



Intelligent Mail[®] Package barcode (IM[®]pb): What you need to know to be ready!

FAQ's

Q: What is the IM[®]pb?

A: The Intelligent Mail[®] Package Barcode is the Postal Services next generation tracking barcode for parcels and Extra Services.

A package with an IMpb allows the USPS[®] to provide end users with detailed tracking information. The barcode offers full visibility to package tracking on the delivery status of the parcel as it routes to its destination.

Q: What items require a barcode?

A: Parcels, packages, and Priority Mail[®] Express or Priority Mail[®] pieces of any shape, size, or price category, including flat-rate boxes and envelopes require an IM[®]pb (barcode). In addition, the following mail classes require an IM[®]pb:

- First-Class Mail Package Services
- Parcel Select
- Parcel Select Lightweight
- Standard Mail
- Library Mail
- Media Mail
- Bound Printed Matter



A common question asked is, will a manila envelope (8 ½ x 11 for example) will need a shipping label? The following scenarios should help provide some guidance, however for more specific rules, please refer to the USPS Postal Explorer website under Retail First-Class Class Mail – Single Piece at: <http://pe.usps.gov/>

- If you are sending out a First-class mail piece in the manila envelope and it is less than 13 oz and does not have any Extra Services - then the answer is NO. An IMpb is not required.
- If you are sending out a First-class mail piece in the manila envelope and it is less than 13 oz and it DOES have an Extra Service applied to it, then the answer is YES – you do need an IMpb - because the requirement for IMpb effects Extra Services.
- If you are sending out a manila envelope and the weight goes over 13 oz – then the answer is YES – because that item is now considered Priority Mail and Priority Mail requires an IMpb.

Q: What are the IM[®]pb full benefits?

A: Full IM[®]pb Benefits enhance the overall customer experience by:

- Providing end-to-end tracking information
- Offering status from every scan point – leading to better management of shipment expectations
- Accessing the best prices for parcel shipments with **Commercial Base Discounts**
- Automatically qualifying for Free Insurance on Priority Mail and Priority Mail Express
 - Items with a value up to \$50 (Priority) / \$100 (Priority Mail Express)

- Delivering a neat and clean shipping label
- Eliminating the need for multiple barcodes on a package
- Keeping compliant for future USPS® features, products, and services

Q: What is Commercial-Base pricing and how it impacted by the IM®pb requirements?

A: Commercial-Base Pricing (CBP) is a set of special discounted rates that are available to shippers who use scannable postage markings and send package data to the USPS systems electronically.

So what does that mean?

If you are using a mailing system that prints an IBI (*information based indicia*), you qualify for CBP since the marking that is being printed from the mailing system is scanned and that data is submitted to the USPS electronically. If you have a **Neopost IS / IM or IN Series mailing system**, you currently benefit from Commercial Based Discounts.

With CBP there is no minimum shipping volume required to obtain the discounted rates and it applies to items with a weight up to 70 lbs. Also CBP can be applied to Mail Classes such as: Priority Mail, Priority Mail Express, First Class Package Services and First Class International Packages, Media Mail, Library Mail, etc.

After January 26, 2015, only shipping labels that include an IM®pb will qualify for Commercial-Base Pricing. A pre-printed label with an IM®pb will only qualify for Retail Rates. Examples of pre-printed labels with an IM®pb barcode include a:

- USPS Tracking Label (also known as the Label 400)
- USPS Extra Services Label such as eSignature Confirmation

Label 400



Q. Why doesn't a pre-printed label qualify for Commercial Base Pricing?

A: Preprinted labels do not qualify for benefits such as Commercial Based Pricing because the label is missing data elements that are required in an IMpb barcode per the USPS. In order to qualify, you must be able to upload the following information to the USPS:

- **Shipping Address File**
- **Destination Zip Code + 4**
- **Mail Class**

Q. Why doesn't a pre-printed label qualify for Commercial Based Pricing? (continued)

When using an online shipping software package, you enter the characteristics of the shipment - *for example: (1) What address is the item being shipped to? (2) How is it being shipped? (3) What Extra Services are being added to the shipment?* The Intelligent Mail Package Barcode itself is then generated based on the criteria that you have defined. As part of the software package, a shipping services file is then sent to the USPS.

This is not the case with a pre-printed label. With a pre-printed label, you are peeling and sticking the label on the package. No shipping services file is being uploaded to the USPS – unless you have an application such as E-Services or E-Services with Electronic Return Receipt. More importantly, you have not created the label based on the unique characteristics of the shipment – therefore the overall requirements have not been met. There is no address validation; correction; or zip + 4 upload. With that said, the item does not meet the full IMpb requirement and will **only qualify for Retail Rates**. The pre-printed label **DOES meet the USPS minimum requirement that states every package must now include an IM[®]pb barcode**. In fact, the pre-printed label does include an IM[®]pb barcode that will provide partial IM[®]pb benefits including:

- Tracking information such as arrival and departure info; date and time of delivery and attempted delivery

A pre-printed label **does not qualify** for full benefits because the mail class is not included. As a result, pre-printed labels do not receive:

- Free insurance on Priority Mail / Priority Mail Express or
- Commercial Based Rates

Q: What is a Label 400?

A: The Label 400, *(pictured on page 3)* is a pre-printed tracking label that is free from the USPS. Using a Label 400 will not qualify for Commercial Base Pricing in 2015 but it **does** meet the USPS requirement for affixing a barcode to every package. The Label 400 can be ordered through the USPS:

- 1-800-222-1811
- Mobile USPS[®] App
- Available at the retail counter

For the Remainder of 2014 through January 25, 2015, using a Label 400 in conjunction with a Neopost Mailing system will still qualify for Commercial Base Rates. But if a Label 400 is used in 2015 as the tracking label, Retail Rates will be applied. Label 400 will not qualify for Commercial Rates.

Q: What are the two options for presenting an Intelligent Mail® Package Barcode on a package in 2015?

A: In 2015, there are 2 ways you can ship a package via the USPS and meet the latest IM®pb requirements.

Option 1 – Use a Pre-printed Label that includes an IM®pb Barcode: In the image below, the IM®pb is part of a pre-printed label. With a pre-printed label, you just peel and stick it on your item. With a **pre-printed label**, the characteristics of the mailing are not uploaded to the USPS. Addresses can be hand-written and used in conjunction with a postage meter strip tape for parcel shipments. The mailer can track: arrival and departure info; date and time of delivery and attempted delivery. In this case, the mailer does not qualify for Commercial Based Pricing and will pay Retail Rates. Finally, the package will not qualify for free insurance if it is being sent via Priority Mail or Priority Mail Express



Option 2– Create a Shipping Label that Includes an IM®pb. In the image below, the formatted IM®pb is part of a shipping label. To create the shipping label, you need to first define the characteristics of the shipment. This is accomplished through online shipping software. You will enter in data such as: Delivery Address, Return Address, , Class of Service; Extra Services; zip + 4. The shipping label will also include a unique mailer ID. These characteristic create the barcode. By creating an IM®pb shipping label, a package qualifies for **full benefits including:**



- Use of Commercial Base Discounted Rates
- Automatic qualification of Free Insurance on Priority Mail® & Priority Mail® Express Items (up to \$50 and \$100 respectively).

Q: What about Processing Envelopes/Packages with Extra Services?

A: In 2015, Extra Services will require an IM®pb barcode to meet the latest USPS mandate.

If you are currently using a Neopost USA eDelivery Confirmation™, eSignature Confirmation™, or Certified label for parcels, flat rate boxes and envelope for First-class letters (certified label), **these barcodes will continue to be accepted by the USPS for the remainder of 2014.** We refer to these labels as “legacy labels” and they will be replaced in the next few months with an updated look and feel as well as an IM®pb barcode.

Q: What are Neopost USA IM®pb Solutions and where can I get more details?

A: Depending on the number of packages that you are shipping or the options you are looking for, Neopost offers two IM®pb compliant online shipping solutions. One is neoShip which is designed for low-mid volume shipments. The second is Enhanced Mailing & Shipping (EMS) designed for high volume shippers.

neoShip is our latest online shipping solution. It works in conjunction with your IS/IM/IN Series mailing systems. People often ask “does the mailing system print the IM®pb shipping label?” and the answer is *no*. With neoShip, you are using the scale from the mailing system to weigh the items, but will need the following components to create and ship IM®pb compliant labels.

- A computer with internet
- Inkjet / laser printer or thermal label printer
- A registered myNeopost account
- neoFunds / TotalFunds account

Technical specifications are as follows:

- OS: Microsoft Windows XP® - SP3, 32/64-bit,
- Microsoft Windows 7® - SP1, 32/64-bit
- Browsers: Microsoft Internet Explorer® (IE) - v. 7, 8,9,10,
- Mozilla Firefox®
- Java® required
- Windows® recognized inkjet, laserjet or thermal label printer with a minimum quality of 203 dpi (USPS® requirement)
- *Note:* neoShip runs on PC’s not supported on MAC

neoShip



The mailing system is still used to process letters, postcards and items that are less than 13 ounces.

With neoShip, you can create an IM[®]pb compliant shipping label in four easy steps, and pay for it directly out of your existing neoFunds account. Shipping packages has never been so easy.

For more **neoShip** information visit: <http://neopostinc.com/Small-Business/Products/Software-Solutions/neoShip.aspx>

Enhanced Mailing & Shipping (EMS)

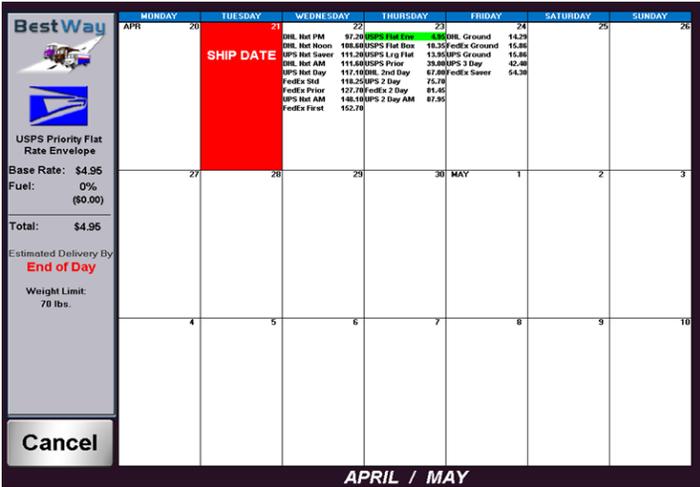
EMS is for mailers looking for a full multi-carrier shipping and accounting solution. Like neoShip, EMS allows you to create and print an IM[®]pb compliant shipping label. With EMS you will also receive full IM[®]pb benefits.

Some key features of EMS include:

Rate Shopping which provides a graphical calendar snapshot of:

- Each carrier
- Available shipping dates
- Associated delivery charges

An EMS screen



For more EMS information, please visit: <http://neopostinc.com/Products/Shipping-and-Tracking/ems.aspx>

Q: Is neoShip currently available?

A: neoShip is currently available on all NEW placements of IS/IM280; IN-360; IN-600HF; IN-600AF; IN-700; and IN-750 systems. If you are ordering a new mailing system, neoShip can be added at time of sale.

Q: I already have a Neopost IS/IM/IN Series mailing system. I want to add neoShip? Can I add it today?

A: neoShip will be available on existing placements of IS/IM/IN Series mailing systems within the next 60 days.

For more information on Neopost USA, visit www.neopostusa.com



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