

Parcel Return Service

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1 Description

Parcel Return Service is only available through a Negotiated Service Agreement (NSA) (709.1.0). Please contact a USPS Sales Representative for additional details.

2.0 Prices

2.1 Parcel Return Service Prices

Parcel Return Service prices are based on the price that applies to the weight increment of each addressed piece, and on the designated return facility, RDU or RSCF. The minimum price per piece is the 1-pound price and these additional standards apply:

- a. Parcel Return Service-Nonmachinable Prices: Parcels exceeding the maximum machinable dimensions in DMM 201.7.5 or are considered a nonmachinable parcel under DMM 201.7.7 are subject to nonmachinable prices.
- b. Oversized Prices: Regardless of weight, any parcel that measures more than 108 inches (but not more than 130 inches) in combined length and girth must pay the oversized price.

2.2 Postage

There are two PRS categories:

- a. Parcel Return Service — RDU. Parcels returned as USPS Retail Ground to, and retrieved in bulk from, a designated delivery unit.
- b. Parcel Return Service — RPF. Parcels returned as USPS Retail Ground to, and retrieved in bulk from, a designated RPF.

3.0 Basic Standards

3.1 Description

Parcel Return Service (PRS) applies to parcels that are picked up in bulk by authorized shippers or their agents. Shippers guarantee payment of postage for all parcels mailed with a PRS label. By providing an approved PRS label to its customers, the merchant or other party designates the shipper identified on the label as their agent for receipt of mail bearing that label and authorizes the USPS to provide that mail to the shipper or its designee. PRS permit holders also may retrieve parcels at one or more designated return processing facilities (RPFs) or designated return delivery units (RDUs).

3.2 Conditions for Mailing

Parcels may be mailed as PRS when all of the following conditions apply:

- a. Parcels contain eligible matter as described in DMM 153.3.0 and DMM 153.4.0.
- b. Parcels bear a PRS label that meets the standards in 4.0.
- c. Parcels show the permit number.

3.3 Customer Mailing Options

Returned parcels may be deposited as follows:

- a. At any Post Office, station, or branch.
- b. In any collection receptacle (e.g., collection box, lobby package drop unit) except a Priority Mail Express collection box, as permitted by each receptacle's size limitations.
- c. With any letter carrier.
- d. As part of a collection run for other mail (special arrangements may be required).
- e. At any place designated by the postmaster for the receipt of mail.
- f. Pickup on Demand service.

3.4 Application Process

Companies who wish to participate in PRS must send a request on company letterhead to the director, Business Acceptance Solutions (see DMM 608.8.0 for address). The request must contain the following information:

- a. Company name and address.
- b. An individual's contact name, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address.
- c. The price category or categories to be used, and the proposed retrieval locations (delivery units and sectional center facilities).
- d. A description of the electronic returns manifesting system to be used to document returns listed by location and price eligibility.

3.5 Approval

The director, Business Acceptance Solutions reviews each request and proceeds as follows:

- a. If the applicant meets the criteria, the director, Business Acceptance Solutions approves the letter of request and sends an authorization letter outlining the terms and conditions for the program. PRS permit holders must submit the authorization letter and PS Form 3801, Standing Delivery Order, to each applicable facility. An acceptable primary form of identification as specified under DMM 608.10.3 is required before each pickup.
- b. If the application does not meet the criteria, the director, Business Acceptance Solutions denies the request and sends a written notice to the applicant with the reason for denial.

3.6 Permit Cancellation

USPS may cancel a PRS permit for any of the following reasons:

- a. The permit holder fails to pay the required postage and fees for returned parcels.
- b. The permit holder does not maintain adequate available funds to cover postage and fees for returned parcels.
- c. The permit holder does not fulfill the terms and conditions of the PRS permit authorization.
- d. The return labels do not conform to the specifications in 4.0.

3.7 Reapplying After Cancellation

To receive a new PRS permit after cancellation under 3.6, the mailer must:

- a. Submit a letter to the director, Business Acceptance Solutions requesting a permit and a new agreement.
- b. Provide evidence showing that the reasons for cancellation no longer exist.
- c. Maintain adequate available funds to cover the expected number of returns.

3.8 Extra Services and Endorsement

Pieces using PRS may not bear an ancillary service endorsement. Insurance is the only available extra services for PRS.

3.9 Pickup Schedule and Location

Permit holders or their agents must set up recurring or standing appointments to retrieve PRS parcels. If the permit holder (or agent) has existing appointments to deliver Parcel Select parcels to destination facilities and those facilities are one of the designated RPFs or designated RDUs, those appointments can be used for retrieving PRS parcels at the same time. Permit holders or their agents must retrieve parcels on a regular schedule as follows:

- a. From all listed RPFs, at a minimum of every 36 hours, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and USPS holidays, unless otherwise authorized. The Postal Service maintains a list of active RPFs and provides shippers 30-day notice of changes to the list. This list is available on the Facility Access and Shipment Tracking system (FAST) at <https://fast.usps.com/fast/>.

- b. From RDUs, at a minimum of 48 hours, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and USPS holidays, unless otherwise authorized. The USPS maintains a list of active RDUs and provides permit holders 30-day notice of changes to the list. This list is available on the Facility Access and Shipment Tracking system (FAST) at <https://fast.usps.com/fast/>.

3.10 Change or Cancel Retrieval Locations

A customer may change or cancel retrieval locations (delivery units and processing facilities) as follows:

- a. *Online.* A customer may change or cancel retrieval locations online at the USPS Business Customer Gateway (BCG) at <https://gateway.usps.com>.
- b. *Letter.* A customer may change or cancel retrieval locations by sending a request on company letterhead to the director, Business Acceptance Solutions (see DMM 608.8.0 for address).

3.11 Parcels Endorsed Hold for Pickup

PRS participants must pay the appropriate Parcel Return Service RDU price under 2.3 for any unclaimed, refused, undeliverable as addressed, or recalled parcels that are endorsed "Hold For Pickup" (under DMM 507.3.0) and that bear the marking "PARCEL RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED" or "PRS REQUESTED" followed by a unique 569 prefix ZIP Code.

3.12 Noncompliant Labels

PRS permit holders must use USPS-certified labels meeting the standards in 4.0. When noncompliant labels are affixed to PRS parcels, which travel through the Postal network to the delivery address of the label, the permit holder will be assessed the appropriate USPS Ground Advantage price, calculated from the parcel's entry point in the USPS network to its delivery address.

4.0 Labels

4.1 Label Preparation

PRS labels must be certified by the USPS for use prior to distribution as defined in the service agreement. In addition, permit holders must obtain USPS certification for barcode symbologies. Except for by FAX, any photographic, mechanical, or electronic process or any combination of these processes may be used to produce PRS labels. The background of the label may be any light color that allows the address, barcodes, and other required information to be easily distinguished. If labels are electronically transmitted to customers for their local printing, the permit holder must advise customers of these printing requirements as part of the instructions in 4.3.

4.2 Labeling Methods

If all applicable contents and formats are approved (including instructions to the user), permit holders or their agents may distribute a PRS label by any of the methods provided under 4.1.

4.3 Labeling Instructions

Regardless of label distribution method, permit holders or their agents must always provide written instructions to the user of the PRS label as follows:

- a. "If your name and address are not already printed in the return address area, please print them neatly in that area or attach a return address label there."
- b. "Attach the label provided by the merchant squarely onto the largest side of the mailpiece, unless you need to use another side to make the parcel more stable. Place the label at least 1 inch from the edge of the parcel, so that it does not fold over to another side. If you are using tape to attach the new label, do not put tape over any barcodes on the label, even if the tape is clear."
- c. "If you are reusing the original container to return the merchandise, use the label to cover your original delivery address, barcodes, and any other postal information on the container. If it is not possible to cover all that information with the label, remove the old labels, mark them out completely with a permanent marker, or cover them completely with blank labels or paper that cannot be seen through. If that cannot be done, or if the original container is no longer sound, please use a new box to return the merchandise and attach the return label to the new box."
- d. "Once repackaged and labeled, mail the parcel at a Post Office, deposit it in a collection box, or leave it with your letter carrier."

4.4 Label Format Elements

PRS labels must meet the standards in the Parcel Labeling Guide available on PostalPro at <https://postalpro.usps.com>. There is no minimum size for PRS labels; however, the label must be big enough to accommodate all of the label elements and standards in this section. All PRS label elements must be legible. Except where a specific type size is required, elements must be large enough to be legible from a normal reading distance and be separate from other elements on the label.

4.5 PRS Label Format Examples

The following are PRS label format examples. Note: The ZIP Code 56999 appears in each example for demonstration purposes only.

- a. Parcel Return Service label using a separate PRS barcode and postal routing barcode.

JOHN DOE
1258 RETURN LN
BETHESDA MD 20817


ZIP - 56999

NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY IF
MAILED IN THE
UNITED STATES

PARCEL RETURN SERVICE
ABC RETURNS PERMIT NO. 77999

USPS PARCEL RETURN SERVICE


9202 3912 3456 7806 1500 09

AGENT / CLIENT NAME
PARCEL RETURN SERVICE
56999

X01

b. Parcel Return Service label using a concatenated barcode.

JOHN DOE
1258 RETURN LN
BETHESDA MD 20817


ZIP - 56999

NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY IF
MAILED IN THE
UNITED STATES

PARCEL RETURN SERVICE
ABC RETURNS PERMIT NO. 77999

ZIP - USPS PARCEL RETURN SERVICE


9202 3912 3456 7806 1500 09

AGENT / CLIENT NAME
PARCEL RETURN SERVICE
56999

X01