

## **Commonly Asked MDA Customer Questions**

### **1. Can we tell how many people may be waiting ahead when calling?**

Not at this time, but we are always looking for ways to improve the process and we appreciate all feedback. Suggestions can be submitted via the [MDA Customer Service Survey](#).

### **2. Do you have an idea what the wait times are when calling in to the Mailpiece Design Analyst (MDA) Help Desk?**

It depends on the number of calls in queue at the time. Wait time can vary from no time at all (routes directly to MDA) to a few minutes. There are times when we experience high call volumes and wait time increases.

### **3. Approximately how many MDAs are there? How many handle a particular region?**

There are 35 MDAs nationally servicing the entire country.

### **4. Can MDAs still assist customers in person?**

Yes. Customers have a “walk-in” option for mailpiece design requests. The MDA must open a ticket at the time of the visit and provide the ticket number to the customer. A new ticket must be opened for each request. We recommend calling the MDA Customer Service Help Desk first to check the MDA’s availability and to make arrangements. If you already know the MDA in your area, you can ask for them by name and the MDA answering the phone or email can help direct your request.

### **5. Can I still request to work with a specific MDA?**

Yes. While all calls and emails are routed to MDAs that are ready and able to assist, customers can still request that a call or email be transferred to a specific MDA. MDAs have been trained to offer their assistance, but can check to see if the requested MDA is available to assist. At the customer’s request, the MDA will attempt to transfer a call to the requested MDA or their voicemail. If it is an email request, the email can be transferred to the requested MDA.

### **6. How long does the mailpiece evaluation process take?**

Turnaround time is between 24 and 48 hours from the time we receive the request and needed information/sample(s).

### **7. There is an MDA within driving distance from me. Is there a way to be routed to that specific MDA in case I need to bring a mailpiece for a physical mailpiece review?**

Yes. When you call **1-855-593-6093** or direct your inquiry to [MDA@usps.gov](mailto:MDA@usps.gov), the MDA receiving your request will be able to let you know if a physical review is needed. If it is, you can request to work with the MDA near you. The MDA that receives your request will be able to let you know if the requested MDA is available and can help connect you with that MDA. In-person assistance from an MDA is also referred to as a “walk-in” appointment. If you are in need of in-person assistance and an MDA is not within driving distance from your location, you can contact your local district’s Business Mail Entry facility, Mailing Requirements, or nearest Business Mail Acceptance Unit for assistance. They may be able to assist you or help determine if the piece should be sent to an MDA for evaluation or testing.

### **8. What documentation is provided by the MDA after a mailpiece review?**

An MDA can provide a verbal answer and/or relay information to you via email. MDAs can also send you a written response on postal letterhead. The USPS offers all customers the ability to participate in the EMAC (Enhanced Mailpiece Automation Compatibility) review program. To request a formal written response via the EMAC program, please submit the designated MDA Assistance Request form available on our RIBBS website at:

[https://ribbs.usps.gov/bma\\_mdasupport/documents/tech\\_guides/MDAAssistanceRequestForm.pdf](https://ribbs.usps.gov/bma_mdasupport/documents/tech_guides/MDAAssistanceRequestForm.pdf)

For additional information regarding our EMAC program, please review our EMAC FAQ webpage at:

[https://ribbs.usps.gov/bma\\_mdasupport/documents/tech\\_guides/EMACReviewExtFAQ.pdf](https://ribbs.usps.gov/bma_mdasupport/documents/tech_guides/EMACReviewExtFAQ.pdf)

### **9. Can I have artwork evaluated before I submit a request for Qualified Business Reply Mail (QBRM) approval?**

Yes. Simply submit your Reply Mail artwork or mock-up for evaluation prior to producing your final piece and submitting a request for QBRM approval.

### **10. What is the turnaround time for QBRM process when submitted to the local Post Office?**

The local Post Office will need the sample pieces and completed PS Form 6805. The QBRM approval process requires that a permit number and ZIP+4 Code be obtained from the local office. After the permit is acquired and/or verified, and the ZIP+4 Code has been assigned or validated using PS Form 6805, the customer submits the pieces and a request to distribute QBRM to the local office. The local office personnel will then contact the MDA Customer Service Help Desk, request a ticket number, and submit the documentation package (completed PS Form 6805 and 10 sample mailpieces) to the MDA. After the MDA is in possession of the documentation package, the customer can expect a response within 24 to 48 hours.

### **11. Why does PS Form 6805 ask for mailpiece dimensions?**

The PS Form 6805 is a multipurpose form. In addition to QBRM approval and ZIP+4 Code assignments, the PS Form 6805 is used for permit and ZIP+4 Code validations before creating BRM or QBRM artwork. When the Address Management System (AMS) office receives PS Form 6805, they verify that the category being requesting is correct. QBRM ZIP+4 Code assignments are not interchangeable within the categories and cannot be used on BRM pieces. Customers wishing to distribute QBRM must have a ZIP+4 Code assigned specifically for the category (size/weight) they are requesting: one ZIP+4 for postcards, one ZIP+4 for pieces up to 1oz, or one ZIP+4 for pieces up to 2oz. For example: A customer wishing to distribute QBRM Postcard would request the corresponding ZIP+4, but they would be required to maintain the size of the piece between 3.5"x5" and 4.25"x6". In addition, if the customer wishes to create artwork but is unable to use the Automated Business Reply Mail (ABRM) tool, the completed PS Form 6805 is provided to the MDA. The MDA will use the physical dimensions listed and additional information on the PS Form 6805 to create the artwork.

**12. Is it true that if any changes are made to a QBRM piece (i.e., the size, content, company name, address, etc.) it has to be resubmitted for approval?**

Yes. In order to receive QBRM prices, the piece has to be reviewed and approved by an MDA. This approval process requires a completed PS Form 6805 and 10 mailpieces.

**13. I have a periodical mailer who gets complaints about torn copies. Will an MDA evaluate the mail pieces and give suggestions to prevent damage?**

MDAs can assist with initial reviews to help determine if the mailpiece meets the design requirements and what could be done to alleviate the problem. If an MDA cannot determine the cause of damage, they may escalate to Pricing and Classification Service Center (PCSC) for additional review. If mailing requirements personnel or another postal entity has already determined that the piece meets the criteria, they can submit the samples to the Manager of Business Mail Entry and they can submit to PCSC.

**14. Are Envelope Manager and DAZZle design tools that mailers can use?**

Yes. This software is sold to the public by the manufacturer, and it is used by MDAs to create reply mail artwork. In addition, the Automated Business Reply Mail (ABRM) tool is a fast, self-service online option offered by USPS and used by mailers to create artwork. The ABRM tool is available 24 hours a day / 7 days a week. In instances when the ABRM tool limitations may prevent the user from creating artwork, the MDAs will help to create the artwork.

**15. Are there times when physical mailpiece samples need to be directly sent to MDAs?**

Yes. Depending on the type of evaluation needed, a physical sample may be needed to make an accurate determination. An MDA will be able to advise you when a physical sample is needed.

**16. What types of tests would need a physical sample?**

These are some examples: IMb Tracing test; ACS test; selected folded self-mailers; paper thickness test; reflectance tests –paper color/ink color; general barcode parameters and readability tests such as IMb; Intelligent Mail tray label and container barcode tests; pieces with magnets; pieces with uneven thickness, etc.

**17. Can I work with my local business mail entry unit to know when I need to submit physical samples to an MDA?**

Yes. The BMEU is a great place to start. They'll be able to assist in many cases and help you determine when a physical sample should be sent to an MDA.

**18. How will I know where to send my sample pieces?**

When you contact an MDA, they will provide you with an address where to mail the sample if they determine that a physical sample is needed.

**19. What is the turnaround time to get an answer when a physical sample is needed?**

Depending on the method of mailing, an MDA can help estimate how soon your sample will arrive. If you send your piece by First-Class Mail or Priority Mail; it can take 2-3 business days. We recommend that you use Express Mail for time-sensitive pieces that require a guaranteed arrival date.

**20. How long does it take to get an answer from an MDA?**

We are committed to provide responses within 2 business days. With our new direct call and email routing to next available MDA during business hours, MDAs may be able to provide quicker service depending on the question and whether or not they have all the information needed. If an MDA is not able to provide an answer within 48 hours, they will provide an update every 48 hours on the status of their progress.

**21. Is there a charge for requesting a mailpiece evaluation from an MDA?**

No, there is no charge. The assistance of MDAs is a complimentary service provided by USPS.

**22. Will an MDA review a mailpiece that is going to be processed through EDDM (Every Door Direct)?**

Yes, MDAs can assist with EDDM questions and samples. Your local BMEU and District Mailing Requirements office can help as well.

**23. Can I mail a 3"x4" magnet with a letter inside a #10 window envelope at presorted standard rates?**

The magnet would need to be secured to avoid shifting and a #10 envelope should be suitable for a presorted letter-size mailing. However, this would be an example of a mailpiece for which the MDA would need to see a physical sample and conduct a thorough evaluation before providing an answer.