

Getting Ready for the New Move Update Standards

On November 23, 2008, two address quality initiatives will become effective: (1) increase the minimum frequency of Move Update processing from 185 (calendar) days to 95 days prior to the date of mailing (2) extend the Move Update standards to include all Standard Mail[®] as well as automation-rate and presort-rate First-Class Mail[®].

Move Update – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: For Standard Mail mailers, does updating have to begin on November 23?

A: Mailers do not begin their updating process(s) on November 23, but rather, on this date, mailers must begin using addresses that were updated within the previous 95 days. For example, a mailing entered on November 23, must bear addresses that were updated no earlier than August 20.

Q: My business does not maintain a mailing list with an address-update cycle. How does the address-update standard apply when my customer provides an address?

A: If you send the mailpiece to the address within 95 days of the date the address was provided, the address complies with the Move Update requirement. If you use the address 95 days or more after it was provided, you must use an on-piece Ancillary service endorsement for address correction (or another update tool such as FASTforward[®]). In most instances, if the mailpiece is mailed shortly after the address was provided, the address will not change, and the mailpiece will be delivered as addressed.

Q: What documentation must the list owner furnish to a mailer, in addition to the address list, for use on a Presorted or automation rate mailing?

A: The list owner is obligated to prove it is aware of the requirements of Move Update and that the addresses on the list comply with those requirements. The list owner should keep the following for 2 years:

- Move Update output reports documenting that the address list went through the Move Update process within 95 days before it was submitted to the Postal Service™.
- Proof that names on the list added since the last update came directly from customers.

Q: I am a mailing agent. If, when I accept mail, my clients cannot prove that they have updated their addresses within the last 95 days; may I still include those mailpieces in First-Class Mail[®] or Standard Mail[®] Presorted or automation rate mailings?

A: No, unless you are a FASTforward licensed MLOCR user using FASTforward to update the addresses. Otherwise, those mailpieces must be mailed at the single-piece rate.

Q: My letter shop prepares and enters mail for customers. If the customers cannot provide Move Update documents can I enter this mail at discounted rates?

A: No, unless you process the list of addresses through a Move Update method within 95 days before mailing.

Q: If I believe my list is accurate, when should I submit my files to the NCSC in Memphis for testing?

A: This verification process takes approximately 7 to 10 business days. Therefore, you should submit an application for approval as soon as possible; keeping in mind your preparation needs and desired mailing date.

Q: If my mail is processed for Move Update using FASTforward MLOCR, which mailpiece design issues, other than general automation compatibility, do I need to be concerned about?

A: The name of the addressee must be in the optical character reader (OCR) read area. Mailpieces with exceptional address formats (such as “Jane Doe or Current Resident”) are not eligible for FASTforward processing. All mailpieces must have a barcode clear zone that is completely free of any text, images, or windows so the MLOCR can spray the delivery point barcode and the new address on the lower right bottom of the mailpiece if a move is identified.

Q: I do not want my mailpieces forwarded to the new address if the addressee has moved, but I want to receive the new address from the Postal Service. If I endorse my mailpieces with an approved ancillary service endorsement and give them to a presort bureau licensed to use FASTforward on their MLOCR, what will happen to the mailpiece, and what information will I receive from the Postal Service?

A: The Postal Service provides COA information when a move occurs and the mailpiece is addressed for delivery to the old address and bears an approved endorsement for an address correction to be provided. If a mailpiece is processed, using MLOCR FASTforward and a new address is identified, the new address and its associated delivery point barcode are sprayed on the mailpiece and the mailpiece is sent directly to the correct new address. The Postal Service will not return the mailpiece to the sender or provide information about the new address because it is considered to be addressed correctly.

If you want to receive updated address information for a mailpiece and do not want the mailpiece mailed directly to the addressee’s new address, you need to advise the MLOCR service bureau to turn off the FASTforward logic when processing your mailpieces when they bear an endorsement indicating that the piece should not be forwarded. Alternatively, you may use the nonforwardable endorsed mailpiece option for these mailpieces. This option requires that the presort bureau run the “Do Not Forward” mode and return the mailpieces to which FASTforward applied new address information.

If you choose to use only ancillary service endorsements to meet the Move Update requirements, you must use them at least every 95 days. In addition, you must update your addresses within 95 days of using the addresses.

Q: If I am mailing a promotional mailpiece at First-Class Mail or Standard Mail rates and I use an exceptional address format (e.g., “Jane Doe or Current Occupant”), must the recipient name have been updated within the previous 95 days?

A: No. If deliverable, each mailpiece will be delivered to the address appearing on the mailpiece whether or not the named addressee resides at that address. However, the addresses must have been updated.

Q: Can a mailer who constantly polls for correct address information meet the Move Update requirements (e.g., “Check this box to indicate whether you have moved. If you have, provide your new mailing address.”)?

A: No. Mailers eligible to use an alternative Move Update method may, however, be able to use this type of polling to maintain the required 99 percent accuracy rate.

Q: I have CASS-Certified™ address-matching software that ensures I have good addresses. Does this meet the standards for new names and addresses?

A: No. Address-matching software looks up addresses to correct and standardize the address information and append ZIP + 4[®] codes. It does not perform a name lookup to determine whether the addressee is still at that address and, therefore, cannot be used to meet the Move Update requirement.

Q: How do I meet Move Update requirements when mailing to an address recently added to my address list?

A: The Move Update process is name-and-address-based, not list-based. When a customer contacts a business and as a result is added to the list, the newly added address can “ride” with the list until the next cycle for update. The address will be added to the list only if the customer has requested services or literature or has purchased merchandise.

If an address is added to the list not because a customer contacted a business but for another reason, the address will not qualify for an automated discount unless the mailer can provide the Move Update documentation showing proof of the update. Otherwise, the initial mailing must be at the single-piece rate using an ancillary service endorsement. Once this initial mailing has occurred the address can be added to your normal update cycle.

If the address list is rented to another party for the purpose of mailing at discounted rates and that list has a blend of established and newly acquired customers, the list owner must provide Move Update documentation to prove that all of the addresses on the list have been updated.

If the address list is distributed to additional mailers (e.g. by a second party to others or by a third party), the Move Update documentation must accompany the address list.

Q: Does a list or an address have to be updated every 95 days?

A: An address can be updated any time, so long as it is updated within 95 days before the address is actually used for a discounted mailing. If a mailer mails a list once every two years, that list would have to be updated using one of the Move Update methods before the mailing.

Q: Must entire lists be updated every time?

A: Entire lists do not have to be updated at once. The update requirement applies to individual addresses, not to entire lists. Only those addresses that will be used in a First-Class Mail or Standard Mail discounted mailing need to meet the Move Update requirement. The list could not be used with an ancillary service endorsement since the addresses would not have been updated within 95 days. However, the list could be used with NCOA^{Link}[®] or FASTforward MLOCR when mailing.

Q: My mail volume is generated by rented lists, and I have no reason to use a post-mailing process to acquire updates. How can I qualify?

A: The list owner is responsible to provide you with the quality product you require. If your requirement is that, the list must be Move Update qualified for a certain time period, then make that a requirement. You also always have the option of using a pre-mailing process like NCOA^{Link} on the lists you acquire from outside sources.

Q: I have a mail-order business. During the holiday season, one of my customers purchased 30 gifts and directed me to send them to a list of people she provided. Does that “Gift List” meet the Move Update standard?

A: Yes, for the first 95 day cycle because addresses received directly from customers have the initial 95 day grace period. Let’s say you didn’t mail anything else to these addresses until one year later, during the holiday season, your customer directs you to send 30 more gifts to the same name and address list on file, in that case,

you must process those addresses through one of the pre-mailing Move Update methods, i.e., NCOA^{Link} or FASTforward before you mail.

Q: Must I accept every new address I receive from a Move Update Method?

A: No, but you have 95 days to independently verify and reflect the new address on the mailpiece. After 95 days of notification, the old address does not meet the Move Update standard and mail to that old address must be mailed at the appropriate First-Class Mail single-piece rate.

99 Percent List

Q: I brought a mailing list from a certified Alternative Move Update Method mailer. How long can I use the list and meet the Move Update standard?

A: The clock for the 95 day cycle begins on the date the names and addresses were extracted out of the mailer's database, not when they were sold or when you received them.

Q: Is any Move Update documentation required at the time of mailing?

A: No, the mailer's signature on the postage statement, or electronic submission (i.e., *PostalOne!*[®], Mail.dat) certifies that the mailing complies with all relevant standards, including Move Update, and that the mailing qualifies for the rates and fees claimed.