

USPS Picture Permit™ indicia

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General Program Information

The United States Postal Service® introduced USPS Picture Permit Imprint™ indicia program in June 2012. This service is available for mailings of automation First-Class Mail® letters and postcards and USPS Marketing Mail™ letters.

- **What is USPS Picture Permit™ indicia?**

USPS Picture Permit™ indicia (PPI) provides organizations the opportunity to include their corporate logo, brand images, or trademarks in the permit indicia space of First-Class Mail® automation letters and postcards, and all USPS Marketing Mail™ letters. The addition of images to the permit imprint indicia has the potential of increasing open rates and enhancing the value of the mail.

- **Why does the U.S. Postal Service® offer USPS Picture Permit™ indicia?**

The U.S. Postal Service responded to requests from organizations to use their corporate logos, brand images or trademarks in the permit indicia space and to improve the open rates of their mailpieces. In creating USPS Picture Permit™ indicia, the U.S. Postal Service® has developed guidelines and requirements for the use of organizations' proprietary images in the permit indicia space of the mailpiece.

- **How will my company benefit from using USPS Picture Permit™ indicia?**

PPI could boost the visual impact and open rate of your mailpiece, which will improve the effectiveness of the overall mailing.

- **Who may apply for USPS Picture Permit™ indicia?**

Organizations that plan to use a new or existing mailing permit to send First-Class Mail automation letters and postcards or USPS Marketing Mail™ letters.

- **How do I apply?**

Follow the instructions provided on Business Customer Gateway/Mailing Services/Picture Permit: <https://gateway.usps.com/eAdmin/view/signin>

Requirements

- **What are the requirements for USPS Picture Permit™ indicia?**

The requirements for PPI are the following:

- Commercial Presort Permit Imprint
- Automation First-Class Mail letters and postcards
- Automation USPS Marketing Mail™ letters
- Customized portions of the proposed indicia design **must be in color**, e.g., your corporate logo, brand images and trademarks.
- Required elements of the indicia must be in black, e.g., class of mail, U.S. Postage Paid, permit number, etc.

- **What mail is eligible for USPS Picture Permit™ indicia?**

The following types of mail are eligible for PPI:

- First-Class Mail Automation letters and postcards
- USPS Marketing Mail™ Automation letters

- **What are the required elements for the USPS Picture Permit™ indicia space?**

The required elements for the PPI space are the following:

- Mail Class (in all caps)
- U. S. Postage Paid
- Permit Number
- City and State (ZIP Code™ optional)
- Company Name – May be used in lieu of Permit Number, City, and State if specific requirements per Sect. 604.5.3.9 of the Domestic Mail Manual (DMM) are met.

PPI is an enhancement for the indicia space; it does not replace the basic indicia elements. All existing permit indicia markings are still required, including the mail class, U.S. Postage Paid, City, State, and Permit Number or the company name in lieu of city, state, and permit number when using a company permit imprint as per Sect. 604.5.3.9 of the DMM.

- **Is use of the Full-Service IMb required for USPS Picture Permit™ indicia mailings?**

No, Full -Service IMb is not required.

- **Why do the images in the USPS Picture Permit™ indicia need to be in color?**

Black and white images did not perform to satisfaction in operational tests; therefore color images and logos are required.

- **Who is responsible for the image in the USPS Picture Permit™ indicia space?**

The mail owner has the responsibility for the image in the PPI space. Images are not provided or endorsed by the Postal Service.

- **Is there a fee to use USPS Picture Permit™ indicia?**

Yes, there is a fee to use PPI

- The fee for First-Class Mail Automation letters and postcards is one cent (1¢) per mailpiece (plus applicable postage)

- The fee for USPS Marketing Mail™ Automation letters and postcards is two cents (2¢) per mailpiece (plus applicable postage)

USPS Picture Permit™ indicia Authorization Process

- **What is the authorization process for Picture Permit?**

Step 1: Go to Business Customer Gateway/Mailing Services/Picture Permit: <https://gateway.usps.com/eAdmin/view/signin> to register and upload a pdf file of an addressed mailpiece showing envelope/postcard dimensions, clear zone and proposed Picture Permit design

Step 2: Once registered and customized image is received, the organization will confirm the application has been reviewed and approved. Application status will be posted on the BCG Dashboard.

Step 3: If your user id does not have any Permit Indicia (PI) or OMAS Indicia (OI) permits for the CRIDS you are authorized for. Please return to the USPS Business Customer gateway and request Picture Permit Indicia access for one or more of your business locations which have a PI or OI permit.

Mailpiece Design Analyst Evaluation Process

Letter Mail conforming to DMM 604.5.4, Picture Permit Imprint Indicia (PPII), shall undergo the Mailpiece Design Analyst evaluation process which takes approximately 2-3 business days as long as the sample mailpiece meet all the technical requirements. Mailers will be able to follow the approval status on the Business Customer Gateway Dashboard.

Mailers shall provide a pdf production sample which will replicate what will be printed and produced in the live mailstream. The sample mailpiece must include the following requirements:

- Complete and valid destination address
- Color image shall not contain embedded text or numbers.
- Color image shall not have a drop shadow on any edge.
- PPI image area (including .50" left and bottom clear zone) to be on white background (no reverse print).
- PPI image shall be positioned in upper right-hand corner with "clear zones" as shown in Fig. B
- Overall width of longest text line shall not be less than width of image as shown in Fig. C
- All mail class text to conform to the approved template provided by USPS.
- No disk mailers, reusable envelopes, perforated folded self-mailers, windowed envelopes.
- Does not exhibit any of the non-machinable criteria listed in DMM 101.1.2.

*For more details please review the Picture Permit Technical Requirements Document

- **Where may I find more information about USPS Picture Permit™ indicia online?**

Additional PPI information (listed below) can be found at:

<https://postalpro.usps.com/mailing/usps-picture-permit-indicia-ppi>

- Program Overview
 - Fact Sheet
 - FAQs
 - USPS Picture Permit™ indicia Product Requirements
 - USPS Picture Permit™ indicia Technical Requirements
 - Registration Link
 - PPI Program Office (PO) email address
- **How will I know if my application is approved?**

Status updates are posted on the Business Customer Gateway Dashboard

- **How do I contact the Picture Permit Program Office?**

By Mail: UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE®
ATTN: USPS PICTURE PERMIT™ indicia
475 L'ENFANT PLAZA, SW ROOM 2P916
WASHINGTON, DC 20260-5538

By Email: picturepermit@usps.gov

Commingling of Mail

- **Can mail be commingled for USPS Picture Permit™ indicia?**

Yes, mail can be commingled for PPI.

- **Does the commingled mailing need to be entered as part of a Full-Service automation mailing?**

No, the commingled mailing doesn't need to be entered as part of a Full-Service automation mailing.

- **Can Full-Service and Basic Service automation pieces be included and qualify for payment of the USPS Picture Permit™ indicia fee within the combined mailing?**

Yes, Full-Service and Basic Service automation pieces can be included and qualify for payment of the PPI fee within the combined mailing.

- **Can Non-Automation mailpieces be submitted and qualify for payment of the USPS Picture Permit™ indicia fees?**

Yes, non-automation mailpieces can be submitted and qualify for payment of the Picture Permit fees provided:

- Machinable (presort) mailing are presented as a combined mailing and supported by electronic documentation and separate postage statement by client.
- Or machinable (presort) mailing may be presented as a separate identical weight presort mailing for just the PPI pieces.
- Single-piece PPI pieces may qualify for payment of the PPI fee when prepared and presented in groups of 100 by ounce increment.

- **How are the commingled mailings submitted?**

The commingled mailings are submitted on eDoc (Mail.dat or Mail.xml) and the Mail Owner and Mailing Agent must be identified in the eDoc.

- **Is the mail owner required to be listed on the Customer Mail Report?**

Yes, the mail owner is required to be listed on the Customer Mail Report.

- **Does a separate postage statement need to be submitted for each USPS Picture Permit™ **indicia** mail owner?**

Yes, a separate postage statement needs to be submitted for each PPI mail owner.

- **Do all of the mailpieces represented on the individual postage statement need to be 100% USPS Picture Permit™ **indicia**?**

Yes, all of the mailpieces represented on the individual postage statement need to be 100% PPI.

- **Will USPS Picture Permit™ **indicia** piece counts be verified in conjunction with the Mail Piece Count Verification performed at time of acceptance?**

Yes, PPI piece counts will be verified in conjunction with the Mail Piece Count Verification performed at time of acceptance.

Mail Service Providers

- **Can a Mail Service Provider (MSP) apply for USPS Picture Permit™ **indicia** authorization on behalf of their clients?**

Yes, MSPs may apply for the PPI as long as they have written authorization from the mail owner. However, the mail owner remains responsible for the images appearing on the PPI space.

Permit Imprint

- **Is a mailing permit required to participate in USPS Picture Permit™ **indicia**?**

Yes, a new *or* existing mailing permit is required to participate.

- **Can I customize my existing permit with images?**

Yes, your existing permit imprint **indicia** may be modified as long as you complete the authorization process as outlined on the web site.

- **How do I obtain a mailing permit to participate in USPS Picture Permit™ **indicia**?**

Complete *PS Form 3615, Mailing Permit Application and Customer Profile*, and submit it to the Post Office™ where your mailings will be entered.

Sample Mailpiece(s)

What information is required on the sample mailpieces?

If there is an issue with the pdf version of your mailpiece it may be required to submit up to 50 samples.

- The information that is required on the sample mailpiece(s) are:
 - Complete and valid destination address
 - Picture Permit Imprint Indicia

Why are a variety of valid addresses needed on sample pieces?

In order to test return-to-sender and undeliverable-as-addressed automation capabilities, a variety of valid addresses are needed. Without a complete and valid address, all pieces are rejected and therefore cannot be appropriately tested.

Where do I submit the sample mailpieces for USPS Picture Permit™ indicia?

You submit the samples to the program office at the following address:

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE®
ATTN: USPS PICTURE PERMIT™ [indicia](#)
475 L'ENFANT PLAZA, SW ROOM 2P916
WASHINGTON, DC 20260-5538

Additional Information:

For additional information on PPI, please go to: <https://postalpro.usps.com/mailing/usps-picture-permit-indicia-ppi> or email questions to picturepermit@usps.gov.