



TRADITIONAL ACS™

SHIPPER PAID SERVICES

TECHNICAL GUIDE



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Change History

Version #	Date	Title	Description of Change
1.9	01/21/2024	Forwarding Postage Rates for Shipper Paid Services Parcels Shipper Paid Service Fees Keyline Requirements	Updated Mail Class information, removed references to Parcel Select Lightweight, First Class Package Services, and USPS Retail Ground. Removed reference to “ZONE” price for Bound Printed Matter.
1.8	10/18/2019	Billing	Updated to reflect NCSC invoices less than \$25 will not produce an invoice. ACS customers whose balance remains less than \$25 will be sent an annual invoice on September 24 of each year and any outstanding balance is due and payable
1.7	01/25/2019	Return Postage Rates for Shipper Paid Services Parcels	Changed Up to 13 oz = First-Class Package Service to reflect Retail ZONE price
1.7	01/25/2019	Forwarding Postage Rates for Shipper Paid Services Parcels	Changed Up to 13 oz = First-Class Package Service to reflect Retail ZONE price
1.7	01/25/2019	Standard Post	Changed all instances of Standard Post to USPS Retail Ground
1.7	01/25/2019	Document	On January 22, 2017, Standard Mail® underwent a name change and was rebranded as USPS Marketing Mail™ - updated document
1.7	01/25/2019	Document	Updated Links from RIBBS to PostalPro
1.7	01/25/2019	BILLING	Updated verbiage and clarified payment due for invoices less than \$25.00
1.7	01/25/2019	FAQ	Removed question regarding requesting Shipper Paid Services on Standard Mail letters
1.6	09/30/2015	BILLING	Updated
1.5	09/11/2015	BILLING	Added
1.5	09/11/2015	ACS MONTHLY BILLING	Updated
1.5	09/11/2015		Minor corrections to formatting
1.4	05/26/2015	CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED OPTION 2 (CSR2)	Added for for Bound Printed Matter Flats
1.4	05/26/2015	FULFILLMENT FILE ACCESS	Added
1.4	05/26/2015	ACS NOTIFICATION FILE	Added link to ACS file formats
1.4	05/26/2015	ACS MONTHLY BILLING	Added information regarding the improved ACS monthly billing.
1.4	05/26/2015	Clarification	Added clarifications to indicate when return postage and fees will be charged at the local PO, and when they will be charged through ACS via Shipper Paid Return service.
1.3	08/04/2014	Published	Removed watermark with effective date.
1.3	07/27/2014	ANCILLARY SERVICE ENDORSEMENTS AND OPTIONS	Updated the description of ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED (OPTION 3 WITH SHIPPER PAID FORWARDING AND RETURN) for clarity.
1.3	07/27/2014	DMM References	Updated links to the DMM throughout this document and removed obsolete references.
1.3	07/27/2014	KEYLINE REQUIREMENTS	Corrected the minimum length of the keyline (from 4 to 5)
1.3	07/27/2014	WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO TO PARTICIPATE?	Added information that new customers will be required to set up a SingleSource ACS fulfillment account and that existing customers are strongly encouraged to convert their accounts.
1.2b	06/02/2014	INTELLIGENT MAIL BARCODE	Added information on the restriction of IMb use on Traditional ACS with Shipper Paid Services parcels.
1.2b	06/02/2014	COMBINED FULFILLMENT	Removed language that refers to disabling the Mailer ID
1.2	05/22/2014	TRADITIONAL ACS SHIPPER PAID SERVICES FOR PARCELS	Changed the title of the document to reflect “Shipper Paid Services” to incorporate both Forwarding & Return service options that are now available.
1.2	05/22/2014	ANCILLARY SERVICE ENDORSEMENTS AND OPTIONS	Added information on the new endorsement options available as of July 2014. Indicated where a SingleSource

			ACS fulfillment account will be required (ASR SPS3 and RSR SPS3).
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Version #	Date	Title	Description of Change
1.2	05/22/2014	WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO TO PARTICIPATE?	Corrected the IMPORTANT NOTE regarding the Service Type Code to use when an Intelligent Mail® package barcode is present.
1.2	05/22/2014	KEYLINE REQUIREMENTS	Corrected keyline code “X” to represent Parcel Select Lightweight in the keyline.
1.2	05/22/2014	BARCODE REQUIREMENTS	Updated language regarding the use of IMb and IMpb on parcels requesting Shipper Paid Services.
1.2	05/22/2014	ACS Notification File	Corrected placement of parsed header in file format description tables and removed references to COBOL programming language in the file format descriptions.
1.1	11/13/2013	Forwarding Postage for Shipper Paid Service Parcels	Changed Parcel Post to Standard Post. Updated links to Notice 123 Price List.
1.1	11/13/2013	Barcode Requirements	Added information regarding the use of the Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb) and Intelligent Mail package barcode (IMpb).
1.1	11/13/2013	Keyline Requirements	“Z” is now used to represent Parcel Select Lightweight parcels in the keyline.

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Introduction

ACS™ is a Move Update option that allows mailers of letters, flats or parcels to receive electronic address correction notices for undeliverable mail. Shipper Paid Service is an ACS fulfillment option that allows parcel mailers to receive an electronic address correction and pay forwarding or return postage via their ACS account. Shipper Paid Service is available for use on parcels mailed at the following prices:

- Parcel Select
- Package Services (including *Library Mail and Media Mail*)
- Bound Printed Matter (including Bound Printed Matter *flats*)
- USPS Marketing Mail™ parcels

Package Services parcels and Bound Printed Mail flats that must be forwarded will arrive as “Postage Due” at the new address. If the addressee refuses the piece to avoid paying the forwarding postage, the parcel is returned to the mailer, and both the forwarding and return postage is charged. Shipper Paid Service provides an option for the shipper to pay the forwarding postage via the ACS account, minimizing the chance that the parcel will be refused.

When forwarding is requested on Marketing Mail parcels, the forwarding postage is collected in the ‘weighted fee’ that is charged for the undeliverable returns. The parcel that cannot be forwarded (Refused, Attempted Not Known, etc.) is charged the USPS Ground Advantage price *multiplied by 2.472*. This “weighted fee” is charged to cover costs incurred to forward those UAA parcels that *could* be forwarded to the new address. The weighted fee on returned pieces does not apply to a Shipper Paid Service Marketing mailer. If the piece is returned at all, the shipper pays the single-piece postage price instead. The Shipper Paid Services mailer may also choose to pay the return postage through their ACS account as well.

There is a Shipper Paid Services option that allows for the forwarding of the parcel when a change of address is available, but the parcels will not be returned if undeliverable for reasons other than a move. This helps shippers to reduce reshipping expenses when notified that the customer has moved.

This technical document contains all the information to help you decide which Shipper Paid Service option works for your shipping needs. It also explains how to prepare your mailing labels to receive electronic change of address, undeliverable notices and Shipper Paid Services. You’ll find details on the format of the electronic notices, including the method in which they are provided. We think you’ll find Shipper Paid Services, used in conjunction with ACS, to be a useful and cost-effective tool for your undeliverable parcel mail.

Administration

The United States Postal Service® (USPS®) provides support for the ACS process through the National Customer Support Center (NCSC) in Memphis TN. Information regarding this service can be found at: <https://postalpro.usps.com/address-quality/ACS>.

If you have questions after reviewing the documentation, contact the NCSC ACS Department via email at acs@usps.gov or by phone at (877) 640-0724 (Option 1). We recommend submitting questions via email.

Disclaimer

The USPS makes no warranty or representation either expressed or implied, with respect to the technology, data and/or the computer system in which it is contained, including its correctness, quality, performance, merchantability, or fitness for any particular purpose.

The USPS will not be liable for direct, indirect, special, incidental, consequential, or other similar damages arising out of use of, or inability to use, ACS™, OneCode ACS®, OneCode Confirm®, *PostalOne!*® and Intelligent Mail® barcode technology and/or computer system, even if advised of the possibility of such damages.

While ACS is designed to substantially reduce the number of address correction notifications provided manually to mailers and replace them with electronic notifications, ACS is not a guaranteed service.

In any data processing environment, sometimes it is possible to receive data or partial data that may not be anticipated by the software which in turn could lead to unexpected results. For this reason the software developed to process ACS transactions must interrogate each record and field according to the specifications contained in the file layouts/formats and descriptions. If any abnormal issue is found, it is suggested that the information be written to an error file for manual review instead of terminating the program.

For assistance in obtaining the 18 character unzip password:

ACS DEPARTMENT Hours: Monday through Friday: 8am - 5pm CST

Dept E-mail: ACS@usps.gov or call Toll Free: 877-640-0724 (Option 1) or FAX: 901-821-6204

For assistance with the Electronic Product Fulfillment (EPF) web site:

EPF DEPARTMENT Hours: Monday through Friday: 8am - 5pm CST

eMail: BXDMM0@usps.gov or call: 1-800-331-5747

Ancillary Service Endorsements and Options

Traditional ACS with Shipper Paid Service mailers have the following ancillary service endorsements and options available for use on their parcels:

IMPORTANT NOTE: A printed ancillary service endorsement is required when Traditional ACS with SPF/SPR is requested. The words “Shipper Paid Service” and the option identified in the descriptions below are not part of the printed ancillary service endorsement that is applied to the parcel.

Address Service Requested

(with Shipper Paid Service Option 1 – includes Shipper Paid Forwarding)

- Mailer may print either “*Address Service Requested*” or “*Electronic Service Requested*” on their parcel.
- If a Change-of-Address (COA) is on file, the parcel is forwarded and an electronic ACS notice is provided. The mailer pays the forwarding postage and address correction fee via ACS.
- If undeliverable for any other reason (Refused, No Such Number, etc.), the parcel is returned to sender. No electronic ACS notice is provided. The mailer pays postage and/or fees for return of the piece at the Post Office of the return address.

(with Shipper Paid Service Option 2 – includes Shipper Paid Forwarding)

- Mailer may print either “*Address Service Requested*” or “*Electronic Service Requested*” on their parcel.
- If a Change-of-Address (COA) is on file, the parcel is forwarded and an electronic ACS notice is provided. The mailer pays the forwarding postage and address correction fee via ACS.
- If undeliverable for any other reason (Refused, No Such Number, etc.), the parcel is returned to sender and an electronic ACS notice is provided. The mailer pays postage and/or fees for return of the piece at the Post Office of the return address.

(with Shipper Paid Service Option 3 – includes Shipper Paid Forwarding and Return)

- Mailer may print either “*Address Service Requested*” or “*Electronic Service Requested*” on their parcel.
- If a Change-of-Address (COA) is on file, the parcel is forwarded and an electronic ACS notice is provided. The mailer pays the forwarding postage and address correction fee via ACS.
- If undeliverable for any other reason (Refused, No Such Number, etc.), the parcel is returned to sender and an electronic ACS notice is provided. The mailer pays postage and/or fees for return of the piece via ACS.
- The monthly ACS Invoice will include forwarding and return postage charges.

Note: “Address Service Requested – BPRS” used in conjunction with Bulk Parcel Return Service is not recommended for the Marketing Mail parcel shipper at this time.

Change Service Requested¹

IMPORTANT NOTE: A printed ancillary service endorsement is required when Traditional ACS with SPF/SPR is requested. The words “Shipper Paid Service” and the option identified in the descriptions below are not part of the printed ancillary service endorsement that is applied to the parcel.

(with Shipper Paid Service Option 2 - includes Shipper Paid Forwarding)

- Mailer may print either “*Change Service Requested*” or “*Electronic Service Requested*”¹ on their parcel.
- During months 1-12 of a COA, the parcel is forwarded and an electronic ACS notice is provided. The mailer pays the appropriate forwarding postage and address correction fee via ACS.
- If the COA is over 12 months old or if undeliverable for any other reason (Refused, No Such Number, etc.), an ACS notice is provided and the parcel is disposed of by the USPS®. The mailer pays only the electronic address correction fee via ACS.

IMPORTANT NOTE: When mailing Bound Printed Matter flats using the IMb, use the **Traditional ACS - CSR2** Service Type ID (STID) in the barcode. The most current list of Service Type Identifiers can be found at this link: https://postalpro.usps.com/address-quality/ACS/AppendixA_STID_Details

“Electronic Service Requested” as a Printed Endorsement

“Electronic Service Requested” may be printed only on parcels requesting ACS. The actual “Address Service Requested” or “Change Service Requested” endorsement and option is identified within the ACS Profile for the Participant ID. The ACS Profile is maintained and managed by the ACS Department of the National Customer Support Center in Memphis TN.

Mailers must choose which printed ancillary service endorsement provides the handling and disposition that best meets their needs. Printing the optional proxy endorsement “Electronic Service Requested” allows shippers to vary their endorsement option by the choice of Participant ID used on the piece. Mailers that need to use multiple endorsements and options for their parcels will be assigned a separate Participant ID for each. When a specific ancillary service and option is desired, the mailer need only print the matching Participant ID in the address block.

The printed endorsement “Electronic Service Requested” on the mail is a generic endorsement that instructs Post Offices to send UAA mail to a CFS or PARS operation so an electronic ACS notice can be generated. The disposition of the mail will vary depending on the mail class, the presence and age of a COA record, and which ancillary service is associated to the Participant ID printed in the address block. Under certain circumstances, an electronic notice cannot be created and the piece may be forwarded to the addressee, returned as undeliverable, or discarded without generating an electronic ACS notice and Shipper Paid Services.

IMPORTANT NOTE: “Electronic Service Requested” may only be used on parcels that are properly prepared to request electronic ACS. If no address corrections or manual address corrections are desired, this printed endorsement is not allowed.

¹ Refer to DMM 507.1.5 for information regarding restrictions that apply to the use of Change Service Requested.

Forwarding Postage Rates for Shipper Paid Services Parcels:

When a parcel is forwarded, the forwarding postage is calculated and charged to your ACS account as follows:

Table 1: Forwarding Postage for USPS Marketing Mail™ and Parcel Select Lightweight Parcels

USPS Marketing Mail Parcels:

USPS Ground Advantage™ – Retail ZONE price

For specific postage prices by weight, refer to [Notice 123 Price List](#)

Table 2: Forwarding Postage for Parcel Select and Package Services Parcels

Parcel Select
USPS Ground Advantage™ - Commercial Zone Price, plus the ACS SPF/SPR Additional Service Fee
Media Mail & Library Mail:
Media Mail or Library Mail – Retail Large Envelope & Parcel Single-Piece Price
Bound Printed Matter Parcels & Flats:
Bound Printed Matter – Commercial Parcels Nonpresorted Price

Return Postage Rates for Shipper Paid Services Parcels:

Address Service Requested used with Shipper Paid Service results in the return of the piece if the parcel cannot be forwarded. Return postage is collected at the Post Office of the return address and charged as follows:

Table 3: Return Postage for USPS Marketing Mail™ and Parcel Select Lightweight Parcels

USPS Marketing Mail Parcels:

USPS Ground Advantage™ – Retail ZONE price

For specific postage prices by weight, refer to [Notice 123 Price List](#).

Table 4: Return Postage for Parcel Select and Package Services Parcels

Parcel Select:
USPS Ground Advantage™ - Commercial Zone Price, plus the ACS SPF/SPR Additional Service Fee
Media Mail & Library Mail:
Media Mail & Library Mail - Retail Large Envelope & Parcel Single-Piece Price
Bound Printed Matter Parcels & Flats:
Bound Printed Matter - Commercial Parcels Nonpresorted Price

Note: Shipper Paid Service used in conjunction with Bulk Parcel Return Service is not available for the Marketing Mail parcel shipper at this time.

Shipper Paid Service Fees:

An [Electronic Address Correction Fee](#) is charged on your monthly ACS invoice for each ACS COA or Nixie notice provided. The fee amount is found in the [Notice 123 Price List](#) under Domestic Other Services and Fees.

For Parcel Select parcels, a reduced [ACS SPF/SPR Additional Service Fee](#) is charged on your monthly ACS invoice for each forwarded Parcel Select parcel.

When Shipper Paid Return services are requested, Parcel Select parcels that are not forwardable and must be returned to the sender are charged the reduced [ACS SPF/SPR Additional Service Fee](#). If the ancillary service does not include Shipper Paid Return services, the Parcel Select [Additional Service Fee](#) will be charged at the Post Office where the parcel is returned.

For information regarding the price of the Additional Service Fee, refer to [Notice 123 Price List](#) under Domestic Business Mailing Fees.

Billing

The ACS billing cycle is from the 25th of the month to the 24th of the next month.

Payment must be submitted with a copy of the invoice remittance slip within 30 days of the invoice date. Unpaid balances more than 30 days old will be charged an annual interest rate of 10 percent. Delinquent accounts may cause the interruption of ACS fulfillment and may result in manual address correction notices or returned mail.

NOTE: To reconcile your monthly invoice, you must include the counts on each of the Shipping Notice files received during the billing period.

Older ACS accounts are invoiced through the San Mateo Accounting Service Center and have “MEM” as a prefix to their account number. Invoices provided by San Mateo Accounting Service Center **are not posted to EPF in an electronic file format**. ACS accounts invoiced by San Mateo Accounting Service Center will receive a **mailed invoice and statement monthly if the balance is more than \$25**. ACS customers whose balance remains less than \$25 will be sent an annual invoice on September 24 of each year. Any outstanding balance is due and payable. Account balances less than \$25.00 will not reflect a finance charge until the delinquent balance is equal to or greater than \$25.00. **The mailed invoice only provides summary information from the shipping notice and does not reflect the detailed information provided by the shipping notice.**

Customers receiving mailed invoices but would prefer to have electronic billing may request a switch to that service by emailing acs@usps.gov with their current account number(s) and request “NCSC Billing” for future invoices.

New ACS accounts are invoiced through the NCSC Accounting and have “SS” as a prefix to their account number. Invoices provided by NCSC Accounting are in an electronic file format and are posted to the customers EPF account if the balance is more than \$25. ACS customers whose balance remains less than \$25 will be sent an annual invoice on September 24 of each year and any outstanding balance is due and payable. Within 6 days after the end of the ACS billing cycle, an additional zipped file will be posted to the EPF account that contains a CSV data file and a PDF version of your invoice. **It is the responsibility of the account owner or service provider to retrieve the monthly invoices from the EPF account.** The invoice will include the very detailed information provided on the Shipping Notice files for the fulfillments provided during the ACS billing cycle. Information regarding file formats, NCSC Billing and invoice files can be found in the [ACS File Format Technical Guide](#) which can be found at: <https://postalpro.usps.com/address-quality/ACS>.

Each PDF version of your invoice contains a statement that lists outstanding balances for the last 12 months.

Credit Card and ACH Credit payment options available to NCSC Accounting customers please contact the NCSC Accounts Receivable Department at 901-681-4658 for information.

Electronic Payment System (EPS) customers can email acs@usps.gov and request your ACS account to be setup for EPS.

Refunds

Refund requests for incorrectly charged ACS records should be submitted via email to acs@usps.gov along with the ACS records you believe were incorrectly charged. Requests must be received within 45 days of receipt of the invoice. The USPS will investigate and provide a response.

With the exception for Periodical mail, address correction services will be provided for each piece of UAA mail that is undeliverable as addressed. Refunds for duplicate ACS notices will not be provided for multiple ACS notices generated from multiple mail pieces that request ACS and are mailed to the same addressee.

Refund requests for other services such as hardcopy (Forms 3547/3579) or unexpected returned mailpieces must be addressed at the local level. *PS Form 3533* must be completed and submitted to the Post Office™ where your postage due or CAPS account was charged. Provide the returned mail or hardcopy notices as documentation to be refunded. Refunds are not provided when mailpieces are prepared incorrectly or a service was requested and provided. The escalation process for this type of refund is to the District Manager of Business Mail Entry.

In addition, please email example images to your local Business Service Network (BSN) representative if you receive unexpected returned mailpieces or PS Forms 3547. For BSN representatives in your area, visit the BSN lookup tool at:

<https://postalpro.usps.com/locators/find-bsn>. The Consumer Affairs lookup tool can be found at:

<https://postalpro.usps.com/locators/find-cam>.

NOTE: ACS is designed to substantially reduce the number of manual address correction notices provided to mailers and replace them with electronic notices. ACS is not a guaranteed service. Manual notices may still be received, although reduced in volume.

Keyline Requirements

Alphanumeric Keylines are required on parcels requesting Shipper Paid Services and electronic ACS notices.

The keyline is printed directly below the Participant ID and left-aligned with beginning and ending pound sign (#) delimiters. It is recommended that the keyline is printed with a space after each fourth character to enhance readability (i.e. #1234 5678 ABCD EFG6#). The pound sign delimiters and embedded spaces after each fourth character are not counted toward the 16-character limit and are not returned as part of an ACS record. Any other information printed to the right of the keyline after the ending pound sign delimiter is ignored during ACS processing.

The content of individual keylines must be unique to ensure identification of a particular customer within a mailer's address file. All keylines for Shipper Paid Services *must be alphanumeric and may be variable in length* (5 to 16 characters).

Alphanumeric keylines must contain at least one numeric and one alpha (including the forward slash ("/") character in addition to the **numeric** check digit. The keyline must consist of a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 16 characters; including the required check digit that is calculated according to the Postal Service standard for check digit computation (see "Shipper Paid Service Standards for Check Digit Computation").

The pound sign (#) delimiter must precede the ACS Participant ID. The pound sign should not be used on any non-ACS mailings. You must place the Participant ID on each mailpiece for which an electronic notification is requested. Place the Participant ID for a specific class of mail on the correct class of mail. Incorrect placement of the Participant ID decreases electronic ACS volumes.

It is essential that the keyline printed on the parcel be formatted properly and contain the proper shipping mail class and the weight of the parcel. Below are examples of Shipper Paid Service keylines.

USPS Marketing Mail Parcels:

Weight of the parcel represented in *ounces* with implied decimal (for example: "062" equals 06.2 oz)

#BYSBBCF
#062Y 1234 6996#
JOHN L SMITH
123 S MAIN ST
MEMPHIS TN 38103-3600

Required Keyline example showing Marketing Mail indicator with the check digit "6"

For USPS Marketing Mail the fourth character must be a "Y"

Package Services Parcels:

Weight of the parcel represented in *pounds* with implied decimal (for example: "125" equals 12.5 pounds). No weight minimum but not greater than 70 lbs.

#BZSBBBZ
#125D 449D S149 28#
JOHN L SMITH
123 S MAIN ST
MEMPHIS TN 38103-3600

Required Keyline example showing Parcel Select indicator with the check digit "8"

For Package Services and Parcel Select, the fourth character must represent the corresponding Package Services mail class or Parcel Select:

- B** = Bound Printed Matter
- D** = Parcel Select
- S** = Media Mail
- L** = Library Mail

IMPORTANT NOTE: Before making any modifications to your NCSC-preapproved keyline characteristics (length or attribute), you must notify the ACS Department at the NCSC. Failure to do so could result in the elimination of any ACS electronic corrections, and all address corrections might be provided manually.

Shipper Paid Service Standards for Check Digit Computation

Shipper Paid Services ACS participants must use the MOD 10 algorithm to compute the check digit:

MOD 10

1. The first 4 characters of the Shipper Paid Service Keyline must contain the numeric representation of the weight of the parcel with an implied decimal. and the alpha character Marketing Mail, Parcel Select, or Package Services class indicator.
2. Consider the first 4 characters, and the remaining keyline as an ASCII string of 4 to 15 characters. Remove any spaces before beginning calculation.
3. Convert the remaining characters to pure numeric values by zeroing out all but the lower four bits. This yields the following values for each alpha character (numeric characters retain their value):

Table 5: Alpha Character Values for Keyline Computation:

A = 1	E = 5	I = 9	M = 13	Q = 1	U = 5	Y = 9
B = 2	F = 6	J = 10	N = 14	R = 2	V = 6	Z = 10
C = 3	G = 7	K = 11	O = 15	S = 3	W = 7	
D = 4	H = 8	L = 12	P = 0	T = 4	X = 8	/ = 15

4. Multiply the value at each odd-numbered position (first position, third position, fifth position, etc.) by a weighting factor of 2.
5. Add the digits (not the actual value) in all positions. For example, if the second position of the keyline is “L,” whose value is 12, add the digits 1 + 2 (not the value 12) to the sum.
Note: The value of the letter “N” in an odd position, when weighted, becomes $14 \times 2 = 28$. The digits 2 and 8 are added, yielding 10. This sum is then further rendered as $1 + 0$, not the integer 10.
6. Subtract the right-most digit of the sum from 10, yielding the check digit.
Note: If the right-most digit of the sum is 0, the check digit will be 0.

Barcode Requirements

Barcodes are required to obtain postage discounts for mailers. All ACS mailpieces mailed at discounted prices must meet all requirements for barcodes set forth in the *DMM*. There are 2 types of barcodes that are available for use; the Intelligent Mail package barcode (IMpb) for parcels, and the Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb) used on letters and flats. There are certain considerations that must be made, depending on which type of barcode is applied to the parcel:

Intelligent Mail package barcode (IMpb):

The Intelligent Mail package barcode and the delivery address must be placed squarely onto the largest surface area of the parcel whenever possible. Refer to [DMM 202.6 Barcode Placement for Parcels](#) for detailed instructions regarding IMpb placement.

Any valid Service Type Code (STC) may be used in the IMpb. The STC has no effect on the ability to obtain Traditional ACS and Shipper Paid Services. For a list of valid STCs and the special services they represent, refer to the most current list of Service Type Codes available at the following link: https://postalpro.usps.gov/IMPB_Service_Type_Codes

IMPORTANT NOTE: When Traditional ACS Shipper Paid Services is desired, do NOT use a Mailer ID in the IMpb that is registered for IMpb ACS. Doing so will restrict the ability to generate Traditional ACS with Shipper Paid Services.

Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb):

The Intelligent Mail barcode, normally used for letters and flats, does not meet the eligibility requirements for parcels and do not qualify for discounted prices. Under certain conditions, the IMb may be allowed in the address block of a parcel (see [DMM 202.6.3](#)). See [DMM 202.5.3](#) for detailed instructions regarding IMb placement in the address block of a parcel.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The appropriate IMb Service Type ID (STID) must be used in the IMb to request Traditional ACS. For a current list of the Traditional ACS Service Type IDs see refer to the most current list of Service Type Identifiers at this link: https://postalpro.usps.com/address-quality/ACS/AppendixA_STID_Details

There is currently no Service Type ID assigned for Traditional ACS with Address Service Requested with Shipper Paid Service Option 3 or for Change Service Requested with Shipper Paid Services for parcels. If either of these ancillary services are desired, the IMb may not be included on the parcel.

What do I have to do to participate?

Step 1: Documentation

Complete all sections of the [ACS Enrollment Form](#) and the PS Form 5116, [Electronic Product Fulfillment Web Access Request Form](#). These forms are available at the following links:

<https://postalpro.usps.com/acs/eACS001.pdf>

[Electronic Product Fulfillment \(EPF\) Web Access Request Form \(PS 5116\) | PostalPro \(usps.com\)](#)

IMPORTANT NOTE: The ACS billing cycle is from the 25th of the month to the 24th of the next month. ACS customers are setup with monthly NCSC ACS billing or with a SingleSource ACS fulfillment and billing account (if selected) and are invoiced through NCSC Accounting Services. Invoices are posted to your EPF account within 6 days following the end of the ACS billing cycle, unless otherwise notified. Information regarding NCSC Billing and invoice files can be found in the [ACS File Format Technical Guide](#). Information regarding SingleSource ACS fulfillment and billing can be found in the [SingleSource ACS Technical Guide](#) at: <https://postalpro.usps.com/address-quality/ACS>.

We ***STRONGLY*** encourage all legacy ACS Shipper Paid Services customers that are currently invoiced through the USPS Accounting Services Center to convert their existing accounts to an improved monthly NCSC ACS billing process or a SingleSource ACS account.

The ACS Enrollment Form must be signed by an authorized officer or agent of the company, firm, or organization indicated as the Account Owner.

Be sure to provide a “Mailpiece title”. This information is used to identify the Participant ID(s) assigned to your ACS-participating mailpieces.

Fulfillment via our secure EPF Internet Web site requires that you complete PS Form 5116 so you can access your Shipper Paid Service ACS files. A separate form must be completed for each login access.

1. Check *Address Change Service (ACS)* at the top of the form.
2. Complete all sections.
3. Sign and date the form at the bottom and submit along with your ACS Application form.

IMPORTANT NOTE: No more than 3 EPF login IDs are allowed for an ACS fulfillment account.

Step 2: Within 10 Days After We Receive the Application

You will receive your assigned Shipper Paid Service Participant ID(s). Review this information for accuracy. If any of this information is incorrect, notify the ACS Department immediately. If you are a new ACS participant, you may request a test file that allows your technical staff to examine correctly formatted ACS fulfillment records.

Step 3: Before Activation

Submit 25 to 50 sample shipping labels or address blocks that have been modified to reflect the proper ACS Participant ID and Shipper Paid Service keyline coding. We will verify that all ACS information is placed correctly and that your keyline is formatted and formulated properly. Each sample label must have a different keyline so that we may verify your check digit calculation and placement.

IMPORTANT NOTE: *If you print an Intelligent Mail® barcode (IMb - not to be confused with the IMpb - Intelligent Mail Package Barcode) on the address label of your parcel that also contains the Shipper Paid Service Participant ID and keyline requesting Shipper Paid Service ACS, the Service Type ID used in the IM barcode must request Traditional ACS and the specified ancillary service desired. For a current list of the Traditional ACS Service Type IDs see refer to the most current list of Service Type Identifiers at this link: https://postalpro.usps.com/address-quality/ACS/AppendixA_STID_Details*

Please contact the ACS Department to verify that the proper STID is being used so that Shipper Paid Service ACS notices will be generated.

If an Intelligent Mail package barcode (IMpb) is included on your parcel, any Service Type Code can be used.

ACS Fulfillment Files

ACS Fulfillment files are Zipped (compressed) and password protected with an 18 character password which is comprised of alpha, numeric and special characters using PKWARE® software and posted to our secure Electronic Product Fulfillment (EPF) web site on a daily bases. You will need to obtain the appropriate software to retrieve the fulfillment files from our EPF web site (most current internet browsers are supported). You will need to obtain the appropriate software package that will decompress the data back into a normal ASCII text file. Additional software will be required if you intend to automate the updating of your database utilizing the ACS Notification File. Additional software will be required if you intend to print out the ACS Notification File for manual updating

All ACS file formats may be found in the <https://postalpro.usps.com/acs/ACSFileFormatTechnicalGuide.pdf> at this link:
<https://postalpro.usps.com/address-quality/ACS>.

Fulfillment File Access

Fulfillment files are posted to our secure Electronic Product Fulfillment (EPF) web site.

During the IMpb ACS Enrollment process you are required to complete and submit a PS Form 5116, Electronic Product Fulfillment Web Access Request Form which can be obtained from [Electronic Product Fulfillment \(EPF\) Web Access Request Form \(PS 5116\) | PostalPro \(usps.com\)](#). Once this form is processed you will receive EPF email confirmation containing additional information on setting up the EPF password and accessing the data.

All ACS notification files over 95 days old will be deleted.

All NCSC Billing invoice files over one year will be deleted.

EPF downloading procedures can be obtained from <https://postalpro.usps.com/ACS/ACSEPFulfillmentFileAccess>

Data Integrity

While the USPS strives to provide ACS data in the manner described in this document, there will be occasions when the data field may not contain the expected data. When customers submit a COA, it is possible that some of the data provided may not be accurate or may be incomplete. In rare instances when our systems are unable to make corrections to the COA data submitted by the customer, the USPS has no choice but to use the data exactly as it was provided by the customer. Additionally, it is possible that other data fields, not directly related to the data fields provided by the customer, may be missing. We strongly suggest that all automated systems utilizing ACS data perform validity checks on all fields.

In any data processing environment, it is sometimes possible to receive data or partial data that may not be anticipated by the software which in turn could lead to unexpected results. For this reason the software developed to process ACS transactions must interrogate each record and field according to the specifications contained in the file layouts/formats and descriptions. If any abnormal issue is found it is suggested that the information be written to an error file for manual review instead of terminating the program.

Change of Address Processing

To develop a manual or automated updating process, it is imperative that you understand how your database is formatted and how different types of addresses are stored or represented in the database. Once you have a good understanding of your existing database and the Shipper Paid Service ACS notice file, then you can determine how to go about updating your mailing list.

Considerations

1. Mailing lists may contain multiple named individuals that may be printed in the address block on the mail. The multiple named individuals within a change of address (COA) notice may or may not contain the same last name. It is the responsibility of the mail list owner to identify the primary target name for submission to the mail stream and develop processes to handle the required files returned from this process to update their files.
2. As referenced in Item 1 above, the mailpiece may have multiple individual names which could result in a change of address for only one of the individuals while the other individual remains at the address or moves to a different address. ACS transactions may not contain the same name information as on the mailpiece due to spelling issues, maiden names, or household members that have moved away.
3. Determine the impact, if any, this system may have with existing COA processes such as direct customer contact, NCOA^{Link} processing, and mailpiece endorsements.
4. Using positions 5 through 15 of the keyline to uniquely identify the specific customer will greatly enhance the ability to update files electronically. The keyline may contain an account number or other identifier for that specific customer. If you are having difficulties and need assistance, contact the ACS Department at 877-640-0724.
5. It is recommended that electronic processes that use change of address systems make use of additional flags. These additional flags can help in the systemic decision making when processing electronic updates. Some of the flags may already be defined in the system, such as when the COA is updated by a Move Update system (ACS, NCOA^{Link}, customer contact, manual correction) and the date of the update. Another flag that is strongly recommended is “prohibit electronic update”. If a customer complains about an address issue, this flag could be set to prevent electronic updates from any of your automated change of address processing sources. Flags could also be created to identify which specific change of address sources to avoid updating the record. For instance, if a father and a son have the same name and the son files an individual move, then it is possible that an ACS transaction would be created and fulfilled to the company. Customer complaints and research indicates the change came from ACS. The company could set the “prohibit electronic update from ACS” for that customer and correct the address as the customer requests.
6. Understand all of the components of the COA data, including the different address types, to ensure the base files are being updated properly. The publications below are recommended for reference material:
“Postal Addressing Standards” (Publication 28) available at <http://pe.usps.gov/cpim/ftp/pubs/Pub28/pub28.pdf>.
“Guide to Move Update” available on <https://postalpro.usps.com/address-quality/moveupdate>
<https://postalpro.usps.com/moveupdate/guide>
“Address Information System Products Technical Guide” available at https://postalpro.usps.com/address-quality/AIS_Products_Technical_Guide
7. Use all of the tools that are available through CASS Certified™ systems. These systems can now identify if an address is a known deliverable address as well as provide vacant address information. Contact the vendor of the CASS Certified system for additional information.
8. In any data processing environment, sometimes it is possible to receive data or partial data that may not be anticipated by the software. This, in turn, could lead to unexpected results. For this reason, the software developed must interrogate each record and field according to the specifications contained in the file layouts/formats and descriptions. If any abnormal issue is found, the data should be written to an error file for manual review instead of terminating the program.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What rate type do I include in my keyline?

A: The rate type in your keyline must match the postage that was paid to mail the parcel. Keyline price codes are referenced in the [Keyline Requirements](#) section of this document.

Q: What happens if the USPS® deems that the rate type, weight and format are invalid in the Shipper Paid Service keyline?

A: The mailpiece will be processed according to the printed endorsement and a hardcopy notice may result instead of the electronic ACS notice. Additionally, invalid formation of the keyline may cause the Shipper Paid Service parcel to be forwarded to the addressee as postage due.

If ACS is generated from an improperly formatted keyline, incorrect forwarding postage may be charged to your ACS account. Additionally, improper weight or mail class identification in the Shipper Paid Service keyline may result in suspension of Shipper Paid Service and additional postage and fees charged to your ACS account.

Q: What happens if my printer places “**Electronic Service Requested**” instead of “**Change Service Requested**” or “**Address Service Requested**” on my Shipper Paid Service parcel?

A: You should receive the same service as you would if you printed the endorsement that matches the Participant ID settings for ancillary services requested. Printing “Electronic Service Requested” allows a Shipper Paid Service mailer to alternate between preferred endorsements by printing the appropriate Participant ID and keyline in the address block. Electronic Service Requested is also more conspicuously identified as an endorsement used when electronic ACS is requested and may result in less manually processed UAA mailpieces that result in hardcopy address correction notices.

Q: What if I would like to alternate mailing parcels with either “**Address Service Requested**” or “**Change Service Requested**” endorsement options?

A: You will be assigned a different Participant ID for each endorsement. You will print the appropriate Participant ID and matching ancillary service endorsement on the parcel based on the needs for that particular parcel. If desired, you may pre-print the proxy endorsement “**Electronic Service Requested.**” Then you’ll only need to change the Participant ID.

Q: What happens if my printer does not print the endorsement on my Shipper Paid Service parcel?

A: Undeliverable parcels will be treated as unendorsed and ACS notices will not be created. Refer to *DMM 507.1.5* for the treatment of unendorsed parcels by mail class.

Appendix A - Ancillary Service Type Identifier (STID) Details

STID Table <https://postalpro.usps.com/service-type-identifiers/stidtable>

Detailed STID Table https://postalpro.usps.com/address-quality/ACS/AppendixA_STID_Details

Appendix B - ACS Frequently Asked Questions

This document has been created to provide OneCode and Full-Service ACS mailers with answers to the most commonly asked questions. It can be accessed using the following link:

https://postalpro.usps.com/address-quality/ACS/AppendixB_ACSFAQ

Appendix C – ACS Product Code Information and Details

This document provides a list of the ACS Product Codes that can be found on your ACS Shipping Notice and data file, and on the SingleSource ACS Invoice and data file.

https://postalpro.usps.com/address-quality/ACS/AppendixC_ACSProductCode_Details

Appendix D - Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

This document has been created to provide definitions of terms and acronyms that are often used when defining OneCode and Full Service ACS. It can be accessed using the following link:

https://postalpro.usps.com/address-quality/ACS/AppendixD_ACS_Glossary