

Identifying Multi and Single Family Dwelling Units Using NCOA^{Link™} and DSF^{2™}

The U.S. Postal Service does not use the terms MFDU and SFDU[®]. They have no single accepted industry definition and are defined by TCS. One person might think of town houses and condos as MFDU's, but another sees town houses as attached SFDU's and condominiums as owned apartments in MFDU's. Vendors offering to provide MFDU/SFDU coding or list selections should be able to provide a specific definition for each term.

It is possible to separate records into "MFDU/SFDU like" categories using NCOA^{Link} and DSF², however, these tools can only identify the address types used by the U.S. Postal Service in the preparation, sortation and delivery of mail. These include high-rises, cluster boxes, delivery drops and others. It is important to understand exactly what types of addresses are included in these categories - for example, trailer parks are coded as High-Rise addresses because that is what "works" for the Postal Service[™].

Note - Sometimes Mailers are really trying to identify something similar to MFDU/SFDU's, but really different (e.g. Home Owners versus Renters). While units in a high-rise (MFDU) may be more likely to be occupied by Renters, this is probably not the case if the units are condominiums, cooperative apartments or townhouses. Conversely, non-high-rise addresses are not all occupied by Homeowners.

NCOA^{Link™}

The NCOA^{Link}, Address Standardization and delivery point validation processes return the following information (Address Level of Match code) about the original Input address and the New Address if one was provided.

- * A - alphanumeric secondary number match failed - MFDU
- * B - PO Box record - Unknown
- * C - Highway Contract with box number – Likely SFDU
- * D - Rural Route default – Likely SFDU
- * E - alphanumeric match in numeric range - Unknown
- * F – firm - Firm
- * G - General Delivery – Likely SFDU
- * H - building/high-rise – Likely MFDU, but possibly a firm record
- * I - alphanumeric match in numeric range, building/high-rise secondary number – likely MFDU, but possibly a firm record
- * J - alphanumeric match in numeric range, HC box number – Likely SFDU
- * K - Highway Contract default – Likely SFDU
- * L - building default – Possibly MFDU, but possibly Firm
- * M - military ZIP[®] default - Unknown
- * N - non-deliverable - Unknown
- * O - alphanumeric match in numeric range, PO box number - Unknown
- * P – Postmaster - Unknown
- * Q - alphanumeric match in numeric range, RR box number – Likely SFDU
- * R - Rural Route with box number – Likely SFDU
- * S – street – Likely SFDU
- * T - small town, non-carrier delivery – Likely SFDU
- * U - unique ZIP – Likely Firm
- * V - alphanumeric match in numeric range, Firm record secondary number – Firm record in a high-rise
- * W - not used
- * X - not found

- * Y - ambiguous dual, no match - Unknown
- * Z - not used

Business (Firm) Addresses – You'll need to decide how you want to classify Firm records in high-rise buildings and buildings occupied exclusively by one or more Firm. These do not fit the definitions of Single or Multi **Family** Dwelling Unit; however Families and Firms may coexist in the same high-rise building. It may be desirable to determine whether or not the record in question is a Firm or a Residential address and categorize as appropriate for your business. If your input record has a Business Name present, then it is safe to assume that it is a Firm.

Secondary Address Data – The presence of an Apartment or Suite number usually (but not always) means that the address is in an MFDU. Note that DPV identifies records that have potentially incorrect or missing Secondary Address data and could result in an undeliverable address.

Commercial Mail Receiving Agency (CMRA) – DPV™ identifies CMRA's (DPV Footnote codes "RR" and "R1"). These are addresses of commercial firms (e.g. Mail Boxes Etc.) used by Individuals and Firms to receive their mail, much like a PO Box address. These should be classified as "unknown". Note that CMRA's may be located within a high-rise and will usually have Secondary Address data. Some mailers opt to exclude these addresses because of the possibility of fraud.

Summary – NCOA ^{Link}

- ∞ Use the Address Level of Match codes to determine whether or not the record is MFDU, SFDU or Unknown.
- ∞ Identify Firm versus Consumer addresses and code according to your business needs.
- ∞ Decide how you want to handle records with missing or potentially invalid Secondary Address data.
- ∞ Decide how you want to handle Commercial Mail Receiving Agencies.

DSF²™

DSF² returns the additional information allowing you to refine your efforts

Delivery Point Drop Indicator – A Delivery Drop will usually be an MFDU, but note well that CMRA's are also considered drops. An example of a Delivery Drop is an upscale apartment building where the Postal Carrier delivers the mail for all occupants to a building staff member (Doorman or Receptionist). The building staff then delivers the mail to each individual occupant. Many Delivery Point Drops are MFDU's, but may not be coded as a high-rise because they are single delivery points and the USPS® definition of a high-rise is multiple delivery points.

Delivery Point Drop Count – Indicates the number of Families or Businesses served by the Delivery Point Drop.

Cluster Box – Also known as NDCBU's (Neighborhood Delivery and Collection Box Units) these units are a collection of "mail boxes" serving multiple addresses in the surrounding area. They can be found in strip malls as well as residential developments with town houses and are usually outdoors, but under a cover/overhang to provide protection from the elements.

Residential/Firm Indicator - Identifies whether an address is categorized by the Postal Service™ as Residential, Business or Undetermined. If promotions are directed to Consumers at their Home Address then Business records can be excluded from the mailing by using this data. It is worth noting that when a Residential address is also used as a Business address the USPS® procedure is to identify it as Firm if there is a sign for the business visible from the street. There is no code for "both".

“B” – Business Delivery
“R” – Residential Delivery
“G” – General Delivery
“U” – Undetermined

Vacant Addresses - Identifies addresses that have been Vacant for 90 days or more and therefore should not be mailed.

Seasonal Addresses - Identifies addresses that are unoccupied a portion of the year.

Summary – DSF²

- ∞ Use the Delivery Drop Indicator and Count to identify MFDU's not identified by NCOA^{Link}, but be sure to separate CMRA addresses as they are not really MFDU's.
- ∞ Decide how you want to categorize NDCBU's (Cluster Boxes) and code accordingly.
- ∞ Use the Residential/Firm indicator to identify Firm versus Consumer addresses that could not be identified by the presence of a Business name in the record.
- ∞ Decide how you want to handle Vacant and Seasonal addresses.

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