Simple
CertifiedMail.com

A Guide to USPS Certified Mail

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HOW TO SEND CERTIFIED MAIL®

What is Certified Mail®?

Certified Mail® is an Extra Service provided by the USPS that provides you with an official receipt proving your letter was mailed and a signature from the recipient proving the Certified Mail was delivered.

Certified Mail® receipts and delivery confirmations serve an important role in business and legal affairs as they are considered prima facie evidence in legal proceedings by local, state and federal courts. Approximately 190 million pieces of Certified Mail® are mailed each year, according to USPS reports.

Common Uses of Certified Mail

- Legal proceedings
- Time sensitive communications with debtors and creditors.
- Important government communications
- Foreclosure notices
- Tax returns
- Health care records
- Compliance documents

How long does it take the USPS to deliver Certified Mail?

Delivery time depends on whether you chose to send the Certified letter via First-Class Mail or Priority Mail. When sending via First-Class, it usually takes two to five business days. Sending via Priority Mail shortens the mailing time to two or three days. Certified Mail is available in all 50 states, plus Washington D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam and the US Virgin Islands.

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Occasional users normally visit the Post Office to send Certified Mail. Here is what you can expect.

For Proof of Acceptance (Mailing)

Fill in the Certified Mail® Receipt (Form PS 3800) and attach it to the front of your envelope. Then pay for the postage and Certified Mail fees at the counter. The clerk will stamp the PS 3800 form and give a portion back to you as Proof of Acceptance.

Tracking

The unique 22-digit code enables you to track the item via the USPS.com web site, all the way to its delivery, but it won't include a signature from the recipient.

For Proof of Delivery with Signature

Fill in the Return Receipt Form PS 3811, commonly known as the **Green Card**, and attach it to the back of your envelope. The Postal Carrier delivering your Certified Mail will not leave the letter until the Green Card has been signed by someone at the recipient's address. The Green Card is then returned to you via First-Class mail.

How much does Certified Mail® cost?

The 2020 USPS fees for Certified Mail® are detailed below. These fees are in addition to First-Class and Priority Mail postage.

Your Options at the Post Office	Cost
Certified Mail Receipt (PS 3800)	$3.55
Return Receipt (PS3811 Green Card)	$2.85

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HOW TO SEND CERTIFIED MAIL®

New USPS features and web-based Certified Mail software make preparing and managing Certified Mail much easier, while eliminating Post Office visits.

Preparing Certified Mail

Today, Certified Mail can be sent in window envelopes that include a cover sheet with PC

Postage™ and IMpb™ bar codes for mail tracking. The cover sheet is printed on 8 ½" x 11" paper from any printer, folded and slipped into the envelope with your letter. The old-fashioned Certified Mail forms and postage meters are eliminated.

The cover sheet is generated by web-based software, accessed from your Internet browser. Preparing Certified Mail this way takes about a minute per piece, at least 5x faster than using the old USPS forms. Batches of dozens, hundreds or thousands can be printed direct from address lists maintained in Microsoft Excel files, with the prep time reduced to approximately 30 seconds per letter.

Proof of Acceptance (Mailing)

Today, you don't take your Certified Mail to the Post Office just to get a receipt. Instead you leave your Certified letter for your Mail Carrier to pick up, or drop in any USPS Mail Box. An electronic Proof of Acceptance (PDF file) posts to your account soon after your Certified Mail® receives its first outbound scan,

within a few hours of mailing. The electronic Proof of Acceptance is accepted as prima facia evidence that the Post Office physically took possession of the Certified letter at a specific date and time.

Tracking Your Certified Mail Letters

To track your Certified Mail letter, you simply login to SimpleCertifiedMail.com where the USPS tracking data is automatically updated every few hours, organized for easy viewing, saved for ten years, and can be downloaded to your own PC or server as needed.

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Proof of Delivery with Signature

Today old-fashioned Green Cards can be replaced with the USPS Return Receipt Electronic (the "RRE"), a PDF file. SimpleCertifiedMail.com posts the the RRE to user accounts within 24 hours of the Mail Carrier collecting the signature, thus eliminating the wait for the Green Card and the chance the Green Card gets lost in the mail stream. Importantly, the RRE carries the same legal status as the PS 3811 Return Receipt Green Card .

Significant Cost Savings:

SimpleCertifiedMail.com is web-based software that runs from your Internet browser. There are no up-front costs, contracts or maintenance fees. You simply pay a small transaction fee for each piece of Certified Mail mailed and managed with the assistance of the software. Your costs will be lower than using Certified Mail with a traditional PS 3811 Green Card, even before counting the labor savings and efficiency improvements.

Key Benefits from using Certified Mail Software

- No need for postage meters and USPS forms.
- No need to visit the Post Office.
- Proof of Acceptance (Electronic) within hours of mailing.
- Mail tracking information is automatically updated to the user's account.
- The USPS Return Receipt (Electronic) is posted to user's account within 24 hours of its delivery.
- Automatic refunds for Certified letters that are prepared but not mailed within 8 days.
- Easy expense management via reports that can be downloaded in Excel format.
- Batch Processing features for high volume.
- REST APIs that enable easy integration with other software platforms.
- All tracking data, USPS confirmations and expense data are saved to your account for 10 years.

For more information, including videos that show how Certified Mail software can improve your business, visit www.simplecertifiedmail.com or call 888-472-1750

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These envelopes and labels improve the visibility of Certified Mail for the mail carrier and the recipient.

The three window envelopes (#10, 6" x 9" and 9" x 12") are preprinted with the green Certified Mail® banner and come with a large, clear window that enables USPS scanners to scan the cover sheet inside.

The Certified Mail® labels are designed for flats and packages. They are available as sheet labels for standard printers and rolls for use with DYMO label printers.

About SimpleCertifiedMail.com

SimpleCertifiedMail.com has been the leader in Certified Mail technology and automation since 2005. For more information visit www.simplecertifiedmail.com or call 888-472-1750