

## 1. What does NCOA mean?

NCOA means National Change of Address. This identifies people and organizations that have moved. Many vendors compare your file against the U.S. Postal Service's file of National Change of Address notices.

## 2. What is CASS (Coding Accuracy Support System)?

A methodology that a vendor uses (certified by the USPS) to standardized a client's list. CASS corrects some address elements (e.g. suffix, ZIP+4). The methodology will not identify if a specific city address is actually a valid USPS delivery nor does the USPS website validate a specific address.

## 3. What is DSF (Delivery Sequence File)?

The DSF is a computerized file that contains all delivery point addresses serviced by the USPS, with the exception of general delivery. On the file, each delivery point is a separate record that conforms to all USPS addressing standards.

## 4. What is CDS (Computerized Delivery Sequence)?

CDS is a postal product that contains all addresses. A customer of the USPS may participate in this product if they have at least 90% of the addresses in a particular ZIP code. Once certified, the USPS uses the CDS product to maintain the customer's data by sending to the customer the certified addresses within a ZIP(s) bimonthly. The maintenance fee includes the resorting of addresses to mirror the Postal Carrier's method of walking their route, deleted addresses (e.g. condemned building), added address (new household) and other data attribute changes for households (e.g. vacancy indicator, seasonal indicator).

## 5. What is the 90-Day Rule for Vacancies?

This is a postal rule. If an address is vacant for more than 90 days then the USPS flags that address as a vacant address.

## 6. How long is a resident/occupant file valid for mailing?

The mailer has ninety (90) days from the date of renting the file to complete their mailing and be qualified for Enhanced Carrier Route mailing rates. Preparation to qualify for any Enhanced Carrier Route rate is optional and need not be performed for all carrier routes in a 5-digit area. An Enhanced Carrier Route mailing may include pieces at basic, high density, and saturation Enhanced Carrier Route rates. Automation basic carrier route rate pieces must be prepared as a separate mailing.

## 7. What is Simplified Address?

This is an alternative addressing format used when delivery of identical mail is requested to every customer on a rural route or highway contract route, or to all post office box customers at a post office **without city carrier service**. Instead of listing the name and address of the addressee, the mailer may use "postal customer". In order to use simplified address format you must mail to EACH box holder, this is a 100% requirement. An example of such mailing would be if there were 100 households on Carrier Route 7 the mailing labels (assuming using labels) would look like: *Boxholder, Route R007, Any City, Any State, Any ZIP. Boxholder, Route R007, Any City, Any State, Any ZIP. Boxholder, Route R007, Any City, Any State, Any ZIP.* This address repeats itself 100 times.

## 8. What is "Simplified Address Count"?

The number of active deliveries in a route.

## 9. Does the USPS permit mailers to use either the simplified format OR the city style addressing format for rural routes?

Yes. The USPS permits mailers to use either the simplified format OR the city style addressing format for rural routes.

## 10. What is a "Highway Contract"?

A Highway Contract (HCR) is a contract agreement between the Postal Services and a private individual or firm for the delivery and collection of mail from homes and businesses to the USPS or between Postal Offices. The services provided by the HCR box delivery carrier are identical to those provided by postal rural route carriers. The supplier, depending upon the contract requirements, performs specified duties such as maintaining a roster of customers, casing mail, selling stamps, certified mail, etc.

# FAQS ABOUT DATA (CONTINUED)

## 11. What is “General Delivery”?

An alternate delivery service that allows customers with proper identification to pick up mail at a post office. This is provided for transients and customers who do not have a permanent address or who prefer not to use PO boxes.

## 12. What is “Throw Back”?

Indicates that the particular city style address receives the mail at a PO Box rather than the residential address per the customer’s request. The customer has asked the USPS to delivery their mail to the PO Box rather than their house. There are many reasons why this may be done: they live in the Northeast and would rather not shovel out their mailbox in the winter time; or the consumer travels a great deal for their job and doesn’t want mail collecting at their house.

## 13. What is “Walk Sequence”?

A numeric code indicating the position of an address within a postal carrier’s walk path. A walk sequence of 10000 (some mailers add or strip off the zero’s) is the first address that the postal carrier will deliver mail to, 20000 is second and so forth.

## 14. I have a client who says the post office charged them a higher rate because the mail was out of walk sequence. Can you help them?

The general answer is yes, but it also depends. The first step is to ask more questions: Who printed the labels? Did they merge the file with other data? Who at the USPS (and telephone number) rejected or charged the higher rate? What reason was given, beyond out of sequence (e.g. was just one carrier route mixed up, two addresses in one route, all routes looked like someone dropped the mail, all or some routes where in reverse walk sequence? Did the USPS undergo a recent scheme change, weeks or months ago, when?) The next step is to evaluate the responses given. The answer may be obvious. For example, if they say the mail was in reverse walk sequence then the mail-house most likely used the data incorrectly.

## 15. Why do Carrier Routes change?

A driving force is that a carrier’s workload has changed (for example, new business comes in and must carry more). The rippling effect of this is the carrier must now shift work to another carrier. You’ll also note that in general, as USPS automation improves, we tend to have more deleted routes as a carrier becomes more efficient.

## 16. Why do routes disappear when they were listed the previous month?

Possible answers: scheme changes, college route, all DND (Do Not Deliver) timing issues - on the vendor or USPS side. Contact your support personnel who can obtain a definitive answer for you.

## 17. What is the Do Not Deliver (DND) Rule?

DND is a ‘USPS Postal Prohibitory Order’ that a consumer signs mandating us to remove an address from our file. The DMA (Direct Marketing Association) also has a Mail Preference file for use by mailers at a nominal fee. The purpose of the file is to consolidate requests for removal and make that available to mailers.

## 18. Can a Carrier Route with less then 10 Pieces of mail qualify for postal discounts?

Yes. Packages may qualify for “Saturation Rate” and be prepared for a carrier route when the contents and the applicable density standards are met: a package with fewer than 10 pieces, a less-than-full tray or sack with fewer than 125 pieces and less than 15 pounds of pieces.

## 19. Why do my counts change?

Could be due to seasonal, vacancies, DND’s, bypasses, or changes in coverage. Contact your support personnel who can obtain a definitive answer for you.

## FAQS ABOUT DATA (CONTINUED)

### **20. My client called the post office and the count they have for PO Boxes is different from vendor's counts, why?**

Did the client ask for the "active" residential count? Many post offices include the businesses and vacancies and some also include no-stats. 99.99% of the time when different counts are provided, the client asks the wrong questions to the USPS. You will still find a small percentage of errors. It is not uncommon to have 10-20% undeliverable names, especially in the consumer market. Consumers move on a regular basis.

### **21. What is a drop stop a.k.a. drop address in AccuLeads?**

The USPS has the option to code a Multi-Family Dwelling Unit (MFDU) as a drop stop. When this is done, the 'stop' may have 50 apartments and instead of identifying each one as Apartment 1, 2, 3, etc the USPS will say 1 Main St. is a drop stop of 50. Every address label will say 1 Main St. and there are 50 such address labels. The USPS will use this addressing method when they are not permitted to have direct access to the mailboxes. In prestigious areas or for security reasons, the landlord provides for mail delivery. Since the USPS doesn't have direct access to the mailboxes they don't know the individual apartment numbers. The USPS will leave, at a predetermined place, all of the mail for that complex.

### **22. What does "merge/purge" mean?**

Merge/Purge is a process used when combining or eliminating records that are duplicated, and produce a single unduplicated mail file or database.

### **23. What is a "list enhancement"?**

List enhancement provides you with demographic information about your customers. The enhanced data allows you to identify, segment, and select names for improved marketing.

### **24. What is "data suppression"?**

Data suppression identifies names in a Consumer and Business database not currently on your customer file. The objective is to produce an unduplicated file of names for future prospecting. Data suppression, as it pertains to a direct mail campaign, is essentially saving a balance of unique records in the event 100% of the file is not mailed. (ADVO/AccuLeads does not have the ability to suppress records.)

**M A N H A T T A N**  
printers & mailers  
*direct mail communications*

**[www.manhattanmailers.com](http://www.manhattanmailers.com)**

**586-786-6100**