



## POSTMARKED TAX PAYMENT POLICY

### GENERAL RULE: Timely postmarks are considered timely tax payments.

Postmarks are imprints on letters, flats, and parcels that show the name of the United States Postal Service (USPS) office that accepted custody of the mail, along with the state, zip code, and date of mailing. The postmark is generally applied, either by machine or by hand, with cancellation bars to indicate that the postage cannot be reused.

Any tax payment made to the Town via USPS shall be deemed received by the Town on the postmarked date stamped on the envelope or other appropriate wrapper containing it. If multiple postmarks with different dates are present, the Town will accept the earliest dated postmark (*See Example B*).

Independent mail delivery services (FedEx, UPS, etc.) do not use postmarks, but the shipping date will be used to determine the date mailed.

Payments received after the due date with no postmark will be considered late, and penalties will be imposed in accordance with Town policies.

Taxpayers who send their payments by mail are cautioned that the USPS only postmarks certain mail depending on the type of postage used and may not postmark mail on the same day deposited by a taxpayer. **If you are waiting until just before the due date, we recommend that you personally witness the postmark being placed on your envelope by the postal clerk.** Please send your mail early enough to account for unforeseen delays in mail handling.

### POSTAGE THAT IS POSTMARKED (See Examples A & B)

**Standard Postage:** Stamps purchased and affixed to the envelope as evidence of payment for postage. Stamped envelopes are generally postmarked at the USPS processing center on the day that they are delivered from the post office they originated from. For example, Vermont has several USPS processing centers. Mail pieces arriving from local post offices are typically postmarked the following day.

**Postage Validated Imprint (PVI) Label:** The PVI is postage which is purchased from a USPS retail counter or window and applied on the envelope by the postal clerk. The envelope is retained in USPS custody and not handed back to the customer. The date printed on the PVI label is the date of mailing.

### EXAMPLE A

#### Standard Postage Stamps:

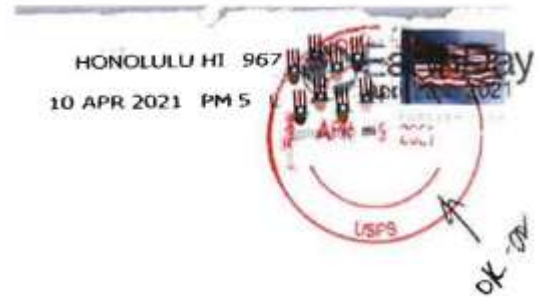


#### Postage Validated Imprint (PVI) Label



### EXAMPLE B

In this example, the due date for this payment was April 9, 2021. Because the taxpayer did not want to be late, they had their envelope postmarked by the postal clerk on the due date. The envelope was then sent to the main processing center and postmarked again when it arrived on April 10th. If the taxpayer did not have the postal clerk postmark his envelope on the due date, it would have been considered late because the only postmarked date would have been the April 10th date which is past the deadline.



Another example of originating post office postmarks and processing/distributing post office postmarks.



### POSTAGE THAT IS NOT POSTMARKED (See Example C)

**Metered Postage:** Postage is printed directly on an envelope or label by a postage machine licensed by the USPS. Many private companies use these types of postage machines.

**Precanceled Postage:** Stamps sold through a private vendor, such as [stamps.com](https://www.stamps.com).

**Automated Postal Center (APC) Postage:** Can be purchased at self-service kiosks located in Post Office lobbies and have 24 hour a day access. All APC stamps and shipping labels are printed and dispensed at these kiosks. APC stamps can be mailed at any time, so the date does not necessarily reflect the date they were mailed.

**Permit Imprint Postage:** Pre-sorted mail used by bill pay services, such as online home banking.

### EXAMPLE C

Metered Postage:



Precanceled Postage:



Automated Postal Center (APC) Stamps:



**Additional Notes:**

A certificate of Mailing is not a form of postage and does not provide sufficient proof of the date that a property tax payment was mailed. A Certificate of Mailing provides evidence of mailing only and is not otherwise associated with the specific item mailed.

**Other convenient options to consider when paying taxes:**

- Pay Online on our [Website](#).
- Send your check by mail, well before the due date.
- Stop by the Town Office in person to deliver your payment.
- Drop your payment in the secure drop box (white) located outside the Town Office front door.

This policy may be amended by a majority vote of the Selectboard.

Adopted by the Selectboard of the Town of Westford at its meeting held 6/26/2025.