings and revenue generation by leveraging the IM<sup>®</sup> BC**
- **Three powerful, detailed online sessions**

# References

# Additional Resources

- **USPS Quick Service Guide** <http://pe.usps.gov/text/qsg300/Q000.htm>
- **Postal Explorer® Web site** <http://pe.usps.gov/>
- **Rapid Information Bulletin Board System** <http://ribbs.usps.gov/>
- **USPS Web site** <http://www.usps.com/>
- **Subscribe to:**
  - MailPro <http://www.usps.com/mailpro/>
  - DMM® Advisory <http://pe.usps.gov/dmmAdvisory.asp>
  - PCC Insider <http://www.usps.com/nationalpcc/>
- **Mailpiece Design Analysts (MDAs)**  
[http://pe.usps.com/mpdesign/mpdfr\\_mda\\_lookup.asp](http://pe.usps.com/mpdesign/mpdfr_mda_lookup.asp)
- **Business Mail Entry Manager**  
<http://www.usps.com/ncsc/locators/find-bme.html>

# Standard Mail® Decision Tree



Refer to the Standard Mail® Eligibility Decision Tree on the Postal Explorer® Web page for information and examples:  
<http://pe.usps.gov/text/standardeligibility/>

Mailing Standards  
 United States Postal Service  
 Issue Date: July 2008  
 Effective Date: March 1, 2008

\* Domestic Mail Manual (DMM) references are for letter-size mailpieces. See applicable sections at [pe.usps.com](http://pe.usps.com) for flats and parcels.

# Questions and Answers

For more information:

- Website: [www.pb.com/mailservices](http://www.pb.com/mailservices)
- Email: [mailservices@pb.com](mailto:mailservices@pb.com)



**Christine J. Erna MDP, AQS**  
**Engagement Manager**  
**Enterprise Postal Consulting**  
**Pitney Bowes Management Services**  
[Christine.Erna@pb.com](mailto:Christine.Erna@pb.com)



**Stephanie Miracle**  
**Solutions Design Consultant**  
**Enterprise Postal Consulting**  
**Pitney Bowes Management Services**  
[Stephanie.Miracle@pb.com](mailto:Stephanie.Miracle@pb.com)

**THANK YOU.**



Every connection is a new opportunity™