

An introduction to the PAF[®] and its uses

The Postcode Address File (PAF) is a database of more than 30 million postal addresses and 1.8 million postcodes managed and maintained by Royal Mail. PAF underpins the efficient sortation, routing and delivery of letters and parcels by Royal Mail and all other mail and delivery providers.

The use of PAF, however, goes much wider than the delivery of mail. PAF is widely used to support accurate addressing by hundreds public sector organisations who use PAF in a range of innovative and increasingly diverse ways.

- Local Authorities incorporate elements of PAF data into their Local Land and Property Gazetteers (LLPG), which Departments throughout the Local Authority rely on for the efficient delivery of public services.
- In a Health centre, a PAF address look-up quickly helps patients confirm their address often now using self-service kiosks. Healthcare providers also use PAF for maintaining accurate address records in their patient and donor databases.
- In the event of incidents such as flood risk, extreme weather conditions or major fires, environmental agencies and emergency services often use address and postcode information from PAF to help identify properties at risk and mobilise resources to support accordingly.
- Central Government Departments will often use PAF data to help citizens quickly verify their address and identity when logging into online services

The PAF Public Sector Licence

Royal Mail reached agreement with the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and Scottish Government on the introduction of a centrally paid Public Sector Licence (PSL) to cover the public sector's use of PAF. From 1 April 2015, all public sector organisations in England, Wales and Scotland can benefit from the PSL Use terms.

Benefits of the Public Sector Licence

The PSL has been developed to increase and widen the public sector's use of accurate postal address and postcode information in the delivery of public services. The PSL Use Terms:

- simplifies PAF licensing and administration
- removes the barriers that previously prevented organisations maximising their use of PAF
- creates important efficiencies by allowing licensees to share data and work collaboratively with other licensees
- encourages new ways of working and stimulates innovation

It is important to note that whilst licensed public sector organisations will no longer need to return licence fees to Royal Mail, in many cases, organisations will need a software solution in order to make the most of the data. To find a licensed PAF Solutions Provider, visit the Address Management Unit's PAF Supplier Directory: www.poweredbypaf.com/end-user

Important features of the PSL

You can download a copy of the PSL Use Terms and find lots of other information about the PSL on our website:

www.poweredbypaf.com/licensing-centre/public/paf-public-sector-licence

There are some key features within the PSL Use Terms you should understand, these include:

- PSL licensees will be able to use PAF throughout their organisation as well as on their websites for displaying or confirming address details. The PSL Use Terms also permit PSL licensees and sub-contractors working on their behalf, to share data with other PSL licensees.
- The PSL Use Terms covers the use of data from PAF for the delivery of a public sector organisation's core public task; they do not cover any use of PAF for profit-making or commercial activity. Any public sector organisation wishing to use PAF for commercial purposes should continue to be licensed on standard PAF Licence terms.

How can my organisation become a PSL licensee?

You can check to see if your organisation is already registered to the PSL—or you can apply to join the PSL on the Royal Mail website. Simply click on the link below and complete the short application form.

www.poweredbypaf.com/licensing-centre/public/paf-public-sector-licence

As a general rule, if you are a public sector organisation that falls within the definition of 'contracting authority' in Regulation 3 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2006, it's likely that you'll be eligible. Typically, central and local government bodies, healthcare providers and emergency services will be eligible.

However, there are some types of organisations such as housing associations, social enterprises, infrastructure bodies, community interest companies, educational institutions, charities and charitable trusts that are likely to fall outside of the eligibility criteria. We have worked with BIS and Scottish Government to define the criteria for establishing eligibility.

We're here to help

On our website, we have created an entire section dedicated to the PSL. You can download our handy information pack and find instruction on how to apply.

Also, our experienced team is on hand to help with any questions you have about the PSL. You can contact them by calling our dedicated PSL helpline: 0845 606 6854 and by selecting option 2 or by emailing: publicsectorlicensing@royalmail.com.

Our team is available Monday-Friday 08:30-17:00.