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What is the difference between First Class Mail and Standard Mail?

First Class mail typically has a faster delivery time but is more expensive than Standard Class.

Nationwide delivery times for First Class mail average one to five days. Local delivery could arrive on the next business day. Also with First Class mail, the undeliverable mail (wrong address, for example) is returned to the sender. First class mail is used by many to keep their mailing lists current.

Standard mail (formerly called “Bulk Mail”) is a more economical method of mailing but it usually takes longer to arrive. We see nationwide average delivery times of one to two weeks and local averages of three to ten days. However, it is possible for Standard mail to arrive next day. Standard mail is a lower cost alternative (ballpark is 40% less than FC mail) with a difficult-to-predict but longer delivery time when compared to First Class mail.

Standard mail typically needs to be processed by a mailhouse to pre-sort the address information and apply an indicia (see below). Standard mail is commonly used for advertising material. With Standard mail, you do not automatically receive the undeliverable pieces although you may ask us to include an endorsement like “Return Services Requested” and, for a fee, the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) will return this mail too.

What is an indicia?

Printing companies can print something on mail pieces that looks like the image below. The U.S. post office uses the information to process the mail and have the postage paid. Accent Printing Solutions can use our indicia or the client can apply for their own if volume dictates.

