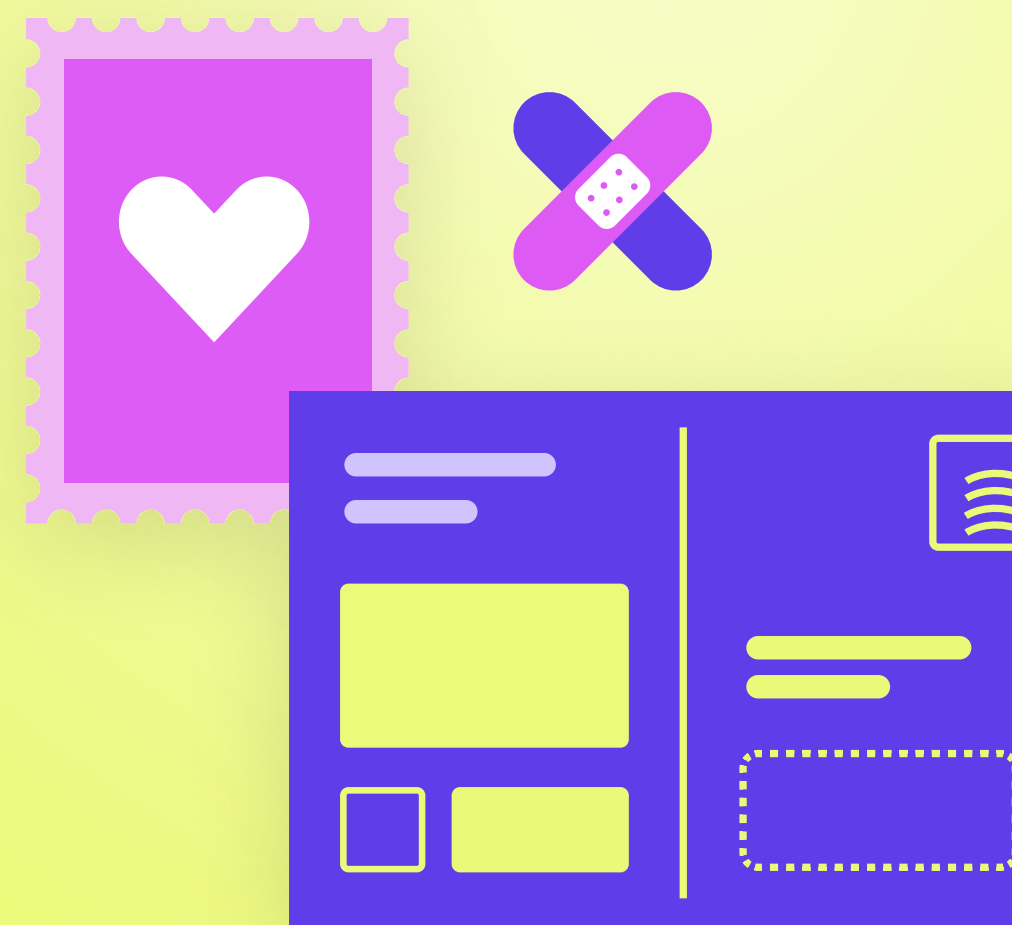


Lob Pocket Guide:

An insider's guide to *USPS terms*

Direct mail is always evolving – and so is the terminology. Our pocket guide makes it easy to keep up with the latest industry terms, definitions, and abbreviations.



Mail Logistics

The planning and coordination of how mail is produced, sorted, and entered into the delivery network. This includes decisions around entry points, routing, commingling, and drop timing, all of which impact cost, speed, and delivery consistency.

Mail Growth Incentive

A program from USPS designed to incentivize mailers to grow the volume of First-Class Mail and/or Marketing Mail year over year. Eligible mailers receive a 30% postage credit for qualifying volume that exceeds the established threshold.

In-Home Date

When mail arrives in the recipient's mailbox (not when it's sent). The in-home date provides a strong anchor for performance analysis by providing a clear view of response velocity and attribution.

Area Distribution Center (ADC)

Mid-level USPS facilities that sort and process mail after high-level sorting, but before it reaches local facilities. ADCs manage mail across a broad geographic region.

Commingling

Combining mail from multiple sources or mailers to qualify for deeper postal discounts and improve sorting efficiency.

Drop Date

The date mail completes production and enters the delivery process, with timing relative to in-home delivery depending on routing, entry point, and logistics.

Destination Entry (Drop Shipping)

Entering mail closer to its final destination within the delivery network to reduce transit time and postage costs.

Entry Point

Where mail enters the USPS delivery network for processing and transportation. The entry point affects cost and delivery speed.

Postcard

A rectangular mailpiece without an envelope that meets specific USPS size and thickness requirements. Postcards typically qualify for lower postage rates.

Letter

A mailpiece enclosed in an envelope that falls within USPS size, weight, and thickness limits for letter mail. Letters are commonly used for personalized or transactional communications.

Flat

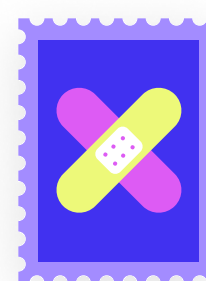
A larger mailpiece, such as a catalog, booklet, or oversized envelope, that exceeds standard letter dimensions but remains flexible.

Sectional Center Facility (SCF)

A localized USPS processing and distribution center that sorts and routes mail for a specific geographic area near the final destination. They're usually defined by the first three digits of the ZIP codes.

USPS Promotions

Limited-time USPS programs that offer discounted postage rates to marketers, printers, and mailers who incorporate new technology and print techniques to drive engagement and response.



We “speak USPS” so you don’t have to. Keep this guide bookmarked for easy reference whenever you need a quick refresher.

Mail Class

USPS categories that define the service, postage, and requirements for different types of mail. The most common mail classes used for direct mail are First-Class Mail and Marketing Mail.

Processing & Distribution Center (P&DC)

These USPS facilities process, sort, and route mail coming in from Post Offices and collection boxes in a specific geographic region.



It’s not just about knowing definitions, it’s about knowing how to use them.

From ADCs to commingling, every term in this glossary influences the way your mail is priced, processed, and delivered. Once you unjumble the jargon and understand how the system works, you can make smarter postal decisions that help you send more while saving more.



Still untangling USPS jargon? Explore more Postal Fix resources, guides, and insider tips at lob.com/postalfix