



# Marketing Bulletin

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MUTUAL BENEFIT GROUP

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TO: ALL AGENTS

## **MAIL SERVICE SLOWDOWN EXPECTED; ENCOURAGE INSUREDS TO PAY ONLINE, VIA EFT OR BY PHONE**

The United States Postal Service implemented new service standards on Oct. 1 that could actually slow mail delivery for many Americans. The agency estimates that about 40% of first-class mail could be affected by this change.

### **May Take Five Days for First-Class Delivery**

Former USPS standards required delivery of first-class mail within 2-3 days. Under the new guidelines, delivery could take up to five days as the postal service begins transporting more mail via its ground fleet rather than relying on faster but costlier air transit.

### **Encourage Online, EFT and Phone Payments**

Late mail can mean late payment for those who rely on the post office and a checkbook to manage their bills. Now is a good time to remind your customers that they can avoid a potential lapse in coverage due to policy cancellation, as well as potential late fees, by choosing an alternative payment method.

*(Please note that a late payment fee of \$10 or \$15, assessed in Maryland and Pennsylvania, respectively, may be charged on any payment that is not received in MBG's office by the due date listed on the billing statement. A \$30 fee will be charged for nonsufficient funds.)*

### **MBG Offers These Alternatives to Paying by Check:**

- Paying online at [www.thembg.com](http://www.thembg.com).
- Signing up to have payments automatically drafted from a bank account. *(The installment fee for recurring payments is only \$2 versus \$6 for each time an individual payment is processed.)*

- Calling MBG's automated interactive voice response number, 888-505-0512, to make a payment over the phone, 24/7. (A convenience fee of \$7.95 is charged for using this option to pay commercial policies in Pennsylvania only.)
- Calling MBG's Operations Service team at 1-800-283-3531 during regular business hours to have a payment processed using bank account or credit card information.

As an agent, you can also expedite payment for customers who may have received their invoice late by participating in MBG's agency account sweep program.

## Payment Processing Times

To further assist you in advising customers and answering their questions, please see the list below that will be important to reference when dealing with slow mail delivery and potential late payment. It explains how processing times differ according to payment method as well as when policies/accounts are credited based on the day and time that a payment is scheduled.

### Processing times depend on your payment method:

- MBG online payments will be processed in one to two business days.
- Electronic Funds Transfer payments will be processed on the due date unless that falls on a weekend/holiday; then it will be processed the next business day.
- Online banking payments will be processed in one to two business days upon receipt.
- Mailed payments will be processed the day they are received.

### Timing of bank account payments and credit card payments:

- If you make payment before 8 p.m. Eastern Time on Monday up to 8:00 p.m. Friday, the account will be credited the next business day unless it is a Federal Holiday\*\*\*.
- If you make a payment after 8:00 p.m. Friday up to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Monday, it will be credited to your account Tuesday, unless it is a Federal Holiday\*\*\*.
- If you try to make a payment after 8 p.m. Eastern Time or on a non-business day, such as Saturday, Sunday, or a holiday, you will need to schedule your payment for the next available business day.
- When there is a holiday, payments take an extra business day to process.

\*\*\* Holidays based on the Federal Reserve calendar are as follows: New Year's Day, Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day,

Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day.

[This information is also available to insureds on our corporate website as part of our Billing FAQs.](#)

We appreciate your assistance in educating policyholders about various ways to make premium payments. We will be posting reminders about these options on our social media platforms during October.

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