

Secretary of State Corporations Division Adds Postal Address Verification

The Corporations Division (the Division) of the Department of the Secretary of State (the Department) strives to continuously enhance its database and the quality of data in the database. To that end, the Division has begun conducting address verification for addresses submitted on filings using the US Postal Service's database of valid addresses.

Over the years, mailing addresses in the Corporations database have been found to often omit or misstate critical information. Examples of address problems include omitted suite numbers, transposed numbers or omitted zip codes. And of course there is always a possibility of manual data entry errors.

The Division has begun using a software system to verify addresses because:

(1) We want our database to be more reliable and accurate for our customers who use it.

(2) Businesses whose addresses are incomplete or wrong in the Department's database may not receive mail from the Department, which could have serious consequences. If a business does not receive a departmental mailing, it will obviously not have the information in the mailing. The business would then have to spend time and resources dealing with an issue that could have been avoided.

(3) It wastes public monies when mail sent by the Corporations Division is returned undeliverable. There is also an expense to the taxpayer when the Division has to deal with issues which would never have arisen if the Division's mailing had been received.

What Does the Address Verification Software Check?

The Department is standardizing address data using a USPS® software system, which does these tasks:

1. Standardizes and validates addresses. It corrects typos and identifies missing postal information including bad street names, cities, states, and ZIP codes.
2. Verifies that an address is deliverable. It also flags addresses for vacancies, missing suite numbers and addresses that are returning mail.

How is the Division Using Postal Address Verification?

Software links our database directly with USPS data to electronically verify addresses. Here are the ways the Division uses this address verification process:

1. Data Entry

When a Division document examiner enters the mailing address of the principal or registered office, the examiner will use the software to verify that the mailing address is deliverable. If the software says that the address is not deliverable, the examiner will contact the customer to either: (1) confirm that the address is accurate as written or (2) make corrections before the document is filed. If the customer confirms that the address is correct although the software says it is not, the examiner will document the confirmation in the entity's records.

2. Custom Orders

If a customer places an order for a certified document while speaking with a customer service representative, during the conversation the software will be used to verify the address provided.

3. Online Annual Report Filings

When annual reports are filed online, addresses provided by the customer will automatically be verified by the software. If an address is categorized as undeliverable by the software, the customer will be asked to review it to make sure it was entered correctly. The customer will then be asked to: (1) accept the address as correct, (2) add missing data or (3) change the address.