



Reducing Mail Return

One of the largest barriers preventing submission of claims to insurance is returned mail due to incorrect or invalid addresses. In discussing mailing addresses we need to cover two distinct topics.

The first topic is correct formatting of the address by the United States Postal Service. For complete details on proper address format and proper abbreviations allowed by the USPS log on to their web site at <http://pe.usps.gov/text/pub28/welcome.htm>.

The correct address according to the United States Postal Service is as follows:

John Doe
123 MAIN ST
DAYTON OH 45454-9999

Notice that all punctuation is removed from the address except for the hyphen used in the zip+4 code. A zip+4 code is not required to be obtained by the ambulance crews for submission to MBI. You may find it interesting to note that the USPS prefers to have all US Highways, State Routes, County Roads, and Township Roads are to be spelled out and not abbreviated. Only Rural Route addresses are to be abbreviated with an RR designation.

The address may need to include additional data such as:

A direction in a street name:

123 N MAIN ST
123 MAIN ST N
123 S W MAIN ST
123 MAIN ST S W

Apartment or Suite numbers:

123 MAIN ST APT 10
123 MAIN ST STE 10

Notice that no pound signs (#) are used in the address to designate a delivery area.

A Post Office Box mailing may be abbreviated without using a pound sign (#) to designate a box number:

PO BOX 12
Dayton OH 45454-9999

The second topic is incorrect or incomplete information. Here are some suggestions for crews to keep in mind while getting address information from patients or family members of the patient.

1. Confirm that they have the correct mailing address for the patient. The patient may be visiting at the residence where the call originated. Also the patient may have a PO Box.
2. Ask the patient to spell the street name if the crew is not clear on the spelling.
3. Ask if there is a direction associated with the street name. (South Main vs. North Main, East Franklin vs. West Franklin)
4. Confirm the street suffix. (Oak Street vs. Oak Avenue)
5. Ask if the mailing address is an apartment and what the apartment designation.
6. Confirm that they have the correct zip code for the patient, especially for response areas containing multiple zip codes.

Most information can be confirmed from a driver's license, insurance card, or even a direct mail piece at the patient's residence.