UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE®

Official Election Mail Training Webinar

OFFICIAL ELECTION MAIL®
Authorized by the U.S. Postal Service

Agenda

- Official Election Mail
- Preparation procedures for Official Election Mail
- Steps for Successful Mailing
- Resources

Agenda

- **Official Election Mail**
  - **Definition and Eligibility**
  - **Use of Tag 191**
  - **Official Election Mail Logo**
  - **Military & Overseas Absentee Ballots**
  - **Free Matter for the Blind and Handicapped**
- Preparation procedures for Political Campaign Mail and Official Election Mail
- Steps for Successful Mailing
- Resources

Definition

Official Election Mail

- Any mailing created by an authorized voting registration official mailed to a US citizen for the purpose of voting. These include:

  Tag 191 Eligible

  - Mail-In Ballots
  - Absentee Ballots
  - **Not Eligible for Tag 191**
  - Balloting Materials
  - Voter Registration Cards
  - Absentee Applications
  - Polling place notifications

Official Election Mail Eligibility

- **Use of Tag 191 on Election Mailings:**
  - Only Election Ballots are eligible to use Tag 191

- **NOT Eligible for Tag 191:**
  - Voter Registration Cards
  - Absentee Applications
  - Balloting Materials
  - Polling place notifications

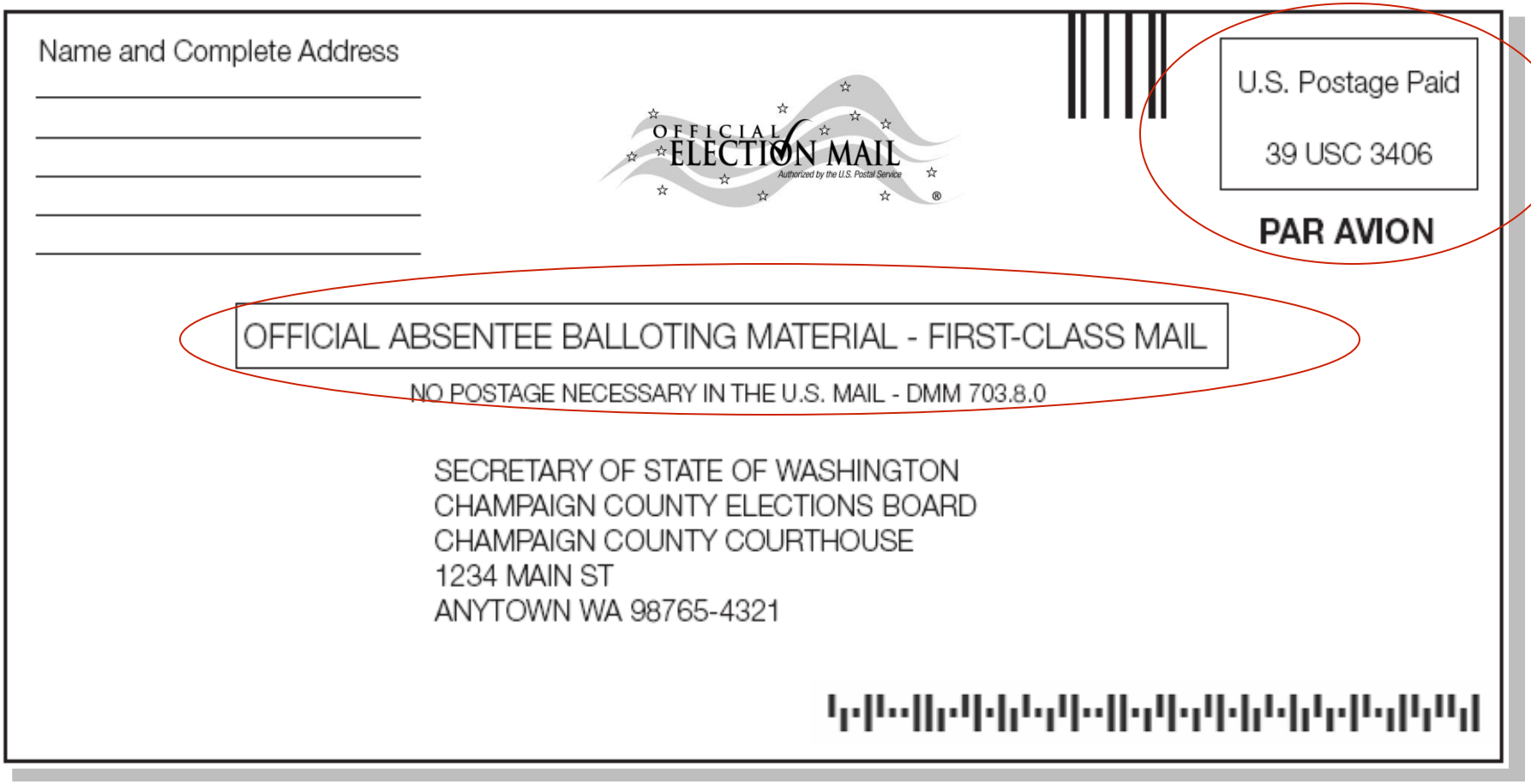
Official Election Mail Use of Tag 191

- Tag 191: *Domestic and International Ballots*
- Helps identify mailings with Ballots from a Municipal, County or State Election Authority
- Greater visibility during USPS handling and distribution
- Available at local Post Office or Business Mail Entry Unit (BMEU)

Note: TAG 191 is not a mandatory Tag for mailers. However USPS uses TAG 191 to identify Election Ballots including Absentee Election Ballots. NOTE: USPS employees will not place Tag 191 on Mailings.

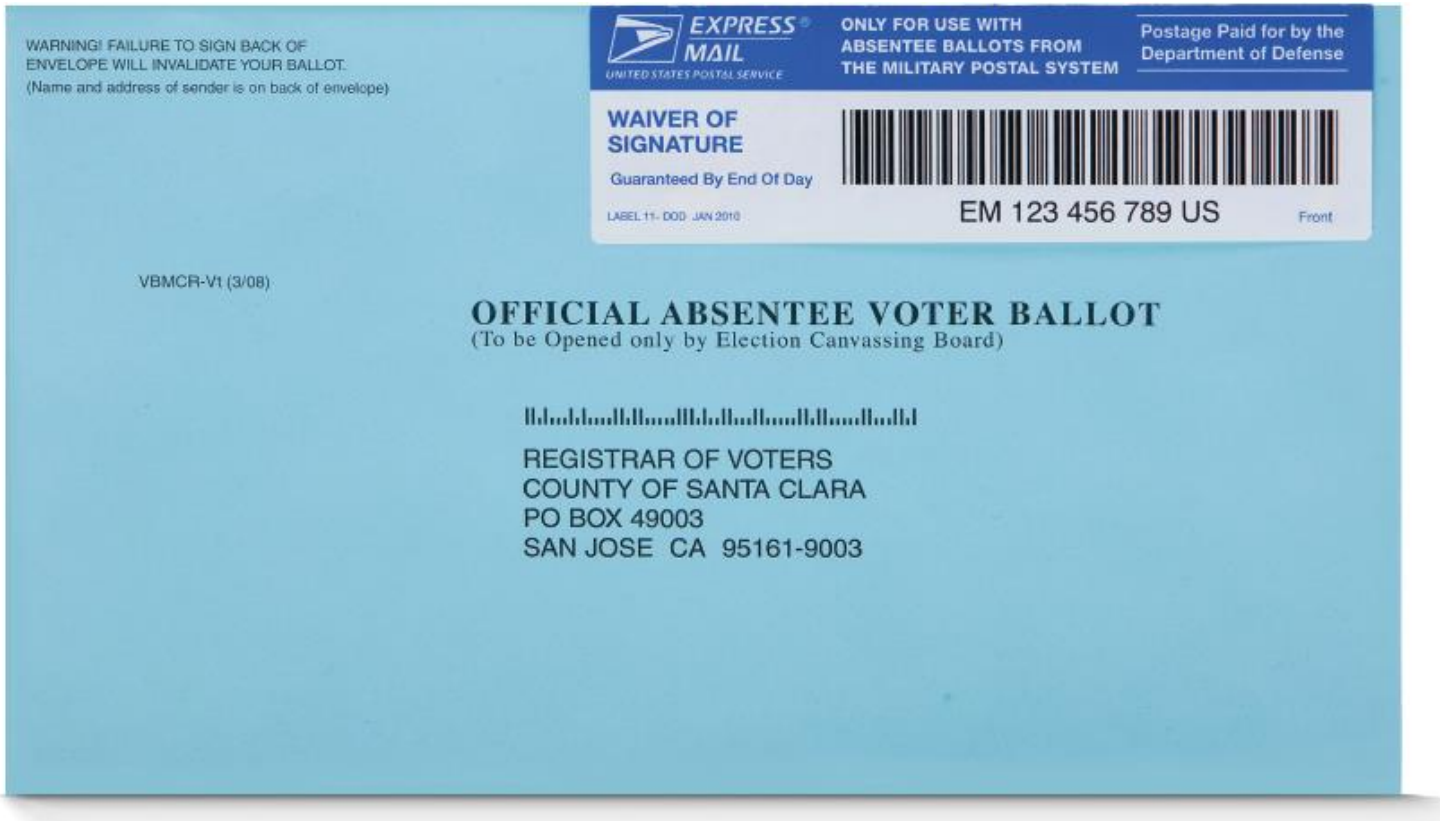
Military & Overseas Absentee Ballots

Must bear these markings:



APO/FPO "New" Ballot Procedures – Express Mail Label 11-DOD

- Joint effort by USPS and Military Postal Service Agency in response to Military Overseas Empowerment Act (MOVE)
- Military personnel in APO/FPO locations can now return absentee ballots via EM Label 11-DOD



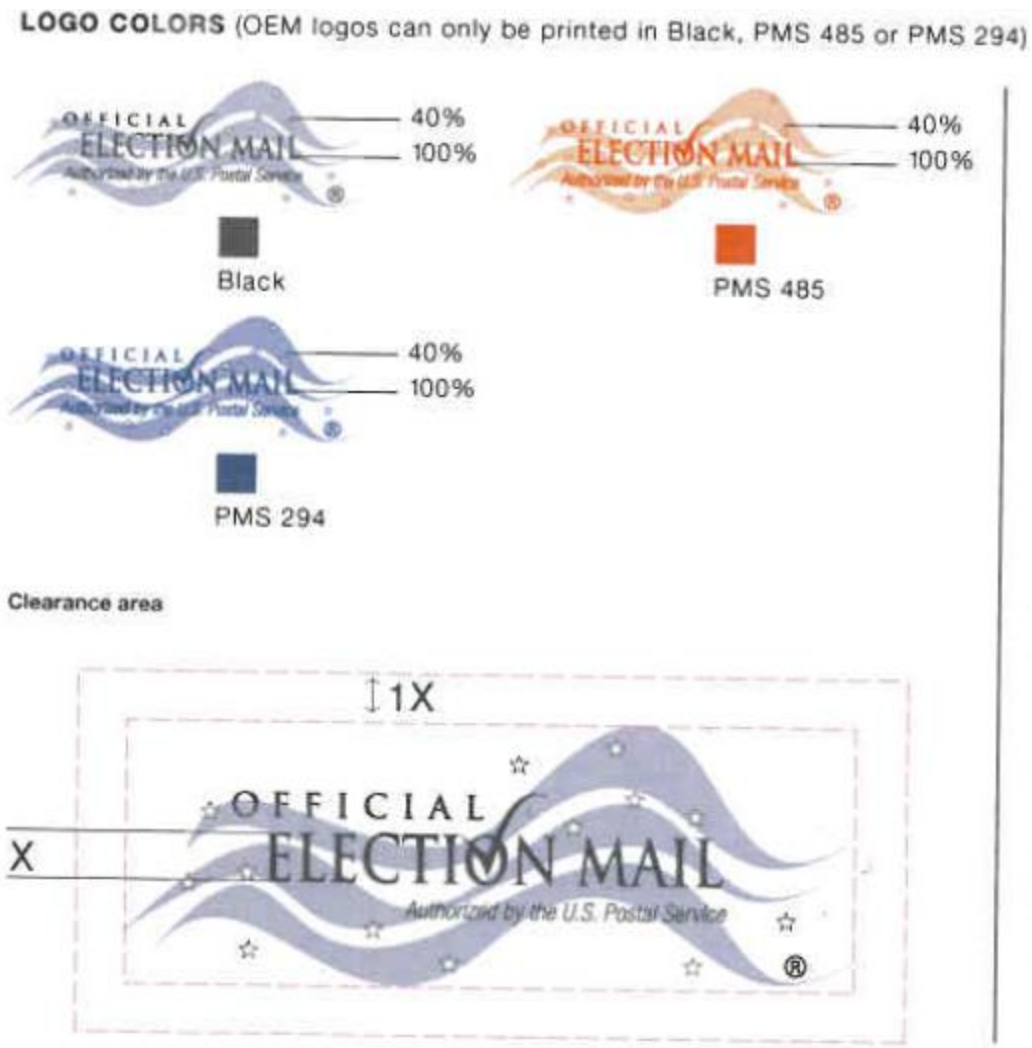
Official Election Mail Logo

OFFICIAL ELECTION MAIL
Authorized by the U.S. Postal Service ®

Display the logo on your mailpiece to indicate your mail is from an official state or local election organization. You can download it at: **www.usps.com/electionmail**

When the logo appears on a mailpiece, voters recognize the mail as important and postal workers can distinguish it from the thousands of other mailpieces processed daily

Official Election Mail Logo Conditions, Sizes & Print Specifications



- **Conditions for Use:**
  - Limited license granted to federal, state and election officials
  - Must be used only on Election Mail under authority of Election Official
  - USPS reserves the right to obtain info regarding the scope of use
  - Use of logo must conform to guidelines

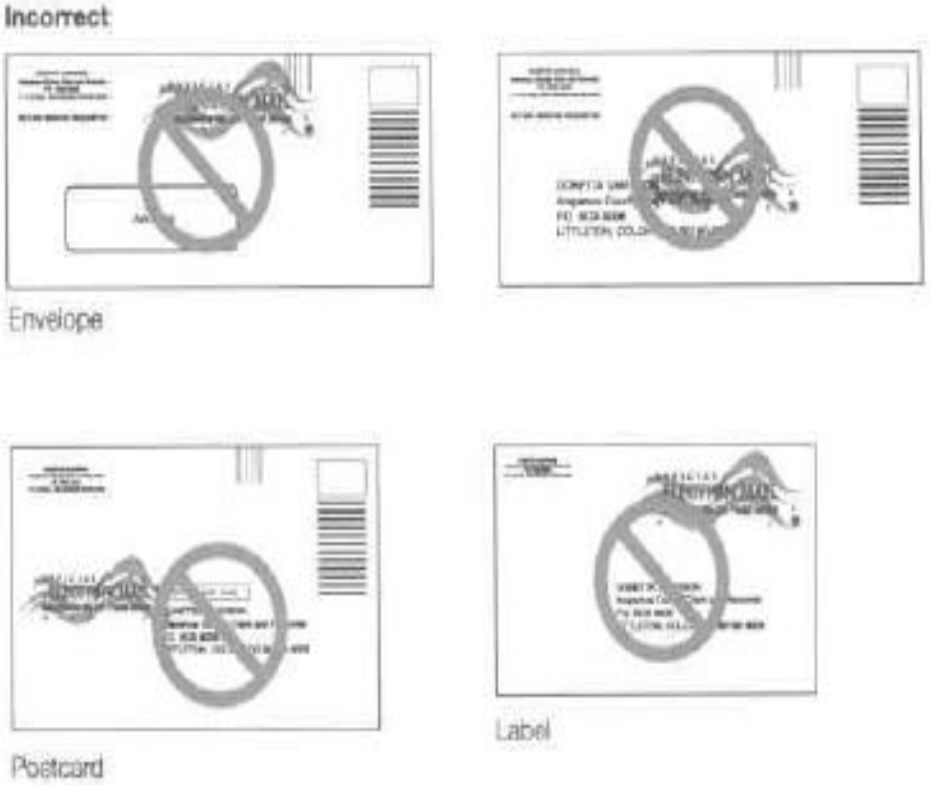
Official Election Mail Logo Placement

- **Placement**
  - Place between the return address and indicia
  - Place vertically from the top edge
  - Maintain the clearance area around the logo
  - Do not place anything above the logo

Official Election Mail Logo Placement

- **Correct Placement**

- When in Doubt Consult with your Mailpiece Design Analyst

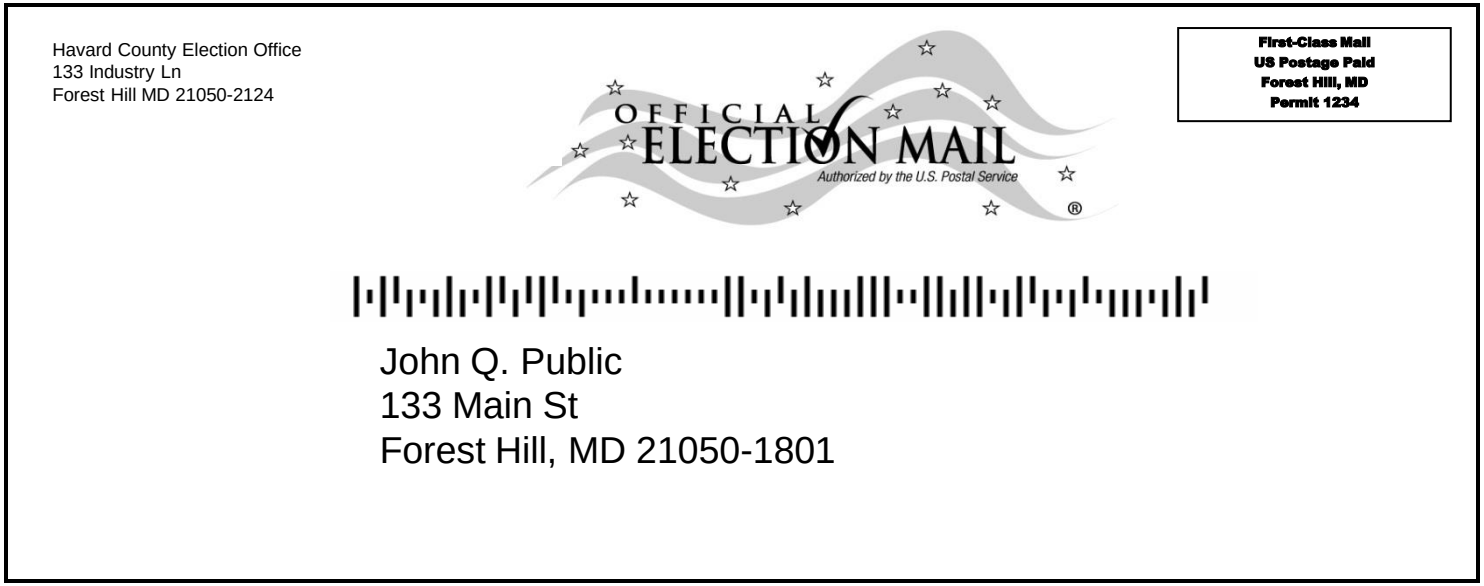


Free Matter for the Blind or Handicapped

- Mailed by or for persons who cannot read or use printed materials
- May be opened for postal inspection
- Treated as First-Class Mail
- Domestic only
- No advertising
- DMM 703.5

Free Matter for the Blind or Handicapped

- Except for blind or handicapped persons who can not read printed materials, active military & U.S. citizens overseas, all other ballot material must have the correct postage affixed



Agenda

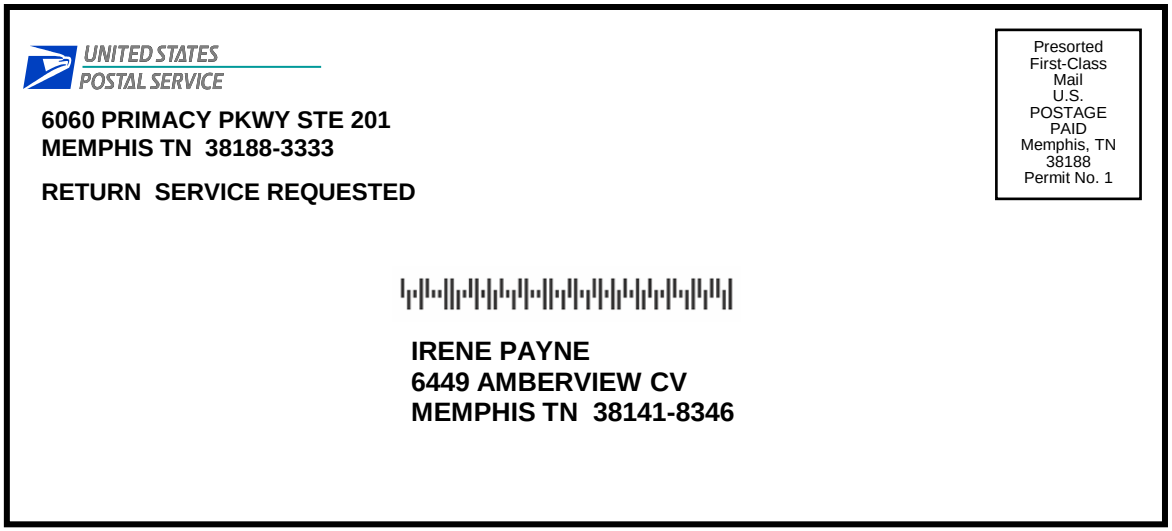
- Official Election Mail
- **Preparation procedures for Official Election Mail**
  - Mail preparation – Classes of Mail
  - Mailpiece Design, Forwarding & Return
  - Address Hygiene & Move Update Requirements
  - Use of Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb)
  - Use of IMb Tracing
  - Payment Method
- Steps for Successful Mailing
- Resources

Mail Preparation
Classes of Mail

- **First-Class Mail**
  - **Personal Correspondence**
  - **Other Required Types of Correspondence**
- **Standard Mail**
  - **Lower than First-Class Mail prices**
  - **Non-personal Correspondence**
- **Nonprofit Standard Mail**
  - **Lower than regular Standard Mail prices**
  - **Restricted**

Mailpiece Design Goals:

- Machinable mailpieces
- Readable addresses and barcodes



Machinable mail is designed to be the right size and shape and made of the correct paper stock for transporting at high speeds through USPS automated equipment

Readable mail means that the address or barcode on the address side of the piece can be read by automated equipment

Options for Undeliverable Mail:

- Forwarded to the new address
- Returned to Sender
- Discarded

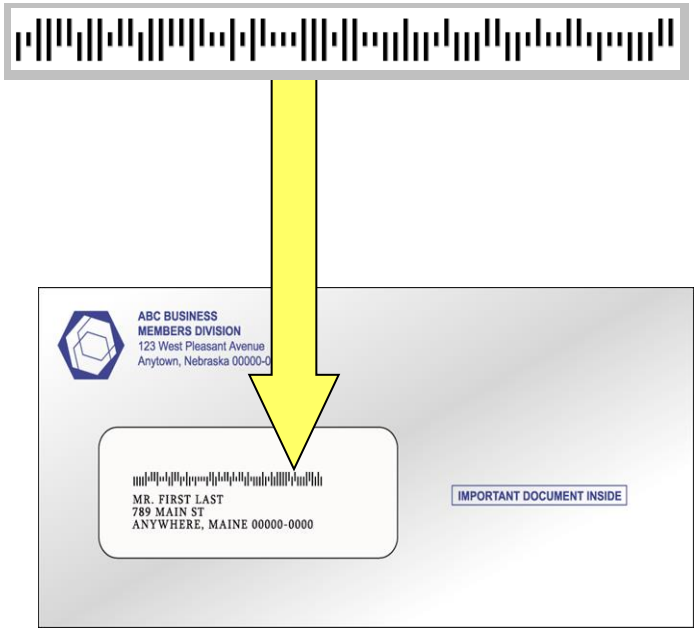
- **Physical Address Hygiene and Quality**
  - **Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS)**
  - **Delivery Point Validation (DPV)**
  - **Address Element Correction (AEC)**
  - **Address Element Correction II**

Mail Preparation
Move Update

- Move Update Options
  - NCOALink™ Systems
  - Address Change Service (ACS)
  - Ancillary Service Endorsements (ASE)
- Applies to First-Class Mail and Standard Mail
- Discount mailers must use addresses that were updated within the previous 95 days

Mail Preparation Using the IMb

- **Transition to IMb Now**
- **Best automation prices**
  - **Full-Service**
- **Sortation, address correction and tracking for letters/flats**
- **Benefits**
  - **Piece-level visibility**
  - **Electronic address change notices (ACS)**
- **Required on all automation-compatible letter/flat mail by January, 2013**



Track the Vote with IMb Tracing!

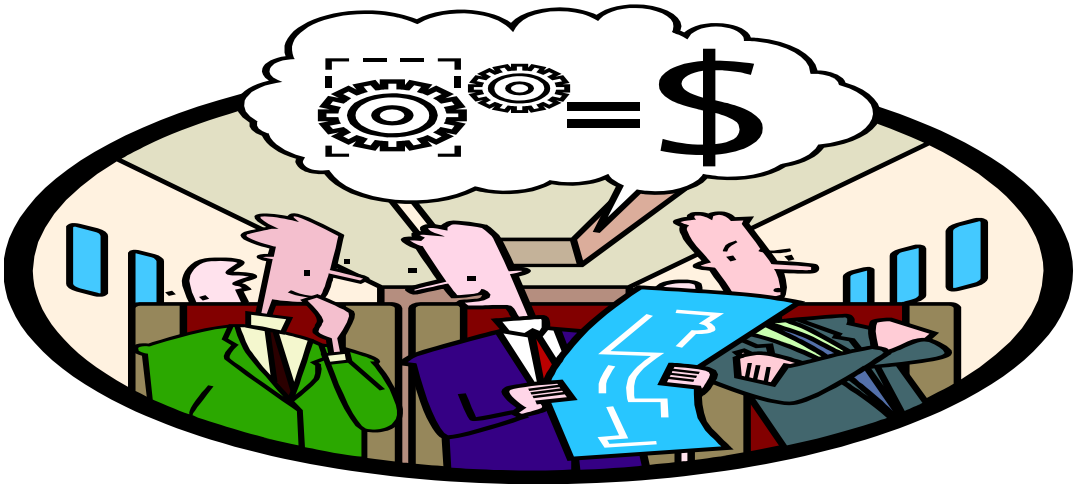
- IMb Tracing enables electronic mail tracking
- Outbound mail to voters
  - Know when the ballot is available for delivery
- Inbound mail from voters
  - Advance notice that a ballot is on the way
- Uses Intelligent Mail Barcode (IMb)

Agenda

- Official Election Mail
- Preparation Procedures for Official Election Mail
- **Steps for Successful Mailing**
  - Plan and Prepare
  - Determine Mail Class, Use of Reply Mail & Every Door Direct Mail
  - Apply for Permits
  - Work with MDA
  - Print, Select Payment Method, and Mail
  - Receive Ballots
- Resources

Steps for Successful Mailing
Plan & Prepare

- Contact Post Office or Business Mail Entry Unit
- Discuss drop off times and procedures
- Obtain names and numbers
- At least two weeks before Election Day, finalize your plans



Steps for Successful Mailing
Determine Mail Class

First-Class Mail

- Personal, handwritten, or typed information
- 1-3 day delivery
- Free forwarding and return
- Sealed against inspection

Standard Mail:

- *No* personal, handwritten, or typed information
- 2 -9 day delivery
- Forwarding/return require endorsement and a fee
- May be opened for postal inspection

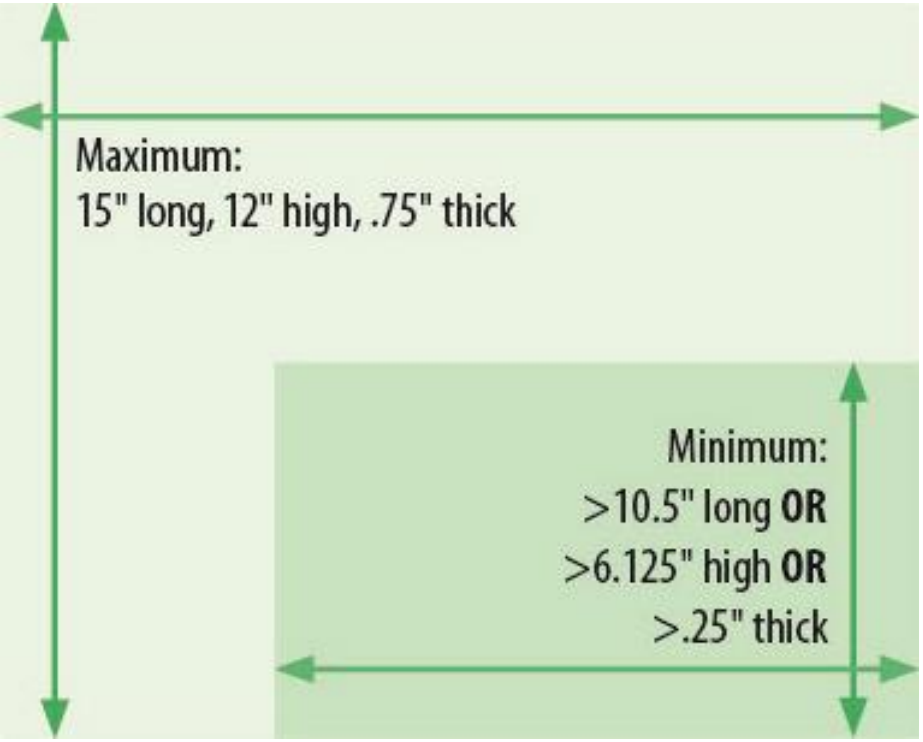
Steps for Successful Mailing
Determine Use of Every Door Direct Mail

- What is it?
  - With Every Door Direct Mail®, you can saturate an entire neighborhood with your message, and your mailing gets directly into the homes and hands of potential voters.
- How does it work?
  - You pick the neighborhoods you want to reach, and a Postal Service™ Letter Carrier takes your printed pieces to every home while delivering the day's mail. It's a powerful, cost-effective way to reach voters in areas you know matter most.
- Added Benefit: No special list needed!!

Steps for Successful Mailing
Determine Use of Every Door Direct Mail

There are some rules:

- Must be one of the following: more than 10 1/2 inches in length OR more than 6 1/8 inches in height OR more than 1/4-inch thick
- Cannot be: more than 15 inches in length OR 12 inches in height OR 3/4-inch thick



Steps for Successful Mailing
Determine Use of Every Door Direct Mail

- **Acceptable Every Door Direct Mail mailing label options and permit indicia for any USPS® BMEU entry point:**

**********ECRWSS****

Postal Customer
City, State 5-Digit ZIP Code

**********ECRWSS****

Residential Customer
City, State 5-Digit ZIP Code

**********ECRWSS****

PO Box Holder
City, State 5-Digit ZIP Code

PRSRT STD
ECRWSS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO.

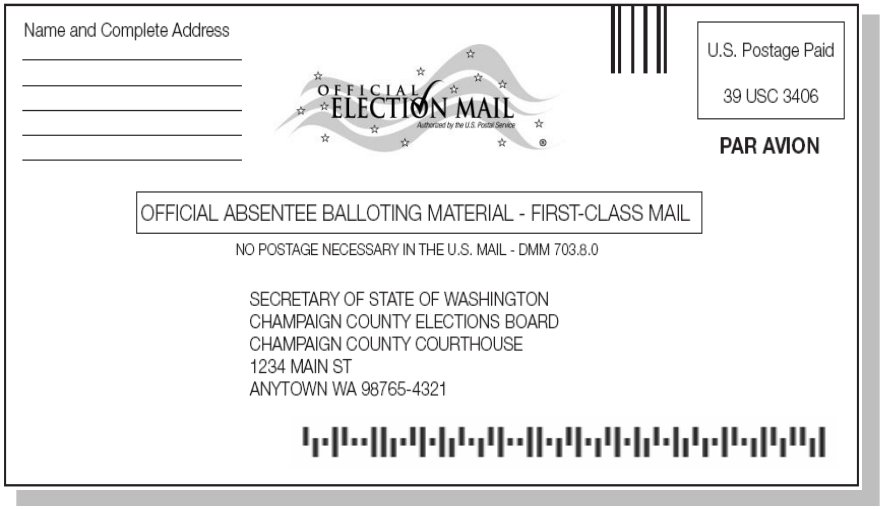
Steps for Successful Mailing
Apply for Permits

- **Mailing Permit**
  - **Use PS Form 3615**
- **Business Reply Mail**
  - **Use PS Form 3615**
- **Qualified Business Reply Mail (QBRM)**
  - **Use PS Form 3615**
  - **Use PS Form 6805**
- **Nonprofit**
  - **Use PS Form 3624**

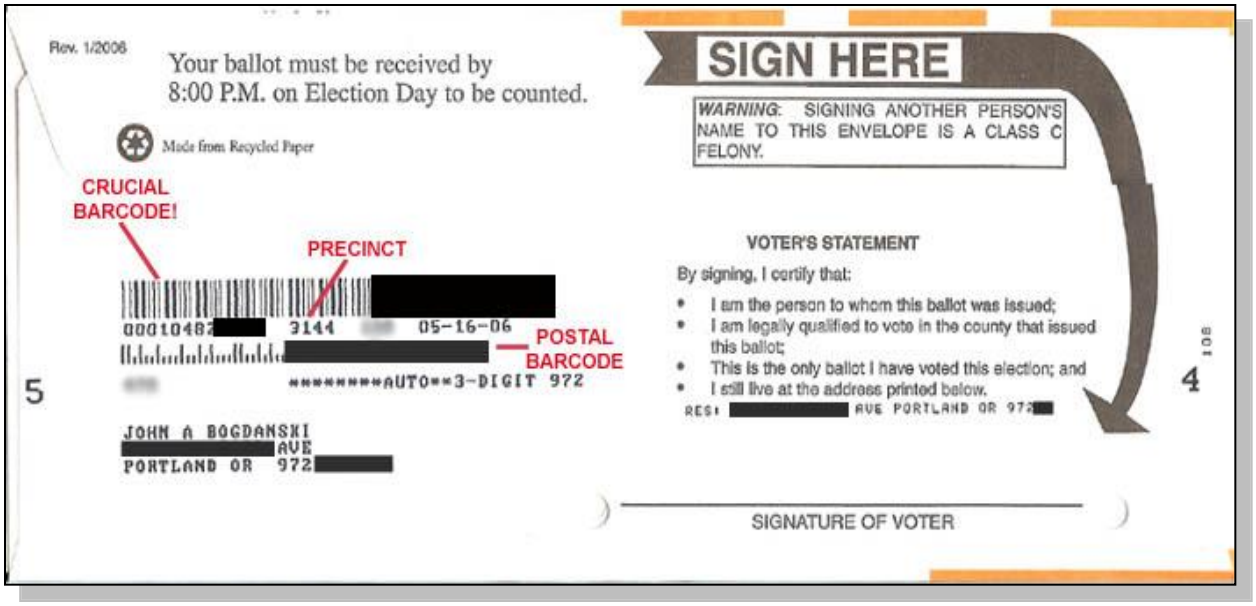
First-Class Mail Auto
US Postage Paid
Washington, DC
Permit 423

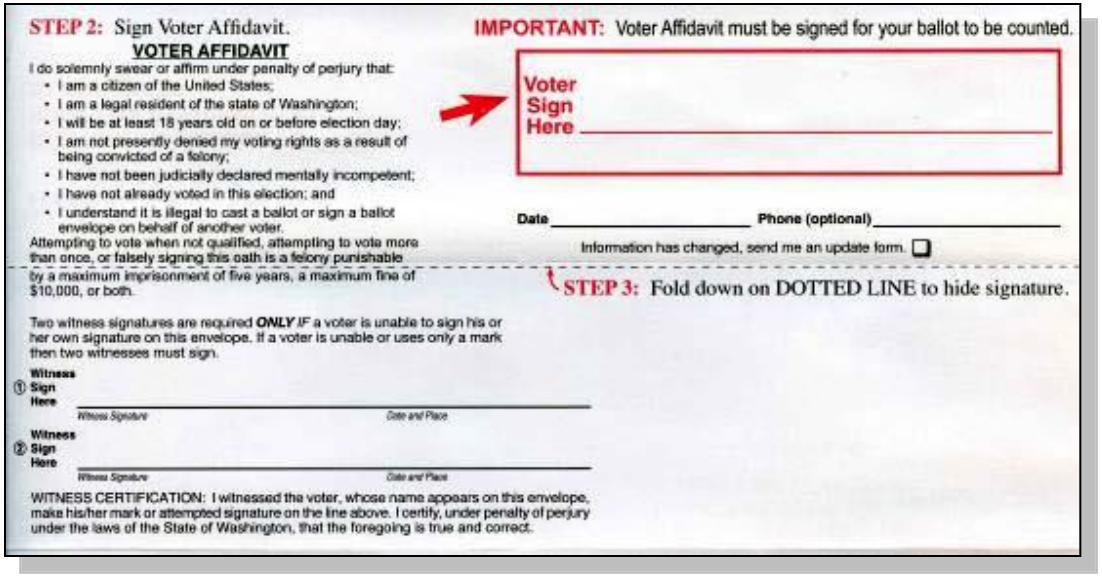
Work with Mailpiece Design Analyst (MDA)

- Verify ZIP+4 &
- Validate Barcode
- Logo placement
- Endorsements
- Size, shape, weight
- Barcode clearances
- Review samples before printing



Steps for Successful Mailing Work with MDA





Caution:

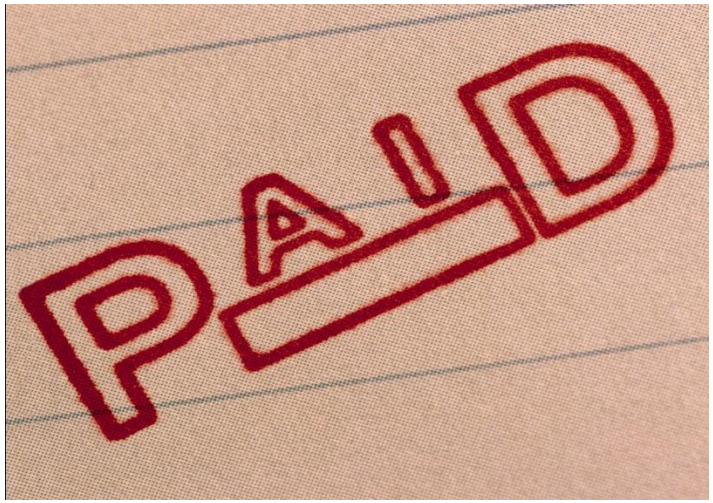
Addresses, numbers and barcodes printed on the back of the Ballot Return Envelope may cause the ballot to be misdirected or delayed!

Before pre-production proof is sent to printer:

- **Finalize design review with MDA**
  - **Logo**
  - **Barcode**
  - **FIM**
  - **Return address**
  - **Legend if needed**
- **Submit pre-production proof to printer**

Steps for Successful Mailing
Select Payment Method

- **Centralized Account Processing System (CAPS)**
  - **Electronic postage payment system**
  - **Centralized, convenient, cost effective**
  - www.usps.com (**search** CAPS)
- **Postage Meter**
- **Permit Imprint**
- **Stamps**



Steps for Successful Mailing Mail

- Contact Post Office or Business Mail Entry Unit
- Discuss mail entry times and procedures
- Obtain equipment
  - Use of Tag 191
  - Letter trays, flat tubs, sleeves
- Mailing must be prepared in accordance with DMM standards for the prices claimed
- Request and complete necessary mailing forms
- Present mailing at Business Mail Entry Unit

Steps for Successful Mailing
Receiving Ballots

- **Contact local Post Office**
- **Consider renting a Post Office Box**
- **Discuss pick-up times and location**

Agenda

- Official Election Mail
- Preparation procedures for Official Election Mail
- Steps for Successful Mailing
- **Resources**
  - Local BMEU Personnel, Postmasters, Account Representative, Business Service Network Representative
  - Mailpiece Design Analysts (MDA)
  - Guides, FAQs, Fact Sheet
  - RIBBS at: https://ribbs.usps.com

Political Campaign Mail & Official Election Mail Resources

- Mailpiece Design Analysts (MDA) are trained to:
  - **Answer questions regarding mailpiece design**
  - **Provide technical assistance to printers, graphic designers, and envelope manufacturers**
  - **Offer guidance regarding mailpiece eligibility for automation prices**
  - **Test paper and mail samples for thickness, color, flexibility, and barcode tolerances**
  - **Analyze readability of actual mailpieces**

- For assistance with mailpiece design, please contact a Mailpiece Design Analyst (MDA) by calling the MDA Support Center at (855) 593-6093 or emailing your request to mda@usps.gov

For assistance with Planning, Mail Preparation, Addressing & Design…

- **Contact your Local BMEU Personnel, Postmaster, Account Representative and Business Service Network Representative**
- **Contact a Mailpiece Design Analyst via the MDA Support Center**
- **Attend local webinars**
- **Visit our RIBBS website at http://ribbs.usps.gov**
- **Review the Domestic Mail Manual, Guides, Fact Sheet, FAQs**

QUESTIONS?