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USPS® MAKES HOLIDAY RETURNS EASY



Cover Story

USPS Makes Holiday Returns Easy

The Postal Service™ is making improvements to its returns infrastructure to prepare for the annual season of holiday returns.

This shopping season is likely to be even more hectic than last year with projected growth from online shopping in the double-digits. Also, USPS® is projected to deliver nearly 900 million packages between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. Once the sun sets on candle and tinsel, consumers will start returning items that they ordered or that they received as gifts. As the number of items ordered online and shipped to consumers grows, so will the demand for easy, convenient return methods that attract repeat business.

The Postal Service is ready for the challenge in the following ways:

- **Continued expansion of our returns processing capabilities.** A total of 16,723 Parcel Return Service Return Delivery Units and 186 Return Sectional Center Facilities across the country are available to pick up packages. This helps USPS handle the volume and positions us as the returns shipping provider of choice in a crowded market worth about \$6 billion.
- **It's easier for businesses to insure returns with USPS.** Insurance is available for up to \$5,000.
- **Offering one universal shipping permit.** We have one universal shipping permit that covers Parcel Return Service, Merchandise Return Service, and USPS Returns® and outbound products.
- **Significant enhancement for USPS Returns.** USPS Returns applies to three mail classes: First-Class Package Service®, Priority Mail®, and Ground Return Service. This service offers customers cost-effective options and streamlines the weighing and rating process through mail processing equipment.

Return Labels

Return labels can either be included in the original order or requested through a merchant's call center. Consumers then affix the return label to their package and mail it using one of the following options:

- Take it to one of 30,000 plus Post Offices nationwide,
- Drop it in one of 143,000 plus collection boxes (packages must meet aviation mail security guidelines), or
- Go to usps.com to schedule a Package Pickup, which is available to more than 40,000 ZIP Codes.

The Postal Service also offers a number of options that help businesses create and deliver return labels to customers. Businesses that use Priority Mail Returns® Service, First-Class Package Return® Service, Ground Return Service, and Parcel Return Service can use the Print and Deliver application to request return labels; USPS will then create those labels and deliver them, along with return instructions, to the following:

- One of 30,000 plus Post Offices nationwide;
- A domestic address; or
- One of more than 2,837 self-service kiosks, where consumers can print them.

Businesses that create their own returns labels may also distribute them to customers via the **Label Broker™**. Designed for customers without a printer, the Label Broker allows merchants to store labels in a secure USPS repository; customers may then print labels at their local Post Office® or at usps.com.

Merchants can also instruct the Postal Service to hold the labels for pickup at a designated Post Office. Small and medium-sized merchants have the following options:

- Use the Merchant Returns Label Tool to generate Merchandise Returns or USPS Returns labels.
- Use the Click-N-Ship® Business Pro to generate Parcel Return Service or Merchandise Return Service labels to include in the original shipment box or send to the cloud platform. Self-service printing is also available individually or in batches.

— Shipping Products and Services,
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