

# Business Reply Mail (BRM)

Related QSGs: 811, 923, 924

# 922

Quick Service  
Guide

**Overview** For an annual permit fee, a business reply mail (BRM) permit is available for distributing business reply cards, envelopes, self-mailers, cartons, and labels. BRM allows the permit holder to receive First-Class Mail and Priority Mail back from customers by paying postage only on the mail returned. The BRM permit holder guarantees payment of First-Class Mail postage plus a per piece charge for pieces returned by the USPS (see payment options below). When designing a BRM mailpiece or label, mailers must consult with their local post office. The piece must conform to a specific format to qualify as BRM, including a unique ZIP+4 code assigned by the USPS. Proofs for regular BRM should be approved by the USPS before printing. Proofs for Qualified Business Reply Mail (QBRM) must be approved by the USPS. On the reverse is a layout example for a BRM envelope. BRM pieces distributed in automation rate mailings are required to meet automation compatibility standards. BRM templates are available on the Postal Explorer web site at (<http://pe.usps.gov>) by selecting "Mailpiece Design" in the left frame.

**Payment Options (S922)** **Basic BRM**—Annual permit fee of \$100.00. Per piece charge of \$0.30 plus First-Class Mail postage. Paid through a regular postage-due account or by cash on delivery.

Cost per piece <i>First-Class postage + 30¢</i> Letter (1 oz.): 33¢ + 30¢ = 63¢ Card Rate: 20¢ + 30¢ = 50¢
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**High-Volume BRM**—Annual permit fee of \$100.00 plus annual accounting fee of \$300.00. Per piece charge of \$0.08 plus First-Class Mail postage. Paid through BRM advance deposit account only. Best suited if return volume is approximately 1,400 pieces or more per year.

Cost per piece <i>First-Class postage + 8¢</i> Letter (1 oz.): 33¢ + 8¢ = 41¢ Card Rate: 20¢ + 8¢ = 28¢
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**Qualified Business Reply Mail (QBRM)**—Annual permit fee of \$100.00 plus annual accounting fee of \$300.00.

Per piece charge of \$0.05 plus a lower QBRM automation First-Class Mail postage rate. Paid through BRM advance deposit account only. Used only on barcoded automation-compatible cards and letter-size mail weighing up to 2 ounces if design is approved for QBRM by USPS before distribution (E150.2). A unique ZIP+4 code is assigned by the USPS for each rate category of QBRM to be returned (one for card-rate pieces, one for letter-size pieces weighing 1 ounce or less, and one for letter-size pieces weighing over 1 ounce up to 2 ounces). Best suited if return volume is approximately 1,100 pieces or more annually.

Cost per piece <i>QBRM postage + 5¢</i> Letter (1 oz.): 30¢ + 5¢ = 35¢ Card Rate: 18¢ + 5¢ = 23¢
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**Other Post Offices** A BRM permit holder can allow its authorized representatives or agents to use that permit number to receive BRM at any other post office. The permit holder must supply the representative or agent with a letter authorizing the use of the BRM permit and a copy of the USPS receipt showing that the BRM annual permit fee has been paid. That information, in turn, must be supplied to the representative's local post office, which will also assign a BRM ZIP+4 code(s) and barcode(s), as appropriate. Postage, per piece charges, and, if applicable, the annual accounting fee are paid by the local representative or agent.

**Official Mail** Authorized users of official mail may distribute BRM, subject to E060 and S922.

This guide is an overview only. For the specific DMM standards applicable to this category of mail, consult the DMM sections referenced above and the general sections within each DMM module.

### Business Reply Mail Layout Guidelines (S922.5)

**Permit Holder Space:** May contain information such as return address, logos, distribution codes, and form numbers.

**Company Logo:** For barcoded pieces, a company logo is permitted in the address block if it is placed no lower than 5/8 inch from the bottom edge of the mail piece and does not interfere with the barcode clear zone.

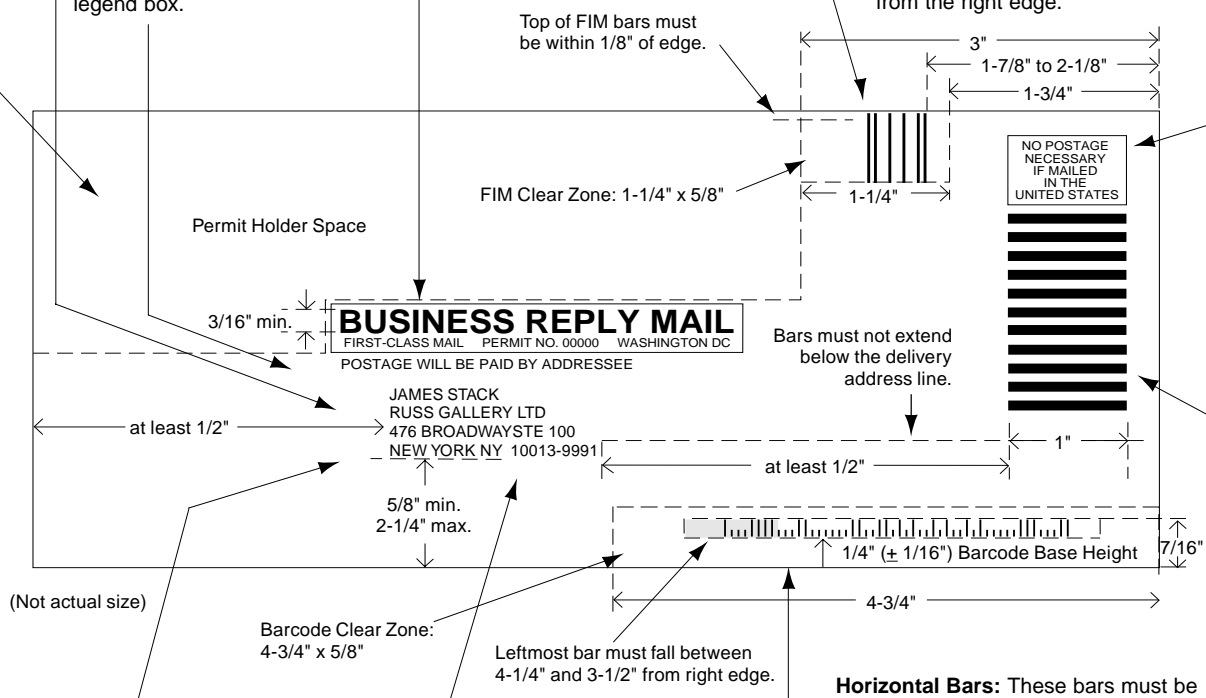
**Postage Paid Line:** Place the endorsement "POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE" (in capital letters) under the business reply legend box.

**Business Reply Legend:** The words "BUSINESS REPLY MAIL" are required above the address in capital (uppercase) letters. Immediately below, place the words "FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO." followed by the permit number and the name of the issuing post office (city and state) in capital letters.

**Facing Identification Mark (FIM):** A FIM pattern (specifically FIM B without barcode or FIM C with barcode) is required on all BRM postcards and letter-size mailpieces.

**FIM Location:** The FIM clear zone must contain no printed matter other than the FIM pattern. FIM bars must be between 1/2 and 3/4 inch high and 0.03125 (1/32 inch) ( $\pm 0.008$  inch) wide.

**Postage Imprint:** "NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES" must appear in the upper right corner of the mailpiece and must not extend more than 1-3/4 inches from the right edge.



**Address Format:** The complete address, including the name of the permit holder (company or individual), must be printed on the mailpiece.

**ZIP Code:** A unique ZIP+4 code is assigned to each piece.

**Horizontal Bars:** These bars must be uniform in length, at least 1 inch long and 1/16 to 3/16 inch thick, and evenly spaced. The bars may not extend below the delivery address line, which is located directly above the line containing the city, state, and ZIP Code.

Before printing, submit proofs of BRM samples to your postal business center or post office for advice and approval. Take advantage of this service—it could save you money. Qualified Business Reply Mail pieces must be approved by the USPS before printing.

**POSTNET Barcode Location:** The barcode must be located here (unless an address block barcode is used on a window envelope or printed address label). The barcode must be a ZIP+4 barcode (delivery point barcodes are not permitted). This area must be free of any printing other than the barcode. A free camera-ready barcode positive may be obtained from your local postal business center (S922.6).

#### Dimensions

Between 3-1/2 by 5 inches and 6-1/8 by 11-1/2 inches. To qualify for card rate, cards must be between 3-1/2 by 5 inches and 4-1/4 by 6 inches and between 0.007 and 0.016 inch thick. Larger card sizes are available, but they are charged at

First-Class Mail letter rate. Barcoded pieces measuring more than 4-1/4" high or 6" long must be at least 0.009 inch thick.

Additional standards apply to QBRM pieces (S922.7).

A surcharge is assessed for nonstandard mailpieces weighing 1 ounce or less.

#### Ink/Paper Colors and Type Styles

Not all colors of paper and/or ink and type styles are compatible with automated equipment. Contact your local postal business center or your postmaster for guidance.

All letter-size reply cards and envelopes (business reply, courtesy reply, and meter reply mail) provided as enclosures in automation First-Class Mail, Periodicals, and Standard Mail (A) must meet the standards in C810.8.