



# Florida Supervisors of Elections 2021 Annual Summer Conference Postal Service Update

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Manager Product Preparation & Payment/A
June 14 2021

# **2020 Election Mail Overview:**

USPS: Post Election Analysis



### **Election Mail**

Voting is the Bedrock of Our Democracy

- Postal Service is proud of the role we play in the electoral process
- Committed to working with Election Officials to ensure smooth processing
- Ensure the needs of military and overseas voters are met
- Support State and Local Mail-In Voting programs









"Throughout the 2020 election, the Postal Service faced unprecedented challenges, but the commitment of our 644,000 men and women to deliver the nation's ballots securely and in a timely manner never wavered, even in the face of the pandemic,"



- Postmaster General Louis DeJoy.



Key Performance Statistics from the \*2020 General Election Cycle indicate that the Postal Service Processed and Delivered:

**Election Mail 543.3 Million pieces** 

Political Mail
4.1 Billion pieces

Election Ballots
135 Million Pieces

✓ The Postal Service has released a post-election analysis which outlines the steps it took to deliver a historic number of ballots and Election Mail volume during 2020.

https://about.usps.com/newsroom/national-releases/2020/USPS\_PostElectionAnalysis\_12\_28\_20.pdf



### Key Performance Statistics from the 2020 General Election mailing season

**DELIVERING** THE NATION'S **ELECTION MAIL IN AN** EXTRAORDINARY **YEAR** 

Percent of ballots delivered from voters to election officials within seven days:

99.89

Average time to deliver ballots from election officials to voters:

2.1 Days

Percent of ballots delivered from voters to election officials within three days:

97.9

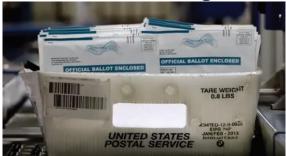
Average time to deliver ballots from voters to election officials:

1.6 Days



## Key Performance Statistics from the 2020 General Election mailing season

- Political Mail and Election Mail volume surpassed 4.6 billion mailpieces
- The Postal Service processed and delivered over 135 million ballots including:
  - Ballots delivered from Election Officials to Voters
  - Completed Ballots returning from Voters to Election Officials





Above figures include only those ballots that were properly identified as ballots using the correct electronic identifiers and does not include ballots that the Postal Service diverted from its processing network or otherwise handled outside of normal processes to accelerate delivery.

# **2020 Election Mail Overview:**

Challenges



# Most Frequently Reported Issues

- Misdelivered return ballots due to mailpiece design
  - Voter address information and multiple barcodes printed on the back of return ballot envelopes resulted in automation equipment using voter address for delivery
- Postmarking issues
  - Missing or obscured Facer Identification Marks (FIMs) resulted in mailpiece orientation errors in automation equipment, including postmarking the back of the return ballot
  - Non-automation-compatible return ballots required manual processing for a postmark. This did not occur consistently.

#### **Design Example**



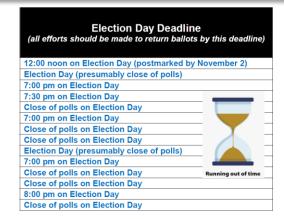






### Most Frequently Reported Issues

- Late Delivery
  - Many states have deadlines for requesting absentee ballots that are very close to Election Day
  - Ballots being inducted within service standards but to close to Election Day
  - Envelope design flaws
  - Inaccurate addresses
- Mailpiece Location Tracking
  - Mailpieces without an IMb could not be tracked
  - Local mail holdout bypasses plant scanning processes
- Mailpiece Preparation / Mail Service Providers
  - Mailpieces being produced without unique serialized IMb
  - Ballots not being identified when inducted









# **2020 Election Mail Overview:**

Recommendations and Best Practices



# Postal Service's Operational Focus

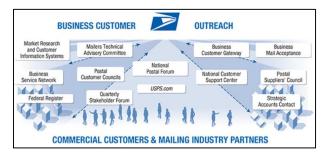
 Conducted employee training on Election Mail, including a series of national webinars and employee

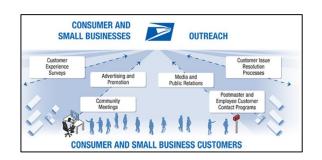


- Topics included:
  - Outreach process
  - Issue reporting and resolution
  - Mail Entry processes
  - Handling Military Ballots
  - Key election dates by state
- Implemented daily "all clear of ballots" certifications at all Post Offices and mail processing plants during weeks before and after Election Day

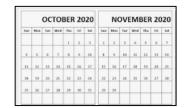


















### **Election Mail Visibility**

The Postal Service strongly encourages the use of all available tools to improve the visibility of Election Mail within the postal network

- Tag 191 for ballots
- Official Election Mail<sup>®</sup> logo
- Postage Statement Identification
- Serialized Intelligent Mail barcodes
- Service Type Identifiers (STIDs)
  - Benefits
    - Identify Ballots on-hand and enable tracking in the mailstream
    - Sort all Ballots on automation equipment
    - Increased visibility of outbound/returning ballot mail within the automation environment





### 





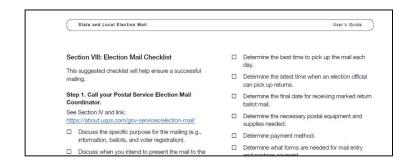
# Recommendations

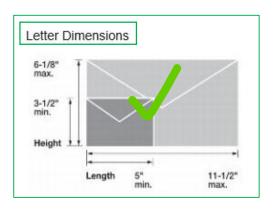
### **Best Practices**

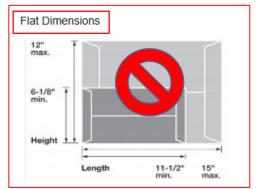
 Use the Election Mail Checklist available in the back of Pub 632

Use letter-size envelopes when possible

 Board of Elections encouraged to use First-Class Mail postage on outbound absentee or Vote-by-Mail ballots













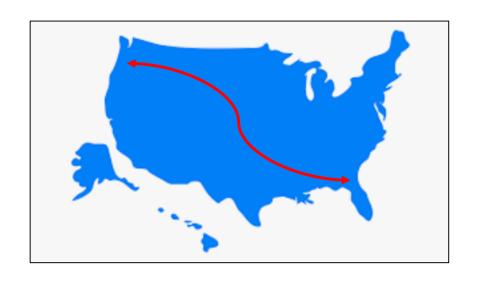
### Return by Mail Date Guidance

### Domestic non-military voters

If you are a nonmilitary voter located in the United States and you choose to use the mail to return your completed ballot, our general recommendation is that, as a common-sense measure, you mail your completed ballot before Election Day, and at least one week prior to your state's deadline. Some states may recommend allowing even more time for mailing completed ballots.

### APO/FPO

The Military Postal Service Agency recommends that military personnel serving overseas follow the return by mail date for their location published here <a href="https://www.fvap.gov/military-voter/overview/process">https://www.fvap.gov/military-voter/overview/process</a>







## Recommendations

### **Prepaid Reply Mail Options**

State and local elections officials are increasingly using mail-in ballots to administer federal, state, and local elections. In some cases, the state requires return Ballot envelopes to have prepaid postage, so the voter incurs no cost for mailing their ballot. In these cases, state and local officials may choose to offer their voters one of the prepaid reply mail options such as:

- Business Reply Mail
- Qualified Business Reply Mail
- Metered Reply Mail
- Permit Reply Mail
- Stamps



### Intelligent Mail barcode Accounting – Automated Invoicing for QBRM

IMbA is a system that leverages Intelligent Mail barcodes (IMb®) to process Qualified Business Reply Mail™ (QBRM™).

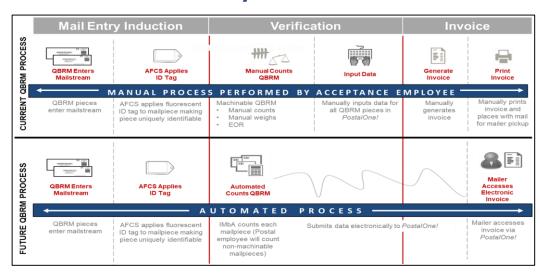
Incoming Return mailpieces are scanned throughout the Postal Network on Mail Processing Equipment which:

- Calculates quantities/Piece counts
- Calculates pricing
- Creates invoices that are automatically loaded to PostalOne!®
- Collects payment from the customer

### All QBRM customers can be seamlessly transitioned to IMbA

All QBRM-eligible products can Participate in the automated IMbA process including:

- Postcards
- 1-oz piece
- 2-oz piece



# **2021 Election Mail Overview:**

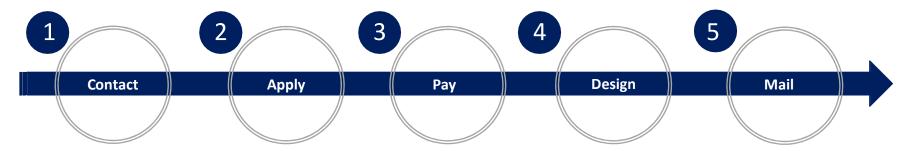
Getting Started
Prepaid Reply Mail Options
Outgoing Mail Options



# **Prepaid Reply Mail Options**

### Getting Started Reply Mail Options

- Contact the Mailing & Shipping Solution Center (MSSC) at: MSSCadmin@usps.gov or 1-877-672-0007
- Complete and submit PS Form 3615
- Require each election jurisdiction to submit PS Form 6805 BRM/QBRM Application for ZIP+4 Code
- Create an Enterprise Payment System (EPS) Account
- Link all subaccounts to the EPS Account
- Pay applicable fees
- Submit 10 sample mailpieces to MDA@usps.gov



Contact MSSC at Complete application Pay fees online MSSCadmin@usps.gov PS Forms 3615 & 1-877-672-0007 6805

with EPS account or at your local post office

Consult with MDA at mda@usps.gov to create mailpiece design\*

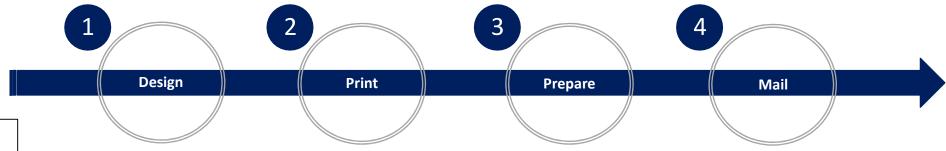
Prepare to send outgoing ballots

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and Customer Profile astructions available on reverse we forms of identification are required	when					Permit Number	Date Permit Issued	Issuing Office
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# **Outgoing Ballot Mail Options**



#### **Getting Started Outgoing Mailpiece**

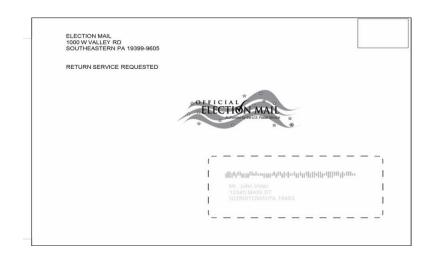
- Election Officials should ensure that the design of the outgoing mailpiece is compatible with USPS processing network.
- Election Officials should consult with a Mailpiece Design Analyst (MDA) prior to printing any outgoing pieces.
- Once the mailpiece design has been completed you can enlist your printer to start the outgoing piece printing.

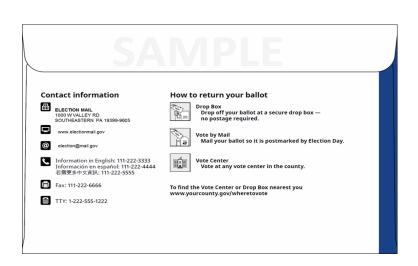
Work with MDA at mda@usps.gov to create mailpiece design

Print mailpieces according to guidelines

Prepare mailing for commercial prices

Present and pay for mailing at post office where permit is held





# **Providing Election Mail Visibility:**

Informed Visibility® Mail Tracking & Reporting





# **Election Mail Visibility**

Informed Visibility

A service that provides near real-time mail tracking data for letter and flat pieces, bundles, handling units (trays, tubs, and sacks)



Informed Delivery

A secure, free feature that provides eligible residential consumers with a digital preview of their in coming mail and packages





# Informed Visibility® Mail Tracking & Reporting

- Take advantage of Intelligent Mail® Barcodes (IMb) Uniquely barcoding mailpieces with individualized serial numbers enables scan data to be associated to/from each voter.
  - Appropriate Service Type ID (STID) in the IMb
  - Depth of barcode to final delivery point facilitates ability for IV® Mail Tracking & Reporting scan data to show the piece was finalized for delivery

# What does Informed Visibility do?

IV® gives mailers detailed visibility into their mailings, increasing the value of mail and enabling mailers to plan their mailings, measure the success of each mailing, and efficiently staff.

# How does IV provide complete visibility?

IV Mail Tracking & Reporting creates **piece-level visibility** for Full-Service mailings by assuming scans down to each piece, even if only the pallet or tray barcode is scanned.



Connects mailers with their data in near real-time, from virtually any device, any location



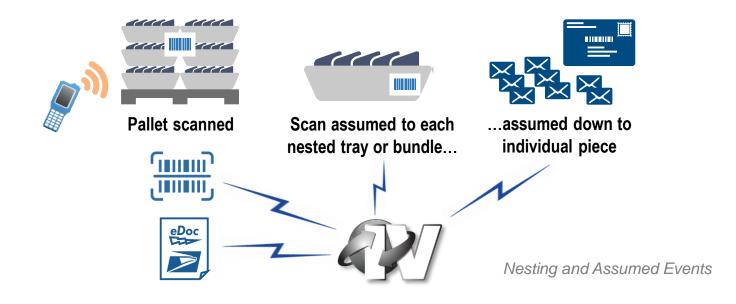
Provides mailers with complete visibility and tracking from acceptance to delivery



Allows mailers to decide what data they want, when they want it, how to receive it

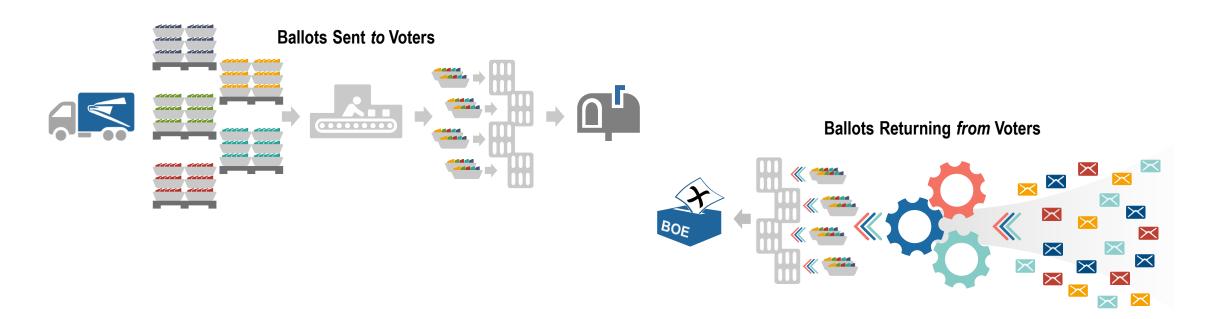


Connects digital & physical worlds, enabling multi-channel engagement with voters, including alerts when ballots have been delivered or reminders for ballot due dates





# Informed Visibility® Mail Tracking & Reporting



### How can Informed Visibility help Election Officials?

- Provides election officials with near real-time and expanded visibility of mailpieces as they move through the mailstream
- Enables local election offices to track delivery of official election mail and ballots to registered voters to better manage election activities
- Provides visibility of when a return ballot enters the mail network and helps anticipate delivery date

- Enables election officials to better plan resources based on visibility into incoming mail volumes
- Instills confidence in the Vote-by-Mail voter of the safety and security of their ballot being handled by the USPS as a trusted entity



# Informed Visibility® Mail Tracking & Reporting

#### Recommendations for Election Officials:

- Utilize Full-Service Mailings for Outbound Mail Facilitates the ability to assume scan events down to individual pieces by making use of Intelligent Mail® container, tray, and piece barcodes
- Leverage eDoc Promotes accurate associations of pieces to trays and containers
  - Use the appropriate attribute in the eDoc
  - Define the nesting relationships (e.g., piece to tray, tray to container)
- Take advantage of Intelligent Mail® Barcodes (IMb) Uniquely barcoding mailpieces with individualized serial numbers enables scan data to be associated to/from each voter.
  - Appropriate Service Type ID (STID) in the IMb
  - Depth of barcode to final delivery point facilitates ability for IV<sup>®</sup> Mail Tracking & Reporting scan data to show the piece was finalized for delivery
- **Sign up for Informed Visibility** Enables Boards of Election to capitalize on USPS scan data to provide visibility to election officials and voters.
  - **Contact** Informed Visibility Service Center at InformedVisibility@usps.gov or 1-800-238-3150, Option #2.
  - Note: IV Mail Tracking & Reporting provides data—not visual dashboards



# Providing Election Mail Visibility:

Informed Delivery





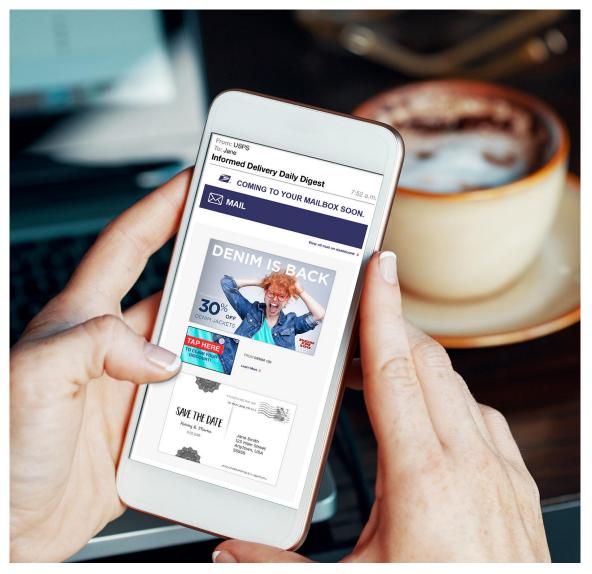


# What is the Informed Delivery® Feature?

It's a **consumer-facing** feature that provides users the opportunity to **digitally preview** their household mail and manage packages arriving soon.\*



Business mailers can integrate colorful and interactive campaign elements to enhance and extend the mail moment!



Are you signed up? Visit informeddelivery.usps.com





# The Informed Delivery® Feature by the Numbers

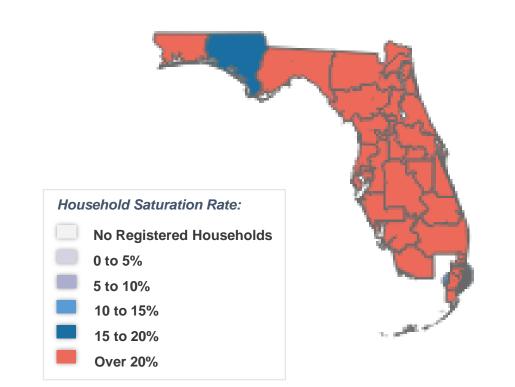
39.4M
Registered Users

31.7M
Email-enabled Users

350K+
Weekly User Registrations

#### **Household Saturation Rate**

National: **22.5**% State of Florida: **25.9**%



96,127
Completed Campaigns

64.7%
Open Rate
6-month average

2,105
Mailers/MSPs Participating





# Interactive Campaign Benefits for Election Mail

Constituents depend on mail to help them make informed decisions and take quick action. Interactive campaigns act as supplemental content to enhance your call-to-action by providing consumers with an additional, digital impression.

Completed Election Mail Campaigns 346

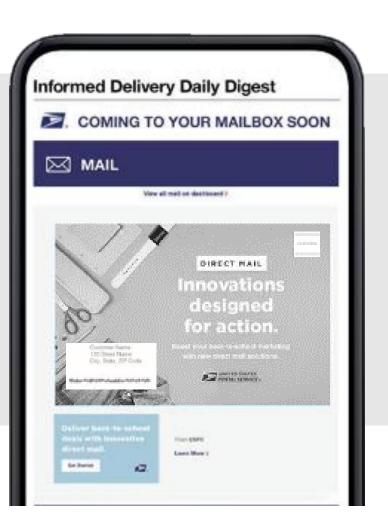
**Election Mail Email Open Rate** 

Click-To-Open-Rate

65.2%

0.87%

Period: 1/1/2020-5/14/2021



# 2021 Election Mail and Beyond:

Next steps for a successful Vote by Mail Experience



### Contact a Mailing and Shipping Solutions Center (MSSC)

- Complete and submit PS Form 3615
- Each election jurisdiction to submit PS Form 6805 BRM/QBRM Application for ZIP+4 Code
- Create an Enterprise Payment System (EPS) Account
- Link all subaccounts to the EPS Account
- Pay applicable fees

Mailing & Shipping Solution Center (MSSC) at: MSSCadmin@usps.gov or 1-877-672-0007

### Contact a Mailpiece Design Analyst (MDA)

- Receive mail piece design consultation for mailing standards
- Offer guidance regarding automation rate qualification
- Receive technical assistance for printers, graphic designers, and envelope manufacturers

It is advised to have every election mail envelope design reviewed by a Mailpiece Design Analyst before it is used

MDA Customer Service Help Desk e-mail mda@usps.gov or 1-855-593-6093



### **Contact your Election Mail Coordinators**

- Single point of contact for election mail planning, questions and issue resolution
- Assist with mailpiece design
- Coordinate timelines
- Issue resolution

**To reach your Election Mail Coordinator** 

http://about.usps.com/gov-services/election-mail/



# Thank you!



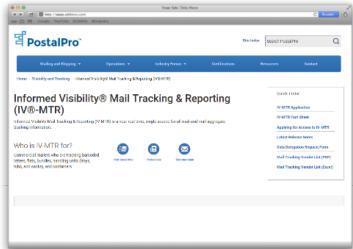
**James Duffy** 

A/Manager Product Preparation & Payment USPS HQ James.M.Duffy2@usps.gov

# Appendix









# Business Customer Gateway (BCG)

- Register for a FREE account at www.gateway.usps.gov
- Sign up for the IV Service under the Mailing Service menu

#### IV PostalPro

- Apply for Access to IV-MTR
- IV Mail Tracking & Reporting User Guide
- IV Mail.XML Guide
- IV External Facing Data Dictionary

#### **IV Solutions Center**

 Direct questions or concerns to the IV Solutions Center at:

InformedVisibility@usps.gov

or

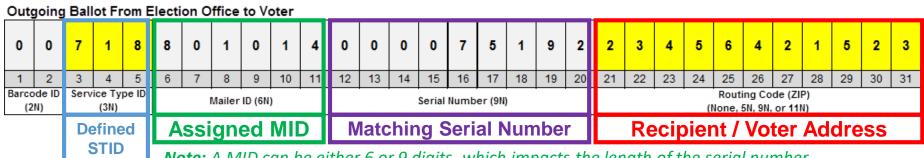
1 (800) 238-3150 Select option #2



# Intelligent Mail barcode for Election Mail Visibility

### Outgoing Election, Ballot Mail

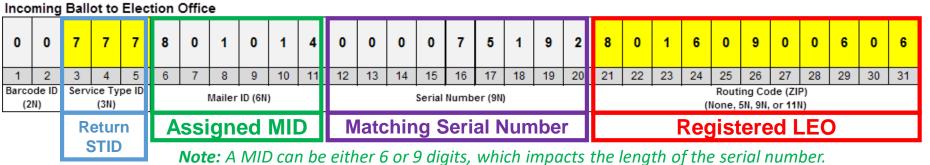
An IMb using defined STIDs, MID, and matching serial number for use on all outgoing election/ballot mail provides essential visibility. For best results, use the full (11-digit) routing code whenever possible.



**Note:** A MID can be either 6 or 9 digits, which impacts the length of the serial number.

### **Returning Ballot Mail**

An IMb using one unique STID, MID, matching serial number, and a unique registered 9-digit routing code (ZIP) for use on all returning ballot mail (mailed First-Class) to the Local Election Offices results in enhanced sorting options and visibility.



For assistance with IMbs, contact your MDA or visit the USPS PostalPro™ website for comprehensive guides to the IMb (link provided in appendix).



# 2020 Official Election Mail Program Kit







### Content

- Tag 191 Fact Sheet and Sample Tag
- Informed Visibility® Mail Tracking and Reporting (IV®-MTR) Fact Sheet
- Steps to Creating Your Intelligent Mail® Barcode (IMb®) Fact Sheet
- Business Reply Mail® (BRM) and Qualified Business Reply Mail
   (QBRM) Fact Sheet
- Special Procedures APO/FPO Fact Sheet
- Informed Delivery® Fact Sheet
- Official Election Mail Program Overview
- Domestic Mail Manual (DMM®) Fact Sheet
- Election Mail Checkbox Fact Sheet
- Cancellations Fact Sheet
- Publication 631: Official Election Mail—Graphic Guidelines and Logos
- Publication 632, State and Local Election Mail—User's Guide (with a step-by-step checklist for election officials)





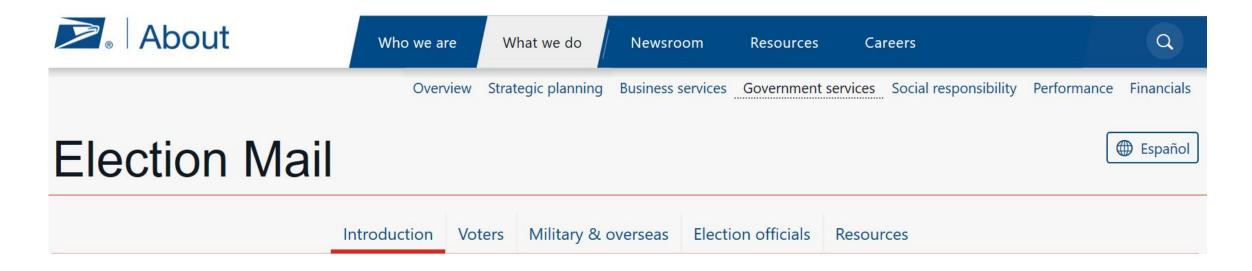
### Your 2020 Election and Political Mail Guide

Key Elections
Election Mail and Political Mail Overview
Absentee Ballots
Absentee and Early Voting
Vote-By-Mail
Military — APO/FPO/DPO
APO/FPO/DPO Outbound Absentee Ballots
APO/FPO/DPO Returning Absentee Ballots
Ballots Tag 191

Business Reply Mail
Qualified Business Reply Mail
Informed Delivery
Improved Mailpiece Visibility
Election and Political Mail Map
Service Type Identifiers
Election 2020 State-By-State
Political Mail Tag 57
FAQs
Contacts and Resources



# USPS.com/electionmail



The American public can rely on the United States Postal Service to fulfill our role in the electoral process. Facing unprecedented challenges in 2020, the commitment of our 644,000 employees never wavered. A review of our performance and preparation to deliver historic Election Mail volume during the 2020 election cycle is found in our 2020 Post-Election Analysis.

