

Reference Manual

The PostalMethods Web-to-Postal Web Service is a commercial subscription-based service which enables the automated sending of postal letters and postcards (snail mail), with no need for manual intervention or expensive print, fold and wrap hardware. PostalMethods is provided on a pay-as-you-go software-as-a-service (SaaS) application delivery model.

Documents to be transmitted may be of various formats, such as HTML, Microsoft Word®, PDF, and a variety of other formats.

The service also provides facilities for retrieving status information regarding submitted postal items.

The service supports both secured (HTTPS) and unsecured (HTTP) communications between your custom-programmed applications and the PostalMethods servers.

Postal Web Service

Overview

The PostalMethods Postal API Web Service is a commercial subscription-based service which enables transmission of letters and postcards without the need to install any hardware or software.

As an extension to sending capabilities, the PostalMethods Postal API Web Service provides facilities for retrieving status information regarding mail items sent through it.

Email Reference

Description

Postal letters can be sent through PostalMethods by simply sending an email message with an attachment. The attachment needs to be of a supported file type, and its first page must include the recipient address block in the proper location.

See our Send A Letter From Any Email Program guide for step-by-step instructions.

Access by SMTP (Email)

Submit messages by email to *send@letter.postalmethods.com*.

Email Message

Add documents, containing the content of the postal letter, as attachments. Any content appearing in the email body is ignored.

"From:" Address

The originator of the email message must be an *Allowed Email Sender* (see Setting System Preferences -> Allowed Email Senders). Messages from unauthorized senders are rejected by the email server upon arrival, with an error message of `550 Unauthorized sender` within the SMTP stream.

Subject Line Content

Any content in the subject line is displayed in the *My Description* field within the control panel's Activity table, and is for reference only. Note that subject line switches are stripped from this description.

Subject Line Switches

You may override default settings by adding "switches" to the subject line. Placing a switch anywhere in the subject line will cause PostalMethods to ignore the default setting in the control panel's "User Settings".

	Switch	Description
Mode	/Production or /Development	Overrides the <i>Work Mode</i> setting

Attachments

Content delivered by email is treated as having its "Address Inside". This limits the document containing the recipient address to specific file types defined (see the earlier link).

Single Or Multiple Document Attachments:

All attached documents are used to create a single letter. Attachments are handled in the order in which they were attached. The first page of the first document must contain the recipient's postal address in the correct location. You can use a pre-fab template as your document to get started quickly.

ZIP File Attachment:

To send multiple letters in a single email message, attach a single ZIP archive of multiple supported documents. The ZIP file is extracted and each document is treated as an individual letter. Unsupported documents within the ZIP are ignored. Do not use password protected ZIP files. Be aware that some email servers are limited by the size of the email attachment they can handle.

Feedback

In various stages of handling a letter, PostalMethods will "push" feedback back to the sender.

When the feedback method is *Email*, feedback is returned to the *Reply-To* address, or if unavailable, to the *From* address of the email message which originated the letter. This behavior can be overridden by setting a "Default Feedback Email" in "User Settings" -> Feedback -> Email -> Advanced Settings -> Default Feedback Email.

When the requested feedback method is set to *SOAP XML* or *HTTP POST*, feedback is sent to a supplied URL.

Encrypt Email Messages

The security of messages sent through the PostalMethods system may be enhanced by encrypting your emails. Encrypting your messages secure the contents of your message while it is in transit from your computer to our servers.

Developers please note: When using the PostalMethods Web Service Postal API, you may use SSL to access our servers securely. Read more.

Securing messages sent to PostalMethods:

1. Obtaining the PostalMethods public key signature: Contact us and request our certificate

2. Install the PostalMethods certificate: You must install the certificate on the computer or server where your message will be encrypted
3. Encrypting your messages: When sending your email messages, make sure your email client or application uses the PostalMethods certificate to encrypt messages

"Push" Feedback

"Push" Feedback allows users to be notified immediately when certain events have occurred. The purpose of this notification is to trigger the user's systems to act, thus reducing the need to poll for updates. User may save IT resources by waiting for the callback trigger and querying for more detailed status information only after changes have actually occurred.

"Push" Feedback Via HTTP POST

Description

This method notifies your system of status changes to your PostalMethods items. The callback is structured as an HTTP POST call, so you need to have a script running on your server, that is capable of responding to an external call.

Setup

Define the location of your feedback reception script in the PostalMethods control panel under *User Settings* -> *Feedback*. Select *Web Service* -> *HTTP POST* and enter the URL into the *Feedback URL* text box.

Input

URL syntax used by PostalMethods to send the status report:

```
{url}?ID={ID}&ItemID={ItemID}&Auth={Auth}&Status={Status}&StatusTime={StatusTime}
```

where {url} is the location of the script on your server and all other fields in {curly braces} indicate a returned value, as defined below.

Example

```
https://your.domain.com/callback.php?ID=10923212&ItemID=1&Auth=123456&Status=-1000&StatusTime=2008-06-12T16:23:54
```

Field Definitions

Property	Type	Comments
ID	<i>int</i>	Matches the ID provided as the response for the original Web Service request
ItemID	<i>int</i>	For future use. Default value: 1
Auth	<i>String (255)</i>	The authentication (AUTH) string is defined by the user in the Control Panel -> User Settings -> Feedback section. PostalMethods will provide this string when accessing this method. You may validate this string to make sure it is coming from PostalMethods.
Status	<i>int</i>	See the list of Letter Sending Status Codes.
StatusTime	<i>datetime</i>	Date and time when the update occurred. Returned in the user's time zone, as defined in the control panel. DateTime is formatted as 'YYYY-MM-DDTHH:MM:SS'

Output

Return an integer with a value of '0' (without the apostrophes) to indicate a successful reception of the HTTP POST callback. Returning any other value, or returning no value, will cause PostalMethods to retry according to a Feedback Retry Policy.

"Push" Feedback Via SOAP XML

Description

This method notifies your system of status changes to your PostalMethods items. The callback is structured as an SOAP call, so you need to have a SOAP *server* running on your end.

Setup

Define the location of your WSDL endpoint in the PostalMethods control panel under *User Settings -> Feedback*. Select *Web Service* and enter the endpoint into the *Feedback URL* text box.

Input

This Web Service should be hosted on your servers - waiting for PostalMethods to contact it with updates.

Property	Type	Comments
ID	<i>int</i>	Matches the ID provided as the response for the original Web Service request
ItemID	<i>int</i>	For future use. Default value: 1
Auth	<i>String (255)</i>	The authentication (AUTH) string is defined by the user in the Control Panel -> User Settings -> Feedback section. PostalMethods will provide this string when accessing this method. You may validate this string to make sure it is coming from PostalMethods.
Status	<i>int</i>	See the list of PostalMethods Status Codes.
StatusTime	<i>datetime</i>	Date and time when the update occurred. Returned in the user's time zone, as defined in the control panel.

Output: CallbackResponse

Element	Type	Comments
CallbackResult	<i>int</i>	The returned value should be the integer zero (0). Any other integer will be considered as an exception and a retry will be performed according to the Feedback Retry Policy.

Output

Return a value of '0' (without the apostrophes) within node to indicate a successful reception of the HTTP POST callback. Returning any other value, or returning no value, will cause PostalMethods to retry according to a Feedback Retry Policy.

Feedback WSDL

This is what the WSDL should look like on your server. PostalMethods will place an XML SOAP call to your server assuming the following structures.

SOAP 1.2

The following is a sample SOAP 1.2 request and response. The placeholders shown need to be replaced with actual values.

```
POST /callbackpostalmethods/CBServiceTester.asmx HTTP/1.1
Host: 192.168.15.195
Content-Type: application/soap+xml; charset=utf-8
Content-Length: length

<?xml version="1.0" encoding="utf-8"?>
<soap12:Envelope xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance"
xmlns:xsd="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema"
xmlns:soap12="http://www.w3.org/2003/05/soap-envelope">
  <soap12:Body>
    <Callback xmlns="PostalMethodsCallback">
      <ID>int</ID>
      <ItemID>int</ItemID>
      <Auth>string</Auth>
      <Status>int</Status>
      <StatusTime>dateTime</StatusTime>
    </Callback>
  </soap12:Body>
</soap12:Envelope>
HTTP/1.1 200 OK
Content-Type: application/soap+xml; charset=utf-8
Content-Length: length

<?xml version="1.0" encoding="utf-8"?>
<soap12:Envelope xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance"
xmlns:xsd="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema"
xmlns:soap12="http://www.w3.org/2003/05/soap-envelope">
  <soap12:Body>
    <CallbackResponse xmlns="PostalMethodsCallback">
      <CallbackResult>int</CallbackResult>
    </CallbackResponse>
  </soap12:Body>
</soap12:Envelope>
```

SOAP 1.1

The following is a sample SOAP 1.1 request and response. The placeholders shown need to be replaced with actual values.

```
POST /callbackpostalmethods/CBServiceTester.asmx HTTP/1.1
Host: 192.168.15.195
Content-Type: text/xml; charset=utf-8
Content-Length: length
SOAPAction: "PostalMethodsCallback/Callback"

<?xml version="1.0" encoding="utf-8"?>
<soap:Envelope xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance"
xmlns:xsd="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema"
xmlns:soap="http://schemas.xmlsoap.org/soap/envelope/">
  <soap:Body>
    <Callback xmlns="PostalMethodsCallback">
      <ID>int</ID>
```

```

        <ItemID>int</ItemID>
        <Auth>string</Auth>
        <Status>int</Status>
        <StatusTime>dateTime</StatusTime>
    </Callback>
</soap:Body>
</soap:Envelope>
HTTP/1.1 200 OK
Content-Type: text/xml; charset=utf-8
Content-Length: length

<?xml version="1.0" encoding="utf-8"?>
<soap:Envelope xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance"
xmlns:xsd="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema"
xmlns:soap="http://schemas.xmlsoap.org/soap/envelope/">
  <soap:Body>
    <CallbackResponse xmlns="PostalMethodsCallback">
      <CallbackResult>int</CallbackResult>
    </CallbackResponse>
  </soap:Body>
</soap:Envelope>

```

"Push" Feedback Via SMTP

Description

Feedback is emailed to the originator of a letter at various points in the process of its handling.

Human-readable status information is available within the email body, formatted according to the user's locale. Due to the variability of this information's format it is not recommended to attempt to parse it by machine.

Each feedback email message contains machine-readable status information in its *X-PostalMethods* headers. X-Headers may appear anywhere in the message header and may not be in any fixed location.

Setup

Define your preferred feedback method in the *PostalMethods* control panel under *User Settings -> Feedback*. Select *Email*. Feedback email messages are normally sent to the email address which originated the letter. However, if a letter is originated via *Web Service*, or if you would like to always get feedback to a specific email address, click on *Advanced Settings* and enter an email address into the *Default Feedback Email* text box.

Example

```

X-PostalMethods-ID: 10220817
X-PostalMethods-ItemID: 1
X-PostalMethods-Auth: J9J4AAQSkZJRgABAQEAYABgAADc4QBmRXhpZgAASUkqAAgA
X-PostalMethods-Status: -1000
X-PostalMethods-DateTime: 2008/06/16 02:50:55

```

Field Definitions

Property	Type	Comments
ID	<i>int</i>	Matches the ID provided as the response for the original Web Service request

Property	Type	Comments
ItemID	int	For future use. Default value: 1
Auth	String (255)	The authentication (AUTH) string is defined by the user in the Control Panel -> User Settings -> Feedback section. PostalMethods will provide this string when accessing this method. You may validate this string to make sure it is coming from PostalMethods. If not populated, this X-header will not appear in the message header.
Status	int	See the list of Letter Sending Status Codes.
StatusTime	datetime	Date and time when the update occurred. Returned in the user's time zone, as defined in the control panel. DateTime is formatted as 'YYYY-MM-DDTHH:MM:SS'

Output

The PostalMethods email server which sends feedback messages is a regular email server and adheres to the standard SMTP protocol. The details of the response(s) it expects are beyond the scope of this document.

"Push" Feedback Retry Policy

PostalMethods will make several attempts to call back your server with the status of a letter. The following policy applies when your server does not confirm the reception of a status callback.

HTTP POST & SOAP XML

The following applies to feedback sent by [HTTP POST](#) and to feedback sent by SOAP XML.

Postback Result	Returned Error Code	Retry Schema
Success	0 (zero)	None
Error	(Non-zero or no response)	Every 60 seconds for up to 60 minutes.

SMTP

Unless a terminal error message is returned from the receiving SMTP server, messages will retry every 5 minutes for up to 120 minutes.

Introduction

The Administration Web service enables customers to handle many aspects of account and users' management programmatically.

Overview - basic terms

In the PostalMethods service, there are two main entities, with parent-child relationships:

- Account
- User (Child of Account; limited)

Account

An Account is the administrative and paying entity. It holds billing and payment information, as well as the balance available for sending mail. Each Account can have one or more Users.

Accounts may be added manually by PostalMethods staff, or by registering online for service. They cannot be added through these administration methods.

User

A User is an operational entity. It is identified by a username and a password for the Control Panel and API key for Web Service requests.

One important property of the User is its permissions. A user with *Administrator* permissions has certain privileges in the scope of the Account and its users, e.g. can view other users' activity and can manage billing details.

Service Access Points

The PostalMethods Web Service is versioned. Published methods are kept unchanged. When developing, it is highly recommended that a versioned URI is used to insure that the same version of the Web Service is used.

The PostalMethods **Administration** Web Service WSDL may be accessed at the following endpoints:

Access by XML SOAP

SSL over HTTP, port 443

Reroute to the current version: <https://api.postalmethods.com/AdminTools.asmx?WSDL>

Direct URI of the current version: <https://api.postalmethods.com/2009-09-09/AdminTools.asmx?WSDL>

Access by HTTP POST

SSL over HTTP, port 443

Reroute to the current version: <https://api.postalmethods.com/AdminTools.asmx>

Direct URI of the current version: <https://api.postalmethods.com/2009-09-09/AdminTools.asmx>

Unencrypted access the Web Service, over port 80 is available but not recommended. Use "http" instead of "https" in the above URIs.

Supported File Types

Limitation: When using **Address Inside**, the document containing the delivery address must be in either MS-Word (doc, docx), textual PDF or HTML format.

Document Extension	File Type
DOC, DOCX	Microsoft Word 2007 and older
PDF	Adobe Acrobat
HTML, HTM**	HTML files
MHT**	MHT web archive files; HTML with embedded images

Document Extension	File Type
ODF, ODG, ODM, ODP, ODS, ODT	OpenOffice 3.1
URL**	Windows URL files Note: The contents of the linked page will be processed
XML	Currently supported XML types: Microsoft Word 2007 XML
XLS, XLSX	Microsoft Excel 2007 and older Note: Only active worksheets will be processed
PPT, PPTX, PPS	Microsoft PowerPoint 2007 and older
RTF	Rich Text Format
TIF, TIFF	Group 3 TIFF, may be in standard or fine resolution
GIF	Non-animated GIF files
JPE, JPEG, JPG	Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG) files
PNG	Portable Network Graphics
BMP	Windows Bitmap
PCX	PC Paintbrush Bitmap

** HTML documents are rendered using MS Internet Explorer, with all page margins set to 0.5 inch. Your HTML page margins should be zero.

Requirements

For Access By SOAP

1. Internet access over port 80 or 443.
2. A development environment with SOAP support.

For Access By Email

1. SMTP access over port 25.

Appendices

Allowed Country Names

When using PostalMethods for sending mail to outside of the United States, the last address line must show **only** the destination country name. The following list contains country names which may be used.

Country Name
Afghanistan

Country Name
Albania
Algeria
Andorra
Angola
Anguilla
Antigua and Barbuda
Argentina
Armenia
Aruba
Australia
Austria
Azerbaijan
Bahamas
Bahrain
Bangladesh
Barbados
Belarus
Belgium
Belize
Benin
Bermuda
Bhutan
Bolivia
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Botswana
Brazil
Brunei Darussalam
Bulgaria

Country Name
Burkina Faso
Burundi
Cambodia
Cameroon
Canada
Cape Verde
Cayman Islands
Central African Republic
Chad
Chile
China
Christmas Island
Cocos (Keeling) Islands
Colombia
Comoros
Congo
Congo Democratic Republic of the
Cook Islands
Costa Rica
Côte d'Ivoire
Croatia
Cuba
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Denmark
Djibouti
Dominica
Dominican Republic

Country Name
Ecuador
Egypt
El Salvador
Equatorial Guinea
Eritrea
Estonia
Ethiopia
Falkland Islands (Malvinas)
Faroe Islands
Fiji
Finland
France
French Guiana
French Polynesia
Gabon
Gambia
Georgia
Germany
Ghana
Gibraltar
Greece
Greenland
Grenada
Guadeloupe
Guatemala
Guernsey
Guinea
Guinea-Bissau

Country Name
Guyana
Haiti
Holy See (Vatican City State)
Honduras
Hong Kong
Hungary
Iceland
India
Indonesia
Iran Islamic Republic of
Iraq
Ireland
Isle of Man
Israel
Italy
Jamaica
Japan
Jersey
Jordan
Kazakhstan
Kenya
Kiribati
Korea Democratic People's Republic of
Korea Republic of
Kuwait
Kyrgyzstan
Lao People's Democratic Republic
Latvia

Country Name
Lebanon
Lesotho
Liberia
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
Liechtenstein
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Macao
Macedonia the former Yugoslav Republic of
Madagascar
Malawi
Malaysia
Maldives
Mali
Malta
Martinique
Mauritania
Mauritius
Mayotte
Mexico
Moldova Republic of
Monaco
Mongolia
Montenegro
Montserrat
Morocco
Mozambique
Myanmar

Country Name
Namibia
Nauru
Nepal
Netherlands
Netherlands Antilles
New Caledonia
New Zealand
Nicaragua
Niger
Nigeria
Niue
Norfolk Island
Norway
Oman
Pakistan
Panama
Papua New Guinea
Paraguay
Peru
Philippines
Pitcairn
Poland
Portugal
Qatar
Réunion
Romania
Russian Federation
Rwanda

Country Name
Saint Barthélemy
Saint Helena
Saint Kitts and Nevis
Saint Lucia
Saint Martin (French part)
Saint Pierre and Miquelon
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
San Marino
Sao Tome and Principe
Saudi Arabia
Senegal
Serbia
Seychelles
Sierra Leone
Singapore
Slovakia
Slovenia
Solomon Islands
South Africa
South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sudan
Suriname
Swaziland
Sweden
Switzerland
Syrian Arab Republic

Country Name
Taiwan Province of China
Tajikistan
Tanzania United Republic of
Thailand
Timor-Leste
Togo
Tokelau
Tonga
Trinidad and Tobago
Tunisia
Turkey
Turkmenistan
Turks and Caicos Islands
Tuvalu
Uganda
Ukraine
United Arab Emirates
United Kingdom
Uruguay
Uzbekistan
Vanuatu
Venezuela
Viet Nam
Virgin Islands British
Wallis and Futuna
Western Sahara
Yemen
Zambia

Country Name
Zimbabwe

United States And Territories

Territory Name
American Samoa
Micronesia Federated States of
Guam
Marshall Islands
Northern Mariana Islands
Puerto Rico
Palau
United States Minor Outlying Islands
United States of America
Virgin Islands U.S.

USPS-Specific Instructions on Constructing Your Address Block

For items sent to the USA:

Letter size paper (8 1/2"x11"):

Effective size for recipient's postal address:

Due to use of a #10 envelope (9 1/2" x 4 1/8"), letter size paper tri-folded (8 1/2" x 3 5/8") and the USPS Multi Line Optical Character Recognition systems, the effective area on the letter page which insures that all address parts will be visible through the envelope window is 2 6/8" wide and 1 5/8" tall.

Location of the effective address size on a Letter size paper:

Download a Microsoft Office Word template showing the effective address area

Selecting a font, style and size for the address block:

- Punctuation should be omitted, although period [.] , slashes [/] and hyphens [-] are acceptable
- Sans-serif font preferred (Common sans serif fonts on Windows, Mac and Unix systems - October 2007)
- Capitalization preferred, especially with fonts size 10 and smaller
- No fonts with bold, extended, condensed, italic, highly stylized, or script-like attributes are allowed
- No "Flat-Top" characters (where numbers 3, 6 and 9 may be misread)

- Supported font size is 8-18 (A point is a printing unit equal to about 1/72 inch). Recommended: 10-12; minimum of 2 points between lines

Stationery Sizes, Margins and Clearzones

Supported Document Page Size

Letters

- **Letter Size:** 8.5" x 11"

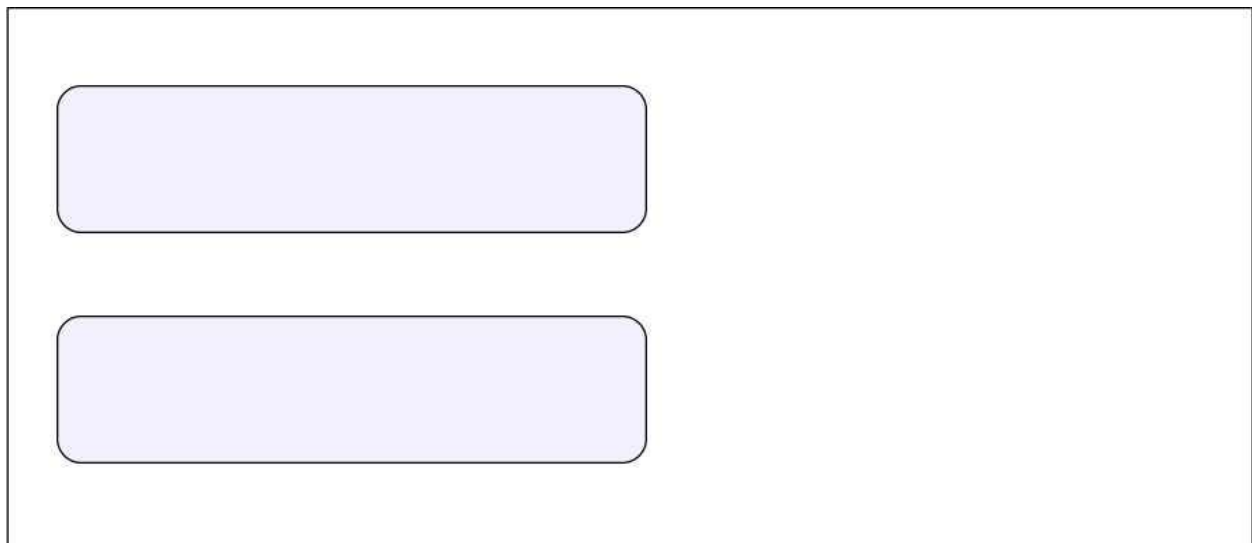
Postcards

- **Standard Size:** 4.5" x 6.25" full bleed (actual postcard after trimming is 4.25" x 6")

Envelope

Business envelope #10 double window

- Size: 4 1/8"x9 1/2"
- Envelope color is white
- Envelope quality/thickness is 24lb. bond
- Recipient's address appears through the bottom window. Top window should show the sender's return address so that the postal agency could return unsent letters to it.
- Top window's top-left corner measurements:
 - Width: 4 1/2"
 - Height: 1 1/8"
 - From Left: 3/8"
 - From Top: 5/8"
- Bottom window's top-left corner measurements:
 - Width: 4 1/2"
 - Height: 1 1/8"
 - From Left: 3/8"
 - From Top: 2 3/8"



Paper

Business letter-size paper

- Size: 8.5"x11"
- Color: white
- Weight and Thickness: 24 lb. Bond (same as 60 lb. Offset; equals 0.012 lb.)

Printing

- Black digital printing, 600 dpi
- Simplex/Duplex (one-sided/two-sided) printing

Print Margins

- Top: 0.5"
- Right: 0.6"
- Bottom: 0.5"
- Left: 0.5"

ID Tags and Barcodes

- On the first page of each letter: Two 2D barcodes and two text Tag IDs are added. These barcodes and tags do not interfere with the allowed text area.
- On additional odd pages: a 2D barcode on the right edge of the paper and a Tag ID on the bottom-right

Delivery Address Location

Due to possible movements of the 8.5"x3 5/8" tri-folded paper inside the 4 1/8"x9.5" envelope, and the postal service's address scanning machinery, the delivery address and return address text area is limited. See How To Correctly Place Postal Addresses In The Document for specific information.

Folding. Paper is folded in three to a "C" shape