



## Red Light Cameras in your Mailbox? Get ready for the new *Move Update*

The Postal Service hates going to the wrong house. They really, really hate it. More than 10 years ago they decided to try to do something about it. They called that something - *Move Update*. *Move Update* required mailers to pinkie-pledge that they were keeping their mailing lists up-to-date. Of course we're all human, so the Postal Service allows a 30% error tolerance. However, effective October 2014, we are all expected to be quite a bit less human – the error tolerance is being dropped to 0.8%. This changes the passing score from 70% to 99.2%. No more grading on a curve, I guess. It could be worse – the USPS originally proposed an accuracy level of 99.95%, so 99.2% is relatively mellow.

The bottom line is this: you will pay a penalty for failing to meet move update standards, and the Postal Service is counting on it! The way the new tolerance threshold is calculated is based on a failure rate that will provide them with a specific revenue stream. Essentially, this penalty is about generating revenue, not ensuring address quality. It is the same reasoning that is used for red light cameras in many jurisdictions.

It is worth noting that this only applies to Full Service Intelligent Mail, which is not technically required, but mailing services are being forced to adopt in order to keep on-site acceptance privileges.

There are essential actions you should take to make sure your mail is not subject to an expensive penalty for failure to meet the Move Update requirements:

- We urge NCOA processing of *every mailing, every time*. If you provide a list that has been processed through NCOA by another provider, *you* may be responsible for any errors in that list.
- NCOA processing is only good for 95 days from the date of the update to the eDoc submission date (the mail date, in English). Whoever does the NCOA processing needs to be working from an up-to-date NCOA database. You may need to reprocess multi-buyers that are mailing after the main mail drop – their move updates may be too old. If you have a big list that you'd like to drop over a multi-month period you will need to reprocess later drops – their addresses will have expired.
- You may not add addresses at the last minute, even seeds that have not been through NCOA processing. Seeds can be tricky since they often have false names that render them as undeliverable to automated postal databases.

Frankly, we are very worried about this development. This concept of using penalties as a revenue stream is essentially a phantom rate increase. The Postal Service is already in the process of designing invoices to be sent out beginning in October for mailer "errors." They'll just be for fun through this year, but in 2015, they'll be for real.

## The Language of Intelligent Mail Your DOA (Dictionary of Acronyms)

If you've been in the mailing business any length of time, then you've noticed our industry uses a lot of industry specific terminology and acronyms. The editors of ProNews recently received a request from a reader asking for a cheat sheet of Intelligent Mail terms – so here we go!

- **IMB** – Intelligent Mail barcode – May appear on a mail piece, the handling unit, or container
- **HU** – Handling Unit – a tray or sack holding mail
- **MID** – Mailer ID – a six or nine digit number used to identify the "mailer" of a mailing – can be the mail owner, mail preparer, mail tracker, and a lot of others in the "Cast of Characters" in a mailing
- **CRID** – Customer Registration ID – uniquely identifies a USPS customer at a location. Sometimes used in lieu of a MID in eDocs
- **eDocs** – Electronic documentation – the complex data files that must be uploaded to the PostalOne! information for a Full-Service Intelligent Mailing
- **Mail.Dat** – A collection of electronic files used to provide the Postal Service and logistics providers with detailed information on a mailing. This is typically the format of data provided in eDocs
- **Mail.XML** – The exception that proves the rule, an alternative file format to Mail.Dat
- **IMsb** – An alternative to Full-Service Intelligent Mail for small business owners
- **IMpb** – Intelligent Mail barcode for parcels
- **MTAC** – Mailers Technical Advisory Committee – A group of industry and USPS members that creates most of these acronyms and formulates some postal regulations
- **NCOA** – National Change Of Address – A system that permits mailers to match their address files against a file of address changes kept by the USPS to make corrections
- **ACS** – Address Correction Service – A service that sends address corrections or reasons for non-delivery to the mailer when mail is not deliverable
- **BCG** – Business Customer Gateway – Popularly known as the Business Customer Gateway to Hell, this is a web portal where mailers can log in and obtain MIDs, CRIDs, see their Mailer Scorecard, and more. The URL is <https://gateway.usps.com>
- **JFKM** – Shorthand for the reaction to most mailers after visiting the BCG

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8341 Beechcraft Avenue  
Gaithersburg, MD 20879

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Dave Lewis  
[dlewis@prolist.com](mailto:dlewis@prolist.com)  
301 924-4545  
[www.ProList.com](http://www.ProList.com)

