

VALIDITY FOR EMAIL

# Certification for Mandated Mail Requirements





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# Introducing Certification for Mandated Mail

*Validity for Email – Certification for Mandated Mail* helps businesses send (potentially) time-sensitive and high-risk messages that are intended to inform their customers of critical, non-promotional information related to a triggering event which necessitates a material response. These essential messages inform recipients of critical events and should only be used for one-time notifications that are an exception to normal sending practices and cadences.

Upon completion of send, participants will receive third-party proof via certificate validating they used best efforts to fulfill their duty of care responsibilities. This Certification of Coverage is provided to the sender to share with third parties for audit review purposes.

## Become Certified

Certification for Mandated Mail provides an expedited path to the Certification service for critical, non-promotional information that are deemed an exception to your standard campaigns.

**Here are the key steps to becoming Certified:**

1. Once you've applied, we will verify your business entity. You'll then be provided with the steps to formally initiate your temporary Certification license following your triggering event.
2. Once we receive notification of your triggering event, we will review your case and confirm that it and your campaign meet our eligibility criteria for Certification for Mandated Mail. This initial response time should be within 24 hours.
3. During this initial review, your email campaign creative will need to be approved and vetted by our team. We will also conduct baseline infrastructure and message content checks. If any parts of your email program do not meet our requirements, we'll provide you with additional information on the changes and how to complete them.
4. Once we've confirmed you are compliant with our program requirements and your creative is approved, your dedicated IP(s) will be added to our Certification allowlist for the temporary term approved by Validity.
5. During your time spent as an active Certified member, your email will receive high inbox placement rates and benefits at global mailbox and email security providers.



# Certification for Mandated Mail

To become Certified, you will need to meet the requirements of the Certification for Mandated Mail program. These requirements are based on best practice guidance established in partnership with our mailbox provider partners.

## Breaking Down the Requirements

- **Business Entity:** be transparent about who you are and what you do.
- **Message Content:** clearly and concisely communicate your cause by including only critical, necessary information.
- **Infrastructure:** properly send, authenticate, and manage email.
- **Legality:** adhere to any applicable spam and data privacy laws that impact you and your recipients.
- **Security and Compliance:** show how you take care of your systems and email recipients' data and follow our issue-resolution process in times of non-compliance.

## Part 1: Business Entity

A verified business entity provides assurances you are a legitimate business. Here are the business entity requirements you must meet to become Certified:

### 1. Business Registration

- Your business is verifiable by a public third-party source through a legitimate online website, such as a country registry, or an application such as Dun & Bradstreet.
- Your business registration includes your business's current physical address.
- Your business has been operational and legally registered for at least one year.
- Your business does not use a registered agent to obscure any of your business's information.

### 2. Business Contact Information

- You provide a direct email at your company's domain for Validity communication.
- You respond to our communications to prove contact information is valid at our request.

**IMPORTANT:** Validity will not Certify any businesses engaging in illegal activities.



## Part 2: Message Content

Your email message content must clearly communicate your cause by only including critical information. Our team will review your campaign creative to ensure it meets the following requirements for the Certification for Mandated Mail program:

### 1. Mail type & content

- Certified IPs must only send mail that is fully related to your cause and is limited to critical, necessary information.
  - ◆ Promotional content of any kind, even if related to your cause, is not permitted.
  - ◆ Corporate mail or free-form content, even if related to your cause, is not permitted.
- Any legacy campaigns or mail sending over Certified IPs (including promotional, corporate, or free-form content) must be suspended for the duration of your temporary Certification license.
- You must provide email content template(s) prior to campaign deployment for Validity approval.

### 2. Qualifying Campaigns

- Emergency Related / Imminent Threat to Public Notifications (human/natural disaster)
- Security Breach Notifications
- Safety / Recall Notices
- Amber Alerts
- Class Action
- Significant Change in Policy
- Critical 'Duty of Care' Notifications
  - ◆ The responsibility of a person or organization to take all reasonable measures necessary to prevent activities that could result in harm to other individuals and/or their property. The legal obligation to safeguard others from harm while they are in your care, using your services, or exposed to your activities.

### 3. Message headers

- Message headers are not falsified, obscured, deceptive, or misleading in any way.
- The subject line or friendly-from alias must include a reference to the type of message you are sending. (e.g., recall\_notifications@validity.com, etc.).



## Part 3: Infrastructure

Infrastructure refers to the hardware and process used to deploy email. It's crucial that you send email from well-maintained infrastructure systems that use best practices. Keep in mind that you may need to work with your Email Service Provider (ESP) or internal IT team to comply with the infrastructure requirements. Here are the infrastructure requirements you must meet to become Certified:

### 1. Dedicated IP Addresses

- Your business is the only entity sending email over dedicated IP addresses. Shared IP addresses are not eligible.

### 2. Open Relays

- Your infrastructure does not have any [open relay](#) servers.

### 3. FCrDNS

- Your IP address reverse DNS (rDNS) entry matches the forward DNS entries, otherwise known as [Forward-Confirmed reverse DNS](#) (FCrDNS).

### 4. Blocklists

- Your IP addresses or domains are not on a [Validity-monitored blocklist](#).

### 5. Authentication (SPF or DKIM)

- You must authenticate your mandated email campaigns with either SPF or DKIM, though both are strongly recommended as a best practice.

#### ◆ SPF

- All of your Return-Path domains have published [Sender Policy Framework](#) (SPF) records. Learn how to set up SPF [here](#).
- All Return-Path domains do not use a +all or ?all directive.
- All Return-Path domains do not include a pointer (PTR) record.

#### ◆ DKIM

- All of your email sent over Certified IPs have [DomainKeys Identified Mail](#) (DKIM) authentication configured. Learn how to set up DKIM [here](#).

### 6. Domain Ownership

- You must send your mandated email campaigns from a branded organizational domain that your business owns.
- Domains registered for less than six months are prohibited.

## 7. Mailing List

- You plan your mail deployment strategy to prioritize your email recipient groups.
- Your business uses email address list maintenance systems to reliably receive and process delivery errors, bounce messages, and other replies from receiving networks.
- Known inactive addresses should not be mailed to as they will never be received by the intended recipient.

## Part 4: Legality

Each country and territory has legislation related to email and data practices. It's imperative that you fully comply and follow these laws and regulations wherever you operate. Examples include but are not limited to:

- United States of America:
  - [Controlling the Assault of Non-Solicited Pornography and Marketing Act of 2003](#) (CAN-SPAM)
  - [California Consumer Privacy Act](#) (CCPA)
- Canada: [Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation](#) (CASL)
- European Union: [General Data Protection Regulation](#) (GDPR)
- Australia: [Spam Act of 2003](#)

## Part 5: Security and Compliance

It's important your business operates in a responsible manner by taking adequate, industry-standard steps to keep your database and systems secure so you can protect your infrastructure and your email recipients.

Should any compliance-related issue arise, including compromised IPs or domains, you will notify Validity within two business days of discovery. You agree that the IP or domain will not be re-enabled in the Certification program until a Validity employee completes a review and determines that the cause of the compromise (or other compliance-related issue) has been properly mitigated. Furthermore, you and any team involved in sending email will cooperate with the Certification administrators to resolve any of the aforementioned.



## Need Help?

For additional insight into Certification and its requirements, or to learn how to troubleshoot deliverability and reputation issues, visit our [Help Center](#).





Businesses run better and grow faster with trustworthy data. Tens of thousands of organizations rely on Validity solutions – including Everest, DemandTools, BriteVerify, Trust Assessments, and GridBuddy Cloud – to target, contact, engage, and retain customers effectively. Marketing, sales, and customer success teams worldwide trust Validity solutions to help them create smarter campaigns, generate leads, drive response, and increase revenue. For more information visit [validity.com](https://www.validity.com) and connect with us on [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).

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