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## National Area Mail Processing Studies Frequently Asked Questions

**Audience: Consumer & Industry Contact and Business Mail Entry Units**

### General

#### ***What is happening?***

On September 15<sup>th</sup>, the Postal Service announced a national Area Mail Processing (AMP) study to determine if there are opportunities to increase efficiency and improve productivity.

#### ***Why is this happening?***

We have to match our resources to the volume of mail we have to process. To that end, the Postal Service is conducting Area Mail Processing (AMP) studies to evaluate the consolidation of mail-processing operations.

We recognize the significant employee and community concerns associated with any potential change in postal operations. As we undertake this AMP study, you can be assured we will seek the public's input and give full consideration to any concerns before making a decision.

***Who is being studied:*** The list of facilities being studied is available at <http://about.usps.com/news/facility-studies/welcome.htm>. FAQs and additional information will also be available on this website. Comments can also be submitted on this web page.

#### ***Will customers have an opportunity to provide input?***

Community meetings will be held in locations where studies are being conducted to give customers the opportunity to offer their input prior to a final decision

Notification for local meetings will be published in local newspapers and at facilities being studied.

#### ***What type of improvements might this study identify?***

At this time, the Postal Service is only conducting a feasibility study and no decisions have been made. In the event the study identifies opportunity for improvements, the community will be notified. Generally speaking, AMP studies can identify improved efficiency through consolidation of some mail processing operations with a nearby mail processing facility.

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### ***Could this affect mail service to customers?***

At this time, the Postal Service is only conducting a feasibility study and no decisions have been made. Our customers will continue to receive the high level of service they have come to expect.

### ***Could we lose our local postmark?***

Even if a decision is ultimately made to relocate some mail processing operations, the (CITY NAME) Post Office will continue to provide a local postmark for those customers who want it. Business customers will continue to use their own postage meters and permits with a (CITY NAME) postmark. Business mail of this type is the overwhelming majority of the volume processed.

### ***Could this result in slower mail service?***

Providing a high level of service to our customers is a priority for the Postal Service. Should we choose to make changes, we expect them to be transparent to most customers.

### ***Could employees lose their jobs?***

Every effort will be made to assist career nonbargaining unit employees released from their positions, and we will reassign affected bargaining unit career employees to other jobs in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements.

### ***When will the AMP study be completed?***

From the time the AMP study is announced till the time a decision is made is approximately 5 months. We will notify the community when the AMP proposal is approved for implementation or deemed not feasible.

## **Business Mail Entry**

### ***What about Business Mail Entry units? How many are inside processing facilities being studied?***

The Postal Service has Business Mail Entry Units in a significant portion of our processing facilities nationwide. Virtually all of the plants that will be studied have Business Mail Entry Units. During the study phase, the Postal Service will determine the best method to manage the impact on business mailers. This may include increasing acceptance at mailer facilities or moving mail acceptance to other local post office facilities.

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### ***How will the Postal Service communicate proposed plans on plant and BMEU closings?***

The proposed network optimization and service standard changes are being communicated through many channels, including: USPS.com, aboutusps.com (aboutusps.com/facilitystudies), RIBBS, the AMP process which includes public meetings, a Federal Register notice, and meetings and discussions between postal officials and mailers.

### ***Will entry procedures be different at optimized plants?***

Standard procedures will be followed to accept and verify mail as we do today. BME facilities will manage their operating plans, volume arrival profiles and critical acceptance times to ensure adequate resources and space to accept and verify the mail to meet the needs of mailers.

### ***How will the network optimization studies affect BMEU locations and hours?***

BMEU hours and locations will depend primarily on workload and suitable acceptance locations and hours. BME facilities will manage their operating plans, volume arrival profiles and critical acceptance times to ensure adequate resources and space to accept and verify the mail to meet the needs of mailers.

### ***What are the impacts of Business Mail Entry Units (BMEU) since there will be more mail entered at fewer number of places? Can the BMEU handle the load?***

BMEUs will still be available at consolidated sites, and/or located at nearby facilities, after mail processing is moved. Reviews of acceptance and verification procedures are ongoing with the industry in an effort to reduce current verification processes. Workloads and operating windows will be reviewed and adjusted as needed.

### ***Does the Postal Service's plan consider the impact of the proposed changes on how customers make their mailings?***

Yes, and it will continue to do so throughout this process which is why your feedback is so important. The network study will include a full review of current acceptance operations at impacted facilities. Several factors will be considered including the # of impacted mailers, the # of mailings accepted and logistics associated with the network study.

### ***Will customers have to move their mailing permits if a facility is closed?***

Every effort will be made to avoid customers having to move their mailing permits. However, in some cases, customers may be required to move or open new permits.

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### ***Will customers have to pay for new permits if the permits are moved?***

In general, a customer will be able to move existing permits at no cost.

### ***What is the Postal Service's plan to counter the congestion issues that will occur once the BMEUs that remain open start dealing with larger entry volumes?***

Facility capacity will be considered as a part of network optimization study.

### ***Will BMEU operational hours change if a facility is impacted?***

Some BMEU operational hours may change as a result of the network optimization.

### ***Will resources continue to be available to assist BMEU customers impacted by the network optimization?***

Yes. Local and District USPS BME staff will provide assistance throughout the process to ensure all customer questions are answered and issues are addressed.

### ***How will the network optimization studies affect BMEU locations and hours?***

BMEU hours and locations will depend primarily on workload and suitable acceptance locations and hours. The Postal Service will work with mailers to assess the impact and develop viable solutions.

### ***Who can answer technical questions for mailers, such as whether more binding lines need to be used, and more destinations for printing?***

Guidance relating to a mailer's specific capacity/capability will be limited to the information provided during the network study. District Managers, Business Mail Entry will be available to respond to specific questions relating to impacted facilities within their control.