

United States Postal Service®

INDUSTRYALERT

June 27, 2023

The Postal Service Allows a Grace Period for Implementation of the USPS Ground Advantage™ Service Type Codes (STCs)

Effective: July 9, 2023

During the grace period, the Postal Service will continue to accept, process, and deliver all legacy products that will merge to form USPS Ground Advantage without penalty or assessment. These products are:

- First-Class Package Service
- First-Class Package Return Service
- Parcel Select Ground
- Ground Returns

The Postal Service will allow this grace period following the implementation of USPS Ground Advantage on July 9, 2023. This grace period is effective until **September 30, 2023**. The grace period will also allow for the receipt of parcels already in transit for delivery at the time of the implementation of USPS Ground Advantage.

The grace period will expire on **September 30, 2023**. At that time, mailers will be required to comply with the new mailing rules, and noncompliance fees will be applied appropriately. Mailers are encouraged to adopt the new rules as soon as possible.

New IMpb Barcode Quality Validation Requirement

The Postal Service relies on the accuracy of Intelligent Mail® Package Barcodes (IMpb) and the data contained within the barcodes, such as Service Type Codes (STCs). Accordingly, the Postal Service is proposing to add a third validation under its IMpb compliance category Barcode Quality (BQ). This new validation will require that an IMpb must include a valid, unique 3-digit Service Type Code that accurately represents the mail class, product, and service combination on the physical label affixed to the package. Also, the IMpb on the package must also correspond with electronic package level details and Extra Services Code(s) contained within the Shipping Services File (SSF).

Any variance in the data presented in the electronic submission of a parcel with the physical aspect of the label affixed to a parcel presented for mailing will be subject to the IMpb noncompliance fee if a mailer falls below the 98 percent threshold. The Postal Service is proposing to implement this change effective October 1, 2023, and believes that this proposed revision will enable the Postal Service to provide a better and more efficient delivery experience for customers.

The new barcode quality validation requirement will be updated in the Domestic Mail Manual (DMM), section 204.2.1.8.

Please direct any inquiries or concerns to the Mailing and Shipping Solutions Center (MSSC) via eMail: MSSC@usps.gov or telephone (877) 672-0007.

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