

Effective December 24, 2025, the USPS changed its postmark policy: mail is now postmarked based on when it is first processed at a regional facility, not when dropped in a mailbox or accepted at a local post office. This can cause 1–2 day delays, potentially leading to late fees for time-sensitive mail like tax returns and bills.

### **Key Changes and Impact**

- **Processing Date > Deposit Date:** The postmark reflects the date the item is processed at a regional center, which can be days after you send it.
- **Missed Deadlines:** Items mailed on a due date may receive a later postmark, making them "late".
- **Transportation Changes:**

Many post offices now only send mail to processing plants once per day in the morning, increasing the chance of a next-day postmark for items deposited in the afternoon

### **How to Ensure Timely Postmarks**

- **Mail Early:** Drop off time-sensitive documents several days before the deadline.
- **Request Hand-Stamping:** Ask a clerk to manually postmark your item at the counter to secure the current date.
- **Use Certified/Registered Mail:** These services provide a dated receipt, proving when you handed the item to the USPS.
- **Use Online Alternatives:** Pay taxes, bills, and submit filings through official websites rather than mail. There are fees associated with online payments.