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Mailpiece Clear Zones on Nonbarcoded Mailpieces

Purpose

Several places on the address side of a mailpiece are reserved for addressing and related information only. These areas are the MLOCR read area, the barcode clear zone, and the return address area.

Address Block Location

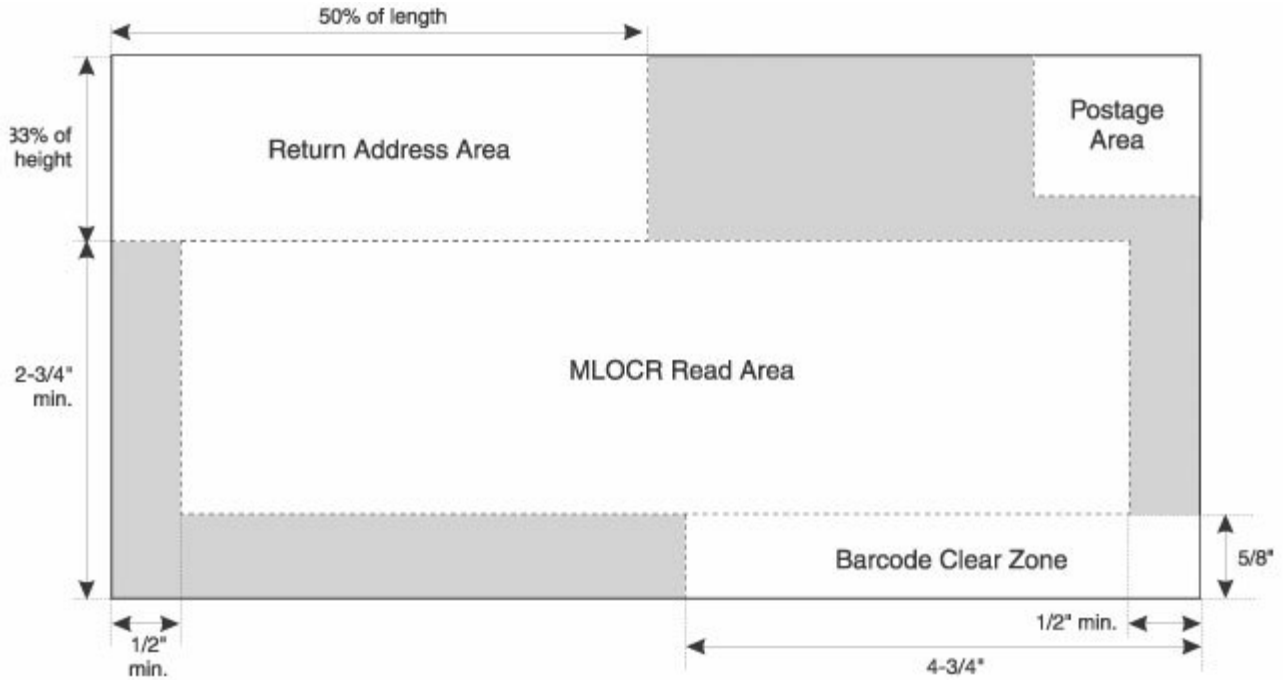
Exhibit 3-1 shows the area on letter mail where address information should be located to be read by multiline optical character readers (MLOCRs). The automation specifications are as follows:

- The MLOCR read area requires only $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch margins on the left and right sides.
- The entire address (except the optional lines above the recipient line) should appear within an imaginary rectangle that extends from $\frac{5}{8}$ inch to $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches from the bottom edge of the mailpiece, with $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch margins on the left and right sides. This is the requirement for any letter-size mailpiece.
- For pieces longer than $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the address should begin no more than $9\frac{3}{4}$ inches from the right edge.

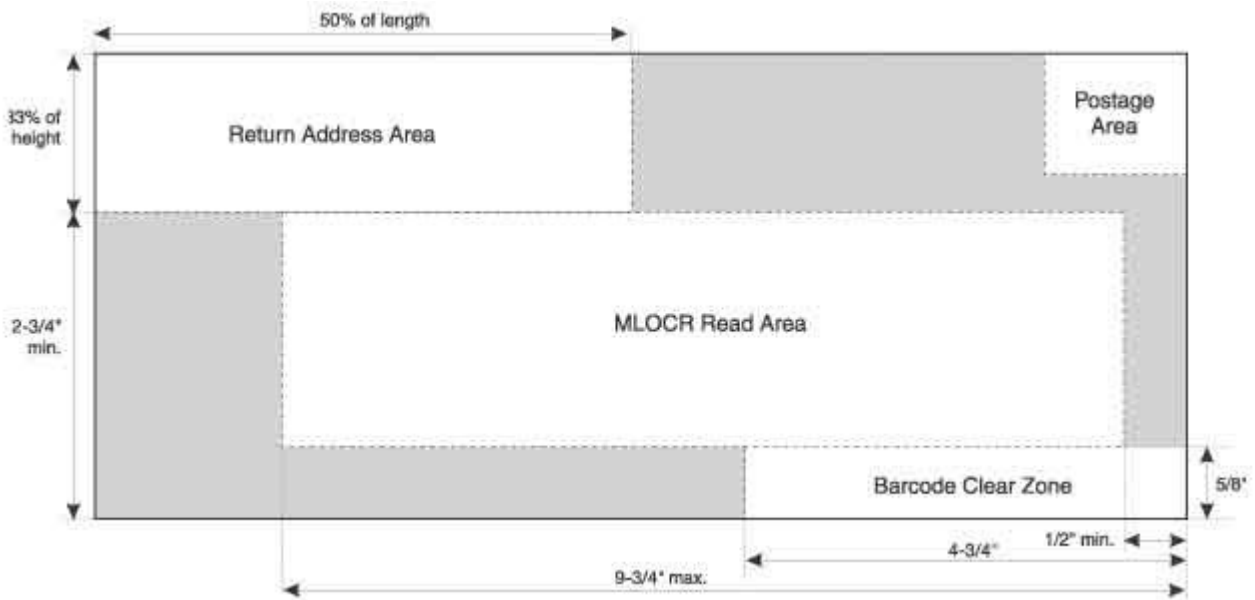
Exhibit 3-1

Mailpiece Clear Zones and Free Space

(not drawn to scale)



Mailpiece clear zones (unshaded), for pieces up to 10¹/₂ inches long



Mailpiece clear zones (unshaded), for pieces more than 10¹/₂ inches long

As Exhibit 3-1 shows, the area available for nonaddress printing increases as the address information is lowered in the MLOCR read area. Positioning the address block near the bottom of the MLOCR read area gives you the most free space for logos, advertising, and other nonaddress printing. If you barcode, even more space is

available.

Nonaddress Printing

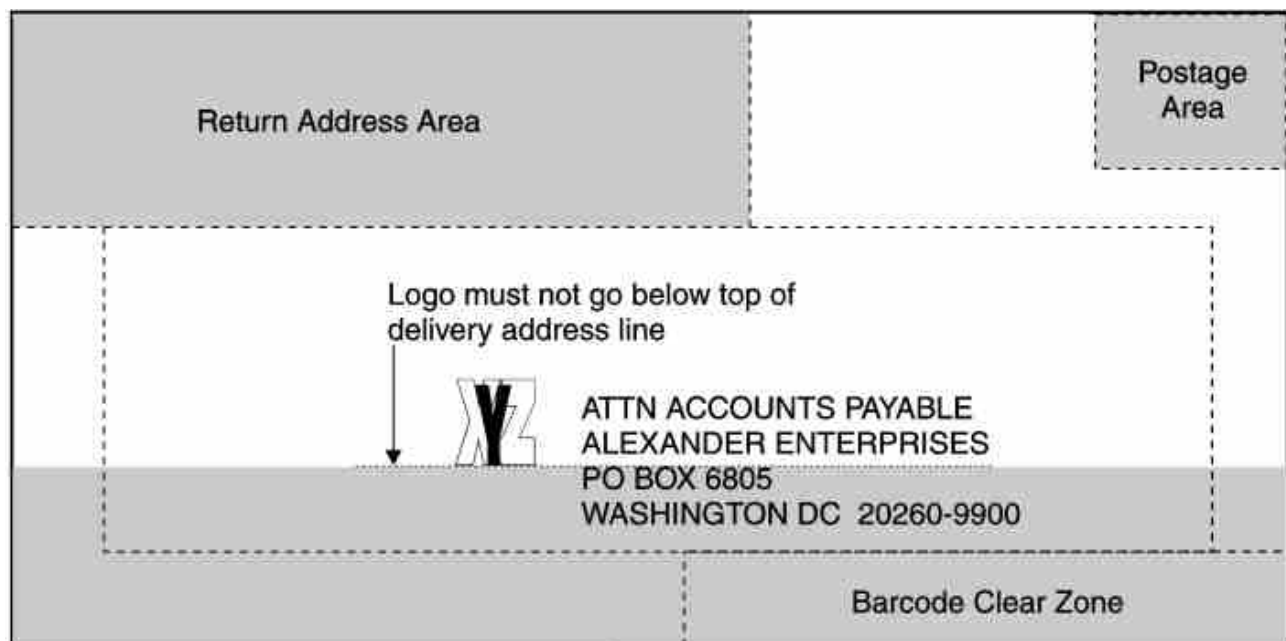
Extraneous (nonaddress) printing in the MLOCR read area can confuse MLOCR scanners and prevent them from interpreting the address information correctly. This can cause them to reject the mailpiece.

Nonaddress printing such as company logos, advertising, and die cuts should not be placed within the MLOCR read area. If it is, the lowest point must be *above* the delivery address line (see Exhibit 3-2). In other words, within the MLOCR read area, you should keep the space on either side of and below the delivery address line clear of all printing.

Exhibit 3-2

Nonaddress Printing Space (Unshaded Area)

(Not drawn to scale)



Return Address

You should always keep the MLOCR read area clear of return address information.

In addition to being positioned at least $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches above the bottom edge of the mailpiece, the return address should occupy an area in the far upper left corner of the mailpiece no longer than 50 percent of the length of the mailpiece as shown in Exhibit

3-1. The return address should be printed in a type size smaller than the type size used in the delivery address.

Barcode Clear Zone

After reading the address, the MLOCR prints the appropriate delivery point barcode in the lower right corner of the mailpiece. To ensure that the barcode is readable by barcode sorters, the barcode clear zone shown in Exhibit 31— $\frac{5}{8}$ inch high by $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches long—must be clear of all printing, markings, and colored borders. Certain types of coated paper should be avoided.