Intelligent Mail® Tray Label Certification Guide

(V 1.6)

Voluntary Vendor Certification

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INTELLIGENT MAIL® TRAY LABEL CERTIFICATION PROCESS OVERVIEW

To ensure accuracy, optimal bar code quality and readability of the Intelligent Mail Tray Label, the USPS® offers a voluntary label certification process of the Intelligent Mail Tray Label for software vendors that generate tray label software. This certification process will validate the Intelligent Mail Tray Label design specifications, technical barcode requirements for the tray barcodes, placement of the barcode and human-readable data elements on the label, as well as the ability to generate accurate label content. The USPS published specifications for the Intelligent Mail Tray Label, USPS-L-3191 & USPS-L-3216 can be obtained from the RIBBS website at http://www.ribbs.usps.gov.

The certification process shall be structured around the following framework:

• Vendors will be certified as either Basic Service or Full Service (Full Service Certification meets the need of both Basic and Full Service). The guides for Intelligent Mail are available on our website at https://ribbs.usps.gov/index.cfm?page=intellmailguides.

• A vendor who does not typically submit mailings will not be assigned a Mailer ID. A generic MID for certification purposes only will be assigned to software vendors.

• The vendors will submit physical label samples for each format, for which they are requesting certification, to the NCSC Barcode Certification Department (IMTL Certification). These labels are to be representative samples of the labels that will be applied to mail trays, sacks or tubs for submission to the USPS.

• Basic Service Certification will require labels presented with unique destination ZIP Codes, for each format for which certification is being requested. The same destination ZIP Codes can be used for each format (as described on page 2). The NCSC will review the ZIP Code on each label to ensure that 100 unique destination ZIP Codes have been submitted.

• Full Service Certification will require labels presented with unique serial numbers in addition to the unique destination ZIP Codes, for each format for which certification is being requested. The same destination ZIP Codes can be used for each format (as described on page 2).

1. The NCSC will review the individual serial number on each label submitted to ensure that every label has a unique sequential serial number.

2. The NCSC will review the ZIP Code on each label to ensure that 100 unique destination ZIP Codes have been submitted.

• All required information must be submitted for each operational configuration (software version number, firmware, printer line, printer make and model, etc.) in order to be certified.

• The USPS barcode review process certifies the labels at the point in time they were printed and submitted. However, subsequent barcode printing could result in the output of non-compliant barcodes based on various other factors.

• Interim reviews of barcode quality may result in re-certification.
• The re-certification process shall be similar to the initial certification process.

DETAILS OF THE INTELLIGENT MAIL® TRAY LABEL CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Voluntary Vendor Certification Process

Certification will include the evaluation of submitted physical Intelligent Mail Tray Labels for the valid defined formats, namely the legacy 10-digit, the transitional10/24-digit, and the pure 24-digit. Verification of a barcode symbol means to test the accuracy or correctness of a barcode in comparison to a written industry standard or specification to maximize reliability. NCSC, Barcode Certification Department will verify the barcode quality and certify that the mailer has met the USPS requirements as specified in Technical Spec USPS-L-3191 & USPS-L-3216, Labels, Tray and Sack, Barcoded, 10 and 10/24-digit Transitional, Intelligent mail (Mailer Uses).

The test steps are outlined below:

Step 1: Vendors will notify the NCSC, Barcode Certification Department that they wish to participate in the Intelligent Mail Tray Label Certification program. Participants may contact the NCSC, Barcode Certification Department by calling 1-877-640-0724, option 2 for application information or to locate the IMTL information on the RIBBS web site. Participants will then complete and submit PS Form 5113, Barcode Certification Customer Application.

Step 2: Upon receipt of a vendor's application, the NCSC, Barcode Certification Department assigns a generic MID for certification purposes.

Step 3: The IM Tray Label vendor will submit 100 physical labels per printer model and format, produced from their commercial software for certification along with a copy of a completed PS Form 5114, Barcode Certification Printer Submission Form to the address below:

IMTL BARCODE CERTIFICATION
NATIONAL CUSTOMER SUPPORT CENTER
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE®
225 N Humphreys Blvd Ste 501
Memphis, TN 38188-1001

Note:
Normal turnaround for the Intelligent Mail Tray Labels submitted for evaluation will be within a 48 hour time frame upon receipt by the NCSC, Barcode Certification Department. The labels will be examined and scanned. NCSC, Barcode Certification Department will ensure that the label barcode and other related label information on the test labels match the appropriate requirements in the Technical Spec USPS-L-3191 & USPS-L-3216. Analysis of the Intelligent Mail Tray Label barcode includes format, readability, and reflectance tests in accordance with Technical Spec USPS-L-3191 & USPS-L-3216.

Step 4: NCSC will communicate results of their findings to the participants via email.
Note:

i. Vendors who pass certification receive PS Form 3114 as documentation for successfully completing the IMTL Certification.

ii. Vendors who do not pass certification will be notified via email highlighting aspects of the barcode that need to be improved before certification can be completed. Vendors will be required to make corrections and resubmit samples for a full evaluation if they still wish to pursue certification.

iii. If there is a change made to the vendor software that affects the quality of the barcode, re-certification must occur at that time to maintain certification.

iv. To maintain certification vendors will be required to have their software re-certified if the Technical Specifications USPS-L-3191 or USPS-L-3216 are modified and re-issued by the USPS.

Step 5: A list of certified vendors will be maintained on both the RIBBS and Business Mail Acceptance (BMA) websites.

Voluntary Customer Barcode Validation Process

Mailers who are **not** software vendors may request to have their Intelligent Mail barcodes, Intelligent Mail tray labels, and Intelligent Mail container barcodes **validated** by their local Mailpiece Design Analyst (MDA).

The Mailpiece Design Analyst will validate the design specifications, placement and content of the barcode and human-readable data elements, including technical barcode requirements of IM barcodes, IM tray labels and IM container barcodes. In addition, the MDA will verify barcode quality and validate that the mailer has satisfied the USPS requirements as defined in USPS-L-3200 Intelligent Mail Barcode Specification, USPS-L-3191 & USPS-L-3216 Intelligent Mail Tray and Sack Label Specification, and USPS-L-3215 Intelligent Mail Container Barcode Specification.

The validation test steps are outlined below:

Step 1: Mailers will notify the MDA that they wish to have their barcodes validated and provide their Mailer ID number.

Step 2: Mailers will submit a minimum of **10 samples** of each barcode type to be validated. Intelligent Mail barcodes must be submitted on the physical paper stock and color intended to produce the mailpiece. Intelligent Mail tray labels must be submitted on the physical paper stock intended to produce the labels. Intelligent Mail container barcodes must be submitted on the physical paper stock intended to produce the placard.

Note: PDF images will not be accepted for testing.

4 Step 3: Upon completion of the test, the MDA will communicate the results of their findings to the requestor via email. Mailers will receive a detailed checklist indicating any portion of the test that may have failed the specification requirements.

Mailing Acceptance and Verification Procedures

Tray Labels will be verified as part of the verification procedures conducted by USPS business mail acceptance personnel. BMEU acceptance personnel will initiate an eMIR report if label irregularities are noted per the verification procedures defined for Intelligent Mail outlined in the DM-109.