

Description

The National Change of Address (NCOA) service is offered to mailers through a network of individual businesses licensed by the USPS. The [NCOA licensees*](#) are authorized to perform address-matching services on mailers' lists at prices that are competitively determined by the market (prices may vary from licensee to licensee). Costs generally range from \$2.00 to \$5.00 per thousand addresses. On a regularly scheduled basis, the NCOA licensees receive current change-of-address (COA) information that is used to update the NCOA database provided by the Postal Service.

The NCOA process takes the mailer's list and programmatically examines each element of the address. The program attempts to verify or correct the ZIP Code; standardize the format for address, city, and state names; and append ZIP+4 Codes, carrier route codes, and delivery point barcode information to the mailer's addresses. Once this standardization process is completed, the entire mailer's list is matched against the NCOA database. When a match from the list is made to an NCOA name and address, the new address information is returned to the mailer. The NCOA database consists of address information for individuals, families, and businesses that have moved within the past 36 months. The names and addresses are compiled from COA orders presented to the Postal Service when a permanent move occurs. Temporary moves are not recorded on NCOA.

Expected Benefits

Because NCOA is used prior to a mailing, it greatly reduces UAA mail, which in turn reduces rehandling costs. NCOA also provides mailers with a PS Form 3553, which proves the list was updated on a given date by Coding Accuracy Support System-certified software.