

Fact Sheet for USPS Picture Permit™ indicia

Overview

USPS Picture Permit™ indicia (referred to as “PPI”) provides an opportunity for an organization to customize the Permit Imprint Indicia on their First-Class Mail® letters and postcards and USPS Marketing Mail™ letters and postcards with their organization logo, brand image or trademark. PPI may be used to raise brand awareness and market an organization’s products and services.

The unique nature of a USPS Picture Permit™ indicia will help...

- Boost the mailpiece’s visual impact
- Potentially increase open/read rate
- Afford immediate recognition of an organizations logo, brand images or trademarks for awareness and product promotion
- Corroborate the message of direct mailpieces and other advertisements

Highlights

- USPS Marketing Mail™ automation & First-Class Mail® automation Letters and postcards only
- **All mailpieces must include the Full-Service Intelligent Mail® barcode.**
- Mail owner is responsible for the image.
- PPI images must be in **color**.
- Required elements of the indicia may be in black (e.g., class of mail, “U.S. POSTAGE PAID”, permit, etc.).

Pricing

- First-Class Mail® letters and postcards = 1¢ per mailpiece (plus applicable postage)
- USPS Marketing Mail™ letters and postcards = 2¢ per mailpiece (plus applicable postage)

Participation

Learn about the product requirements and the 4 step authorization process to become eligible to use PPI at;

www.usps.com/business/postage-options.htm

The website provides the following information:

- PPI Technical Requirements
- Fact Sheet
- FAQs
- PPI Product Requirements
- Registration Link
- Program Office (PO) email address

USPS Picture Permit™ indicia Authorization Process

Step 1: The organization goes to www.usps.com/business/postage-options.htm to review the guidelines and required elements and to complete the online registration.

Step 2: Once registered, you will receive a link to complete the USPS Picture Permit™ indicia application, (PS Form 3615-A), which requires your organizations Permit Imprint indicia # and other information. Please submit the signed copy of PS Form 3615-A to picturepermit@usps.gov

Step 3: When the Program Office (PO) confirms the application has been approved, you will be required to submit a PDF copy of the addressed mailpiece showing the actual envelope/postcard with its dimensions, Full Service Intelligent Mail Barcode, clear zone, and proposed Picture Permit design to: picturepermit@usps.gov

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Step 4: Engineering Evaluation Process

4.1 (Option 1) Engineering Evaluation Requirements

Letter Mail conforming to DMM 604.5.4, Picture Permit Imprint Indicia, shall undergo the standard engineering evaluation process which takes approximately 45 business days. Organization must provide 500 production samples which will replicate what will be printed and inducted into the live mailstream. In addition to the Full-Service Intelligent Mail Barcode, each sample mailpiece must include a complete and valid destination address. Do not use the same address for all mailpieces; the 500 samples must contain a variety of valid addresses.

4.2 (Option 2) Engineering Evaluation Requirements*

Letter Mail conforming to DMM 604.5.4, Picture Permit Imprint Indicia (PPII), and all of the restrictions listed below, may be subject to Option 2 Engineering Evaluation period of approximately 10 business days. After approval for alternative engineering evaluation, organizations must provide 50 production samples which will replicate what will be printed and inducted into the live mailstream that includes a complete address, keyline and Full-Service Intelligent Mail Barcode information printed on each sample (DMM 708.4.3) Do not use the same address for all mailpieces; the 50 samples must contain a variety of valid addresses. Letter Mail not conforming to all of the requirements listed below shall undergo Engineering Evaluation 4.1.

- a. Color image shall not contain embedded text or numbers.
- b. Color image shall not have a drop shadow on any edge.

- c. PPI area (including .50" left and bottom clear zone) to be on white background (no reverse print).
- d. PPI shall be positioned in upper right-hand corner with "clear zones" as shown in Fig. B
- e. Overall width of longest text line shall not be less than width of image as shown in Fig. C
- f. All mail class text to conform to the approved template provided by USPS.
- g. No disk mailers, reusable envelopes, perforated folded self-mailers, windowed envelopes.
- h. Does not exhibit any of the non-machinable criteria listed in DMM 101.1.2.

* For more details please review PPI Technical Requirements document

Please mail samples to:

U.S. Postal Service
Attn: USPS Picture Permit™ indicia
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, RM 5538
Washington, DC 20260-5538

Once the organization passes these tests, the PO will request a mailing schedule, including dates and volumes.

Commingled Mail

The following instructions are provided for mail owners using a Mail Service Provider to submit PPI mail within a Combined mailing. You must comply with all requirements for participation in the USPS Picture Permit™ indicia program including but not limited to the following:

1. Complete PPI program requirements and obtain PO authorization.

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2. Pay all applicable permit and annual fees.
3. Mailing must be submitted through eDoc (Mail.dat or Mail.xml).
4. Mail Owner and Mailing Agent must be identified in the eDoc.
5. A separate postage statement must be submitted for each PPI mail owner. All pieces represented on the individual postage statement must be 100% PPI.
6. Mailpieces must be entered as part of a full-service automation mailing within an authorized First-Class Mail or USPS Marketing Mail™ Combined Mailing.
 - a. PPI pieces must be part of a Full-Service Intelligent Mail mailing.
 - i. Basic service automation pieces may be included and qualify for payment of the PPI fee within the Combined mailing.
 - ii. Pieces subject to the PPI fee must be properly identified in the eDoc to reflect the total count in the Extra Services section of the postage statement.
 - b. Non-Automation price (machinable or presort) mailpieces may be submitted and qualify for payment of the Picture Permit fee under the following conditions:
 - Machinable/presort mailing is presented as a combined mailing and supported by electronic documentation and separate postage statement by client.

OR

 - Machinable/presort mailing is 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.
7. PPI piece counts will be verified in conjunction with the Mail Piece Count Verification performed at time of acceptance.
 8. Mail owner must be listed on Customer Mail Report.
 9. Mail Service Provider must submit upon request a report by PPI client showing the total number of pieces by qualifying ZIP CODE.

Mail Service Providers (MSPs) Acting on Behalf of the Mail Owner

Mail owners are fully responsible for the images appearing on the Picture Permit space. Mail owners may give their permission to an MSP to apply for PPI on the mail owner's behalf.

Upon request, the MSP must produce authorization to the Program Office (PO) when acting on behalf of the Mail Owner. This authorization may be requested as determined necessary by the U.S. Postal Service®, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service®, or their agents.

PO Contact Information

By Mail:
U.S. POSTAL SERVICE
ATTN: USPS PICTURE PERMIT™ indicia
475 L'ENFANT PLAZA, SW, RM 5538
WASHINGTON, DC 20260-5538
By E-Mail: picturepermit@usps.gov