

505 Return Services

Overview

- [1.0 Business Reply Mail \(BRM\)](#)
- [2.0 Permit, Pre-paid \(Metered\), and Courtesy Reply Mail](#)
- [3.0 USPS Returns Service](#)
- [4.0 Parcel Return Service](#)
- [5.0 Bulk Parcel Return Service](#)

1.0 Business Reply Mail (BRM)

1.1 BRM Postage and Fees

1.1.1 Basic BRM

For basic BRM, a permit holder is required to pay an annual permit fee as provided under [1.2](#) and a per-piece fee under [1.1.7](#) in addition to the applicable Retail First-Class Mail (stamped for letters), USPS Ground Advantage – Retail, or Priority Mail postage for each returned piece. For USPS Ground Advantage – Retail, or Priority Mail BRM pieces weighing more than 13 ounces, if the zone cannot be determined from a return address or cancellation, then the permit holder is charged Zone 4 postage based on the weight of the piece. See [Notice 123—Price List](#), for applicable prices and fees.

1.1.2 High-Volume BRM

In addition to the fees and applicable postage required under [1.1.1](#), an annual account maintenance fee under [1.1.9](#) is required for high-volume BRM.

1.1.3 Basic Qualified BRM (QBRM)

[\[7-14-24\]](#) For basic qualified BRM, permit holders are required to pay an account maintenance fee as noted under [1.1.8](#), and a per-piece fee as described under [1.1.7](#) in addition to the applicable retail letter or card First-Class Mail (stamped letters) postage for each returned piece. An annual permit fee may also be required under [1.2.3](#) if the BRM permit is not used exclusively for the return of QBRM pieces. Pieces that do not meet the format requirements for QBRM cannot qualify for the QBRM per-piece fees or postage prices and are charged the high-volume BRM per-piece fees and First-Class Mail postage under [1.1.2](#), and are subject to an annual permit fee. Basic QBRM permits that meet the requirements under [1.6.3](#) are eligible for waived account maintenance fees and a reduced per-piece fee.

1.1.4 High-Volume Qualified BRM

[\[7-14-24\]](#) In addition to the account maintenance, per-piece fees and applicable postage required under [1.1.3](#), a quarterly fee under [1.1.11](#) is required for high-volume QBRM. High-volume QBRM permits meeting the requirements under [1.6.3](#) are eligible for waived annual account maintenance and quarterly fees, and a reduced per-piece fee.



505.1.1.5

1.1.5 Bulk Weight Averaged Nonletter-Size BRM

In addition to an annual permit fee (which will apply under [1.2.3](#) for the return of any flat-size pieces), per piece fee and the applicable Retail First-Class Mail, USPS Ground Advantage – Retail, or Priority Mail postage, permit holders participating in bulk weight averaged nonletter-size BRM under [1.8](#) must pay an annual account maintenance fee, and a monthly maintenance fee.

1.1.6 Special Standards for BRM Pieces with an Optical Disc

A letter-size BRM piece containing one standard optical disc will not be charged a nonmachinable surcharge if the piece meets the standards in [233.2.7](#). A flat-size BRM piece containing one standard optical disc and weighing no more than 2 ounces will be charged postage applicable for a 1-ounce First-Class Mail flat if the piece meets the standards in [233.2.7](#).

1.1.7 Per Piece Fees

Per piece fees listed in [1.1](#) are charged for each piece of returned BRM in addition to the applicable postage. Per piece fees are based on whether the permit holder qualifies as Basic, High-Volume Basic, Basic Qualified, or High-Volume Qualified BRM.

1.1.8 Payment Options for Per Piece Fees and Postage

Basic BRM permit holders may pay per piece fees and postage on returned pieces by cash or check upon delivery, or through a regular postage due account ([604.6.3](#)). High-volume BRM and QBRM permit holders must pay per piece fees and postage on returned pieces through a BRM advance deposit account.

1.1.9 Annual Account Maintenance Fee and Advance Deposit Account

A permit holder may choose to pay an annual account maintenance fee and pay postage through an advance deposit account, to qualify returned BRM pieces for the lower high-volume BRM or QBRM per piece fees. The account maintenance fee must be paid once each 12-month period at each Post Office where a permit holder holds an advance deposit account to receive BRM at a lower price. Payment of the account maintenance fee is based on the anniversary date of the initial payment. The fee may be paid in advance only for the next 12-month period and only during the last 60 days of the current 12-month period. The fee charged is that which is in effect on the date of payment. A separate advance deposit account solely for BRM is not required. An advance deposit account can be used for BRM under these conditions:

- a. For each withdrawal, only one statement is provided for each annual account maintenance fee paid.
- b. If a permit holder distributes BRM with different addresses (including Post Office box numbers) under the same permit number going to the same delivery unit and has only one business reply account, then the BRM is separated by each different address but only one statement is provided and only one annual account maintenance fee is paid.
- c. The permit holder must pay an annual account maintenance fee for each separate statement (accounting) requested. If only one annual account maintenance fee is paid, then the permit holder receives only one statement.

- d. The permit holder must maintain a sufficient balance in the BRM advance deposit account to cover postage and per piece fees for returned mailpieces. The permit holder is notified if funds are insufficient. After three calendar days, if no funds are deposited, then the BRM on hand is charged the basic BRM per piece fee and postage and charges are collected from the permit holder (e.g., in cash) prior to delivery.
- e. BRM addressed to several different firms at the same delivery unit may be delivered to an agent authorized by a valid BRM permit holder. The agent pays one annual account maintenance fee for all the firms represented by the agent in the same delivery unit. If the agent, or any of the firms represented by the agent, wants a separation of charges, then separate (additional) account maintenance fees must be paid.

1.1.10 Renewal of Annual Account Maintenance Fee

An annual renewal notice is provided to each BRM permit holder with a BRM advance deposit account. The notice and the payment for the next 12 months must be returned by the expiration date to the Post Office that holds the advance deposit account. After the expiration date, if the permit holder has not paid the annual account maintenance fee but still has a valid BRM permit, returned BRM pieces no longer qualify for the high-volume BRM or QBRM per piece fees and are charged the basic BRM per piece fees and applicable postage in [1.1.1](#).

1.1.11 Quarterly Fee for High-Volume QBRM

Mailers may choose to pay a quarterly fee in addition to the annual account maintenance fee. Payment of the quarterly fee entitles mailers to a lower per piece fee (the high-volume QBRM per piece fee identified in [1.1.4](#)). The quarterly fee and annual account maintenance fee must be paid at each Post Office where mail is returned, and for each separate billing desired. Mailers are eligible for the high-volume QBRM rates and per piece fees only for the time they pay the quarterly fee (i.e., mailers can opt out of the quarterly fee and related high-volume QBRM per piece fees simply by not paying the fee for the next quarter). The quarterly fee cannot be paid or renewed retroactively to receive a lower per piece fee on pieces already paid for and delivered. The quarterly fee can be paid for any three consecutive calendar months.

1.1.12 Payment Period for Quarterly Fee

The quarterly fee must be paid in advance for at least one but no more than four quarterly periods. A quarterly period begins on either the first day of the month (if a mailer pays on or before the 15th of the month) or the first day of the following month (if a mailer pays after the 15th of the month) and continues for three consecutive calendar months. A mailer who pays the quarterly fee is entitled to the high-volume QBRM per piece fee from the date of payment (rather than the date the quarterly period begins) through the end of the quarterly period. The fee paid is that which is in effect on the date of payment.



1.2 Permits

1.2.1 Required

Any mailer who wants to distribute BRM must apply for and receive a permit. The permit number, city, and state where the permit is held must appear on all pieces of BRM.

1.2.2 Application Process

The mailer may apply for a BRM permit by submitting a completed PS Form 3615 to the Post Office issuing the permit and except under [1.2.3](#) paying the annual permit fee. Customers must provide with the completed PS Form 3615 acceptable primary and secondary forms of identification as specified under [608.10.0](#). If a completed PS Form 3615 is already on file for the mailer for other permits at that office, then the mailer must submit the annual BRM permit fee, if required under [1.2.3](#), and USPS amends PS Form 3615 by adding the BRM authorization. An advanced deposit account is established for a permit holder's use upon BRM authorization (see [1.1.9](#)).

1.2.3 Annual Permit Fee

Except for permits used for only BRM parcels and QBRM, a permit fee must be paid once each 12-month period at each Post Office where a BRM permit is held. The fee may be paid in advance only for the next 12 months and only during the last 60 days of the current service period. The fee charged is that which is in effect on the date of payment. For agents authorized by a permit holder to distribute and receive BRM see [1.7](#).

1.2.4 Renewal of Annual Permit Fee

Except for permits used for only BRM parcels and QBRM, an annual renewal notice is provided to each BRM permit holder by USPS. Permits used for only BRM parcels and QBRM do not expire unless the account is unused for a period of 24 months. The renewal notice and the payment, if applicable, for the next 12 months must be returned by the expiration date to the Post Office that issued the permit. After the expiration date, the returned BRM pieces are treated as follows until the permit fee is paid, the unused permit is reactivated, or a new permit is obtained, as applicable:

- a. Postcards of no obvious value are treated as waste and disposed of at the delivery unit.
- b. Pieces (excluding postcards) with a return address are endorsed "Business Reply Permit Canceled" and are returned to the sender.
- c. Pieces without a return address are endorsed "Business Reply Permit Canceled" and forwarded to the mail recovery center for handling.

1.2.5 Other Post Offices

A permit holder may distribute BRM through any Post Office for delivery at any Post Office under [1.7](#).

1.2.6 Revocation of a Permit

USPS may revoke any BRM permit because of format errors or for refusal to pay the applicable permit fees (annual, accounting, quarterly, or monthly), postage, or per piece fees. If the permit was revoked due to format errors, then a former

permit holder may obtain a new permit and permit number by completing and submitting a new PS Form 3615, paying the required BRM annual permit fee (if applicable), paying a new annual account maintenance fee (if applicable), and, for the next 2 years, submitting two samples of each BRM format to the appropriate Post Office for approval.

1.3 Basic Standards

1.3.1 Description

[4-1-24] Business Reply Mail (BRM) service enables a permit holder to receive First-Class Mail, USPS Ground Advantage – Retail, and Priority Mail from customers. The permit holder guarantees payment of the applicable Retail First-Class Mail, USPS Ground Advantage – Retail, or Priority Mail postage, plus a per piece fee, on all returned BRM that includes incomplete, blank, or empty BRM cards and envelopes and mailable matter with a BRM label affixed. BRM cards, envelopes, self-mailers, cartons, and labels may be distributed by a BRM permit holder in any quantity for return to any Post Office in the United States and U.S. territories and possessions, including military Post Offices overseas. BRM cards, envelopes, self-mailers, cartons, and labels may be distributed by a BRM permit holder in any quantity for return to any Post Office in the United States and its territories and possessions, including military Post Offices overseas. High-Volume BRM under [1.1.2](#) is a subset of BRM that qualify pieces for a reduced per piece fee. QBRM, under [1.1.3](#), [1.1.4](#), and [1.6](#), is a subset of BRM available for specific automation-compatible letter-size pieces that qualify for an automation postage price and a reduced per piece fee. Domestic BRM may not be distributed to foreign countries. See the [International Mail Manual](#) for International Business Reply Service (IBRS).

1.3.2 Extra Services

No extra services are permitted with BRM, except for BRM parcels bearing an Intelligent Mail package barcode with imbedded USPS Tracking service.

1.3.3 Official Mail

Authorized users of official (penalty) mail may distribute BRM subject to the additional standards in [703.7.0](#), which supersede any conflicting standards in [1.0](#).

1.3.4 Samples

Prior to printing, permit holders are encouraged, but not required, to submit preproduction samples of BRM to USPS for approval. QBRM pieces require USPS approval ([1.6](#)).

1.3.5 Error Notification

If USPS discovers a BRM format error, the responsible permit holder or authorized agent receives written notification of the error. The permit holder must correct the error and make sure that all future BRM pieces meet appropriate specifications. The repeated distribution of BRM with format errors is grounds for revoking a BRM permit ([1.2.6](#)).



505.1.3.6

1.3.6 Combined Pieces as a Single Item

Two or more BRM pieces may be mailed as a single piece if the BRM pieces are identically addressed and prepared for mailing in accordance with [201](#). The permit holder is charged postage based on the total weight of the combined piece plus one per piece fee. If the combined pieces become separated, then the permit holder must pay postage and a per piece fee for each individual piece. Combined pieces are not eligible for QBRM postage prices or per piece fees.

1.3.7 With Postage Affixed

BRM with postage affixed is handled the same as other BRM. No effort is made to identify or separate BRM pieces with postage affixed. The amount of affixed postage is not deducted from the postage or per piece fees owed. The permit holder may request a credit or refund for postage affixed to BRM under [604.9.2](#).

1.3.8 Improper Use of Labels and Misuse of BRM Cards and Envelopes

Improper use of BRM labels and misuse of BRM cards or envelopes should be handled as follows:

- a. When a BRM label is improperly used, or a BRM card or envelope is misused as a label to return an unsealed item, such as a brick, two-by-four, or similar item, the Postal Service may treat the item as waste to be disposed of at the discretion of the Post Office.
- b. When a BRM card or envelope is misused and affixed to a sealed item, the permit holder will be responsible for payment of the applicable Retail postage and per piece fee.

1.4 Mailpiece Characteristics

1.4.1 Paper Weight

BRM paper envelopes must have a minimum paper basis weight of 50 pounds or equivalent (500 25- by 38-inch sheets). Other pieces (cards and self-mailers) must meet the basis weight requirements in [201.3.0](#).

1.4.2 Nonpaper Envelopes

USPS Engineering must approve nonpaper envelopes for mailability. See [201.3.0](#).

1.4.3 Envelope Reflectance

Envelope material must not have a red fluorescence exceeding 4.0 phosphor meter units.

1.4.4 Sealing and Edges

BRM pieces must be rectangular, with four square corners, and parallel opposite sides, but may have finished corners as described in [201.1.0](#) for letter-sized pieces or [201.4.0](#) for flat-sized pieces. BRM pieces are not mailable if they are sealed with wax, clasps, string, staples, or buttons.

1.4.5 Window Envelopes

The following standards apply to BRM prepared in an open-panel or a covered window envelope:

- a. All window envelopes:

1. When a mailpiece has a barcode in the address block, the mailpiece must meet the applicable standards in [202.5.1](#) for letters or [202.5.2](#) for flats.
 2. The address showing through the window must be that of the permit holder or an authorized representative.
 3. The facing identification mark (FIM) must be printed on the envelope as specified in [202.8.0](#).
 4. See [601.6.3](#) for required clearances for information showing within a window envelope.
- b. Covered window envelopes:
1. The “No Postage Necessary” imprint, the business reply legend, and the horizontal bars must be printed either directly on the envelope or on the insert appearing through the covered window. The minimum size of the information appearing in the covered window is 2 inches high and 4-1/4 inches long. Horizontal bars may be omitted only on letter-size BRM bearing Intelligent Mail barcodes.
 2. The window cover must be of a nontinted clear or transparent material (e.g., cellophane or polystyrene) that permits the barcode and its background, as viewed through the window material, to meet the reflectance standards in [204.1.3](#). The edges of the window cover must be securely glued to the envelope.
- c. Open panel window envelopes:
1. The “No Postage Necessary” imprint, the business reply legend, and the horizontal bars must be printed directly on the envelope. Horizontal bars may be omitted only on letter-size BRM bearing Intelligent Mail barcodes.
 2. Other required and optional elements in [1.5](#) may be printed on the insert appearing through the address window.

1.4.6 Self-Mailers and Reusable Mailpieces

In addition to the standards in [1.4](#) and [1.5](#), self-mailers and reusable mailpieces must meet the standards in [201.3.14](#) and [601.6.4](#) (or [601.6.5](#)). Permit holders must provide instructions to the user for re-folding and sealing (see [601.6.4](#) or [601.6.5](#).) so that upon return the piece meets sealing and folding requirements in [201.3.0](#).

1.4.7 Cards

Cards must meet the standards in [201.1.2](#). A card exceeding the dimensions in [201.1.2](#) is charged the applicable First-Class Mail letter price.

1.4.8 Labels

For general use, the minimum size of a BRM label is 2 inches high and 3 inches long. BRM labels are not required to have a FIM or a ZIP+4 barcode, but all other format standards in [1.5](#) must be met. See [1.4.9](#) for labels on letter-size pieces.



505.1.4.9

1.4.9 Labels for Letter-Size Pieces

The following standards apply to BRM labels for use on letter-size pieces:

- a. The minimum size of a BRM label is 2-5/8 inches high and 4-1/4 inches long. All format elements, including a FIM, must be printed on the label. Exception: The vertical series of horizontal bars must be at least 3/4-inch high. Horizontal bars may be omitted on BRM letter-size pieces bearing Intelligent Mail barcodes. The back of the label must be coated with a permanent adhesive strong enough to firmly attach the label to an envelope.
- b. The permit holder must provide instructions to the user describing how the label should be applied to a mailpiece and what precautions must be observed when applying the label (see [Exhibit 1.4.9](#)). A pictorial diagram showing proper placement of the label must be included with the instructions. At a minimum, the instructions must include the following directions:
 1. Place the label squarely in the upper right corner of the envelope.
 2. Do not write on the envelope or label.
 3. Do not use a window envelope, an envelope that is less than 1 inch higher than the label an envelope that is more than 4-1/2 inches high, or an envelope with any printing other than a return address.
 4. Do not use tape to affix the label.
- c. When the label is affixed to an envelope, the address must be placed within the OCR read area (see [202.2.1](#)).
- d. Pieces with business reply labels cannot qualify for QBRM prices.

Exhibit 1.4.9 Instructions for Affixing Business Reply Label

How to use your business reply label:
Affix label to upper right corner of envelope. Be sure the label is at the edge of the right corner. Do not use tape. Do not write on the envelope or use an envelope with printing other than a return address.



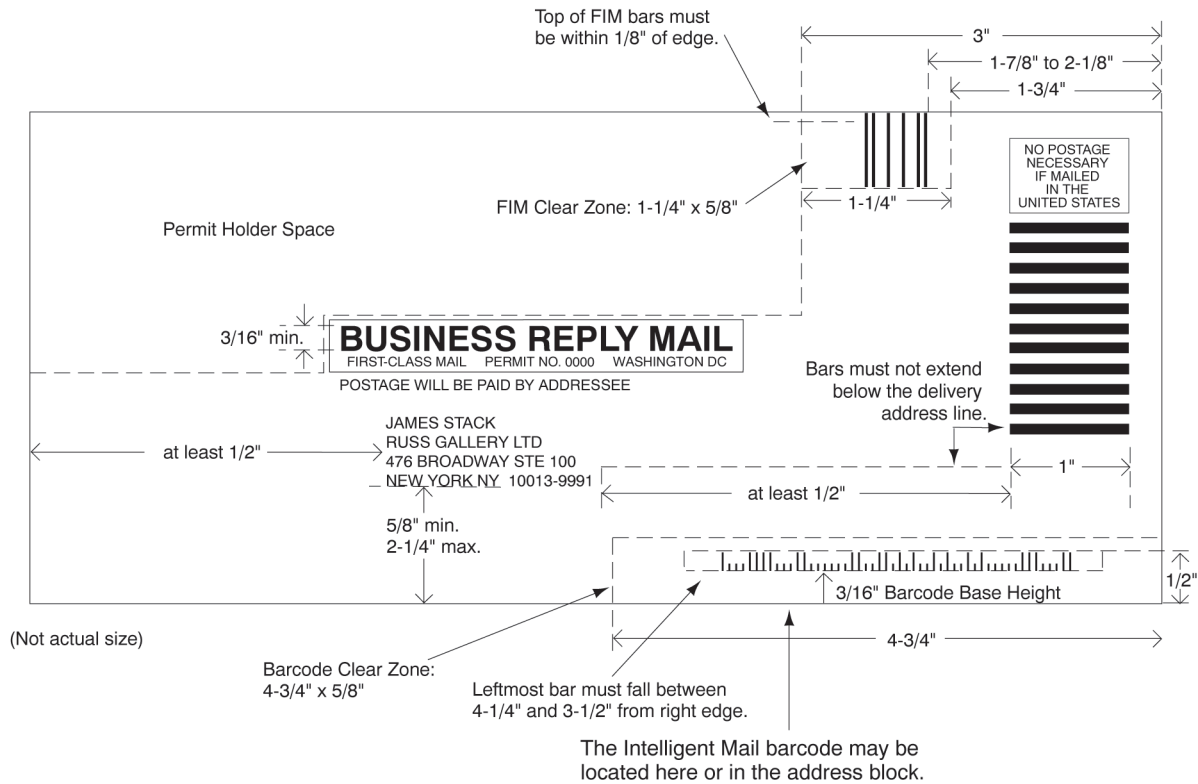
1.5 Format Elements

1.5.1 General

All pieces of BRM are subject to the format Elements in 1.5. The USPS may revoke a BRM permit because of format errors under 1.2.6. An Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb) is not required, except for QBRM prices; if an IMb is used, it must be printed and placed under 1.5.10 and as shown in Exhibit 1.5.1. Pieces of QBRM and bulk weight averaged nonletter-size BRM are subject to additional format standards listed in 1.6 and 1.8. BRM format elements are shown in Exhibit 1.5.1.



Exhibit 1.5.1 Business Reply Mail Format



1.5.2 Printing and Print Reflectance

All forms of printing are permissible if legible to the satisfaction of the USPS. Handwriting, typewriting, and hand stamping may not be used to prepare BRM. Printed borders are not permitted on letter-size BRM, but are permitted on envelopes greater than 6-1/8 inches high or 11-1/2 inches long or 1/4 inch thick. All ink colors are acceptable if the piece meets the appropriate reflectance standards in [204.1.3](#).

1.5.3 "No Postage Necessary" Imprint

The imprint "NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES" must be printed in the upper right corner of the address side of the piece, except as allowed under [601.6.5](#) for reusable mailpieces with outgoing permit imprint indicia. The "NO POSTAGE NECESSARY" imprint must not extend more than 1-3/4 inches from the right edge of the piece.

1.5.4 Business Reply Legend

The legend "BUSINESS REPLY MAIL" or "BUSINESS REPLY LABEL", as appropriate, must appear on all pieces. This legend must appear above the address in capital letters at least 3/16 inch high. At the permit holder's discretion, the business reply legend may be surrounded by a rule or border.

1.5.5 Permit Number and Postage Endorsement

Directly below the business reply legend, the words “FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. [NO., CITY, STATE]” (representing the permit holder’s number and Post Office that issued the permit) must appear in capital letters. Directly below that, the endorsement “POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE” must appear in capital letters. At the permit holder’s discretion, the permit number and postage endorsement may be surrounded by a rule or border.

1.5.6 Delivery Address

The delivery address on a piece of BRM may not be altered to redirect the mailpiece to any address other than the one preprinted on the piece. The complete address (including the permit holder’s name, delivery address, city, state, and USPS assigned BRM ZIP + 4) must be printed directly on the piece, except as allowed under [1.4.5](#) or under item a below, subject to these conditions:

- a. Preprinted labels with only delivery address information (including an Intelligent Mail barcode under [1.5.10](#)) are permitted, but the permit holder’s name and other required elements must be printed directly on the BRM piece.
- b. On letter-size pieces, the complete delivery address must appear within the OCR read area (see [202.2.1](#)).
- c. There must be at least a 1/2-inch clearance between the ZIP Code and the horizontal bars.
- d. A unique ZIP Code (i.e., firm ZIP Code) must not be used for BRM unless the ZIP Code has been assigned specifically for BRM (see Form 6805). A unique 4-digit add-on to denote BRM may not be used with a unique 5-digit ZIP Code not specifically assigned to BRM.

1.5.7 Horizontal Bars

A vertical series of horizontal bars parallel to the length of the piece must be printed directly below the imprint “NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES.” The bars must be uniform in length, at least 1 inch long and 1/16 inch to 3/16 inch thick, and evenly spaced. On letter-size nonbarcoded BRM, the bars must not extend below the delivery address line (the line above the line containing the ZIP Code). On barcoded BRM, the bars must not extend lower than 5/8 inch from the bottom edge of the piece. Horizontal bars may be omitted on BRM letter-size and cards bearing Intelligent Mail barcodes.

1.5.8 Facing Identification Mark (FIM)

A FIM must be printed on all letter-size BRM and on business reply labels affixed to letter-size mail (see [1.4.9d](#)). FIM B must be used with BRM without a barcode. FIM C must be used with any BRM printed with a barcode. The FIM must meet the physical standards in [202.8.0](#).

1.5.9 Company Logo

A company logo is permitted:

- a. On nonbarcoded BRM, if it is placed outside the OCR read area (see [202.2.1](#)).



505.1.5.10

- b. On letter-size barcoded BRM, if it is placed no lower than 5/8 inch from the bottom edge of the piece.
- c. On any piece, if the logo does not interfere with any required format elements.

1.5.10 Additional Standards for Letter-Size and Flat-Size BRM Bearing an IMb

Except as provided under 1.5.11, when an Intelligent Mail barcode is printed on any BRM pieces, it must contain the barcode ID, service type ID, and correct unique ZIP+4 routing code, as specified under 204.1.2. The IMb must be placed on the address side of the piece and positioned as part of the delivery address block under 202.5.3 or within the barcode clear zone in the lower right corner of the piece if printed directly on the piece.

1.5.11 Mailer ID (MID) Based IMb Option

A mailer may use a MID based Intelligent Mail barcode on BRM pieces. The MID based IMb must contain the barcode ID, specific service type ID, Mailer ID, serial number, in the tracking code field and a ZIP+4 routing code. Additional information on the MID based Intelligent Mail barcode can be found on PostalPro at <https://postalpro.usps.com>. Place the barcode according to 1.5.10.

1.6 Additional Standards for Qualified Business Reply Mail (QBRM)**1.6.1 Description**

Qualified business reply mail (QBRM) is a subset of business reply mail. Permit holders distribute reply pieces that qualify for lower postage prices and per piece fees. In addition to meeting the eligibility requirements below, the authorization to participate in QBRM under 1.6.2, and the format standards in 1.5, QBRM is First-Class Mail that:

- a. Meets all the Business Reply Mail (BRM) standards in 1.3 through 1.8.
- b. Has postage and per piece charges deducted from a BRM advance deposit account.
- c. Is a letter weighing 3.5 ounces or less or card that is prepared to meet the automation-compatibility requirements in 201.3.0.
- d. Is authorized to mail at QBRM prices and fees under 1.6.2. During the authorization process, a proper ZIP+4 code is assigned to the mailer (under 1.6.2) for each QBRM to be returned under the system (one for card-priced pieces and one for letter-size pieces weighing up to and including 3.5 ounces).
- e. Bears the proper ZIP+4 code, assigned by USPS, in the address of each piece. The ZIP+4 codes assigned for this program must be used only on the organization's appropriate QBRM pieces.
- f. Bears the correct Intelligent Mail barcode, correctly prepared under 1.5.10 or 1.5.11 and 204.1.0, that corresponds to the unique ZIP+4 code in the address on each piece distributed.
- g. Bears a properly prepared facing identification mark (FIM) C on each piece distributed (see 202.8.0).

1.6.2 Authorization

To participate in QBRM, a mailer with a valid BRM permit and having paid the annual account maintenance fee, must submit PS Form 6805 to the postmaster or manager, Business Mail Entry, for the Post Office to which the QBRM pieces are to be returned. USPS assigns to the mailer a proper BRM ZIP+4 Code, as applicable, reviews PS Form 6805 and preproduction samples provided by the mailer for compliance with relevant standards, and if approved, issues the mailer an authorization via the PS Form 6805.

[7-14-24]

1.6.3 Intelligent Mail Barcode Accounting (IMbA)

[7-14-24] The following apply:

- a. [7-14-24] Intelligent Mail Barcode Accounting (IMbA) is an automated solution for the counting, rating, invoicing and billing processes of QBRM mailpieces.
- b. [7-14-24] Participation in IMbA requires that QBRM permits be linked to an Enterprise Payment Account (EPA) for automated invoicing.
- c. [7-14-24] QBRM permits that have completed the onboarding process and consistently meet the requirements of IMbA are eligible for subsequent annual account maintenance and quarterly fee waivers, if applicable.
- d. [7-14-24] Once enrolled in IMbA, QBRM permits receive a reduced QBRM IMbA per-piece fee.
- e. [7-14-24] For more information, see PostalPro at <https://postalpro.usps.com/>.

1.7 BRM Distributed and Received by Agents of a Permit Holder

1.7.1 Description

Permit holders may give permission to subsidiary offices, agents, or authorized representatives to distribute and receive BRM using a single (corporate) permit number. BRM pieces are distributed by and returned to agents, who pay postage and per piece fees on those returned pieces. Agents may use any type of BRM service meeting the applicable standards in 1.0 and under the following additional conditions:

- a. Permit—The main permit holder or “corporate” office applies for the permit number and pays the permit fee, if applicable. The agent must present a letter of authorization from the permit holder showing the name, address, and telephone number of the local agent authorized to receive the BRM to the Post Office where the BRM is to be returned. Any time there is a change to the original permit application or the authorization letter, each agent must provide an amended letter of authorization to his or her local Post Office.
- b. Annual Permit Fee—Agents do not pay a separate annual permit fee but must submit evidence (usually a copy of PS Form 3544) to the local office once each 12-month period to show that the annual permit fee, if applicable, has been paid. This evidence is not required if the permit holder has an Enterprise Payment System (EPS) account, through which the local Post Office may determine if the permit fee, if applicable, has been paid.



505.1.8

- c. Postage, Per Piece Fees, and Annual Account Maintenance Fees—Agents receiving BRM or QBRM are responsible for paying all the postage and per piece fees, and applicable annual account maintenance fees, under 1.1 for the type of service received.
- d. Payment Guarantee—The permit holder is ultimately responsible for postage and per piece fees for all pieces returned under that permit number. If a local agent refuses or neglects to pay postage or per piece fees on returned pieces, then those pieces are forwarded to the Post Office that issued the original permit for collection of postage and per piece fees from the permit holder. Once forwarded to the permit holder, these pieces cannot qualify for QBRM postage and per piece fees. The permit holder's refusal to accept and pay the required postage and per piece fees for BRM offered for delivery is grounds for immediate revocation of the BRM permit (1.5.6).
- e. Format—BRM distributed by agents must meet all required format standards in 1.4 and 1.5. Authorized representatives distributing BRM on behalf of a permit holder must have the permit holder's name and permit number printed on the BRM and their own names and addresses printed below the permit holder's name, except:
 - 1. When the agent is a branch of an authorized business.
 - 2. The permit holder notifies a Post Office that authorized representatives may use the permit holder's permit number without printing the permit holder's name.

1.8 Bulk Weight Averaged Nonletter-size BRM

1.8.1 Description

Bulk weight averaging is a method of counting, rating, and billing incoming nonletter-size BRM based on principles of mathematical statistics. Probability sampling techniques are used to measure the characteristics of the total BRM volume by examining a fraction of the volume. Statistically valid samples that are drawn from the incoming BRM volume each postal accounting period are used by Post Offices to compute average postage due per pound and average piece count per pound factors. The net bulk weight of mail received is multiplied by these conversion factors to get the estimated volume received and postage and fee amounts.

1.8.2 Eligibility

BRM pieces rated by the weight averaging method must:

- a. Meet the basic standards for BRM in 1.0.
- b. Not be letter-size (201.1.0) or card-size (201.1.2).
- c. Not exceed 5 pounds.

1.8.3 Fees and Postage

Permit holders participating in bulk weight averaged nonletter-size BRM must pay the fees and postage under 1.1.5.

1.8.4 Application Process

Permit holders who want to use bulk weight averaged BRM for nonletter-size pieces must submit a written request to the postmaster of the Post Office where the BRM permit is held. The postmaster forwards this information to the manager, Customer Service Standardization, USPS Headquarters (see [608.8.0](#) for address). The request must include the following information:

- a. Permit holder's name and address.
- b. Name and location of the Post Office at which BRM will be received and an EPS account number, if available.
- c. Information about the number of pieces expected to be returned over a 24-hour period and a 30-day period, and a breakdown of the weight distribution of those pieces (in nearest ounces or pounds) (e.g., X number of 3-ounce pieces, Y number of 4-ounce pieces, and Z number of 5-ounce pieces).
- d. Based on the estimated volume in [1.8.4c](#), a 24-hour estimate and a 30-day estimate of postage and per piece fees using the postage and charges listed in [1.1.5](#).
- e. A statement indicating whether the piece volume has seasonal variation and, if applicable, estimates of monthly volumes for a 12-month period.

1.8.5 Authorization

The permit holder's request will be reviewed and approved by the manager, Customer Service Standardization, USPS Headquarters. If the request is approved, then a letter of authorization is sent to the permit holder from the Post Office where the BRM permit is held. The permit holder signs a service agreement and, if necessary, is assigned a Post Office box address.

1.8.6 Denial of Authorization

If the permit holder's request is not approved, then the Post Office sends a written notice, giving reasons for the denial. The permit holder has 15 days following receipt of the notice to file a written appeal of the decision with the postmaster and to furnish further information. If the postmaster still finds that the application should be denied, then the postmaster forwards the file to the manager, Customer Service Standardization, USPS Headquarters, who issues a final written decision to the permit holder.

1.8.7 Revoking Authorization

A postmaster may terminate authorization for bulk weight averaged BRM by sending written notice to the permit holder, for any of the following reasons:

- a. The permit holder provided incorrect or incomplete information on the request for authorization.
- b. The permit holder's BRM pieces no longer meet the eligibility requirements in [1.0](#).
- c. USPS finds that bulk weight averaging no longer provides adequate revenue protection.
- d. The permit holder no longer desires to participate in bulk weight averaging.



505.1.8.8

1.8.8 Notice and Appeal

Termination takes effect 15 days from the permit holder's receipt of the notice unless the permit holder files a written appeal within that period with the postmaster. The postmaster forwards the permit holder's appeal together with all pertinent information to the manager, Customer Service Standardization, USPS Headquarters, who issues a final agency decision to the permit holder. The permit holder may continue to use the bulk weight averaging method until a final decision is made on the appeal.

2.0 Permit, Pre-paid (Metered), and Courtesy Reply Mail

2.1 Permit Reply Mail

2.1.1 Description

Permit reply mail (PRM) enables a permit imprint permit holder to receive First-Class Mail and Priority Mail back from customers by prepaying postage for reply pieces at the time of mailing. Mailers must distribute PRM pieces as part of the contents of an outgoing First-Class Mail mailing (see [230](#)) only by using a valid permit imprint ([604.5.0](#)) account.

2.1.2 Extra Services

No extra services are permitted with PRM.

2.1.3 Permit Holder Intentions

PRM may not be used for any purpose other than the purpose intended by the permit holder, even when postage is affixed.

2.1.4 Special Standards for PRM Pieces with an Optical Disc

A letter-size PRM piece containing one standard optical disc will not be charged a nonmachinable surcharge if the piece meets the standards in [233.2.7](#). A flat-size PRM piece containing one standard optical disc and weighing no more than 2 ounces will be charged postage applicable for a 1-ounce First-Class Mail letter if the piece meets the standards in [233.2.7](#).

2.2 Authorization and Revocation

2.2.1 Authorization

PRM customers must apply for authorization through the district manager of Business Mail Entry at the office where the permit imprint account is held.

2.2.2 Samples

Permit holders must submit preproduction samples of PRM pieces to the Postal Service for approval prior to distribution.

2.2.3 Error Notification

If the Postal Service discovers a PRM format error, the permit holder or authorized agent will receive a written notification of the error. The permit holder must correct the error and ensure that all future PRM pieces meet appropriate specifications. The Postal Service may revoke a PRM authorization if a mailer repeatedly distributes PRM with format errors (see [2.2.4](#)).