
CASS Certification Procedures

How Your Member Addresses are CASS-Certified

INTRODUCTION

The United States Postal Service, in cooperation with the mailing industry, has developed a process of evaluating address-matching software known as **CASS (Coding Accuracy Support System)** certification.

This process provides software and hardware manufacturers, service bureaus, and commercial mailers a common platform to measure the quality of address-matching software. The purpose of CASS certification is to continually improve the accuracy of 5-digit ZIP Codes, ZIP+4 Codes, delivery point codes and carrier route codes applied to mail. All address lists used to produce mailings for automation rates must be matched by CASS-certified software.

This booklet, designed specifically for self-processing credit unions, describes the procedures used to produce a file from your address database, CASS-certify the file, verify data, and upload the certified addresses back to the CU*BASE system.



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For an updated copy of this booklet, check out the Reference Materials page of our website:
<http://www.cuanswers.com/resources/doc/cubase-reference/>
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OVERVIEW

CASS Certification is the process where your member address information is compared with the U.S. Postal Service standard address listings and then corrected for proper formats and ZIP codes. If CU*Answers processes your statements, CASS Certification should be done on a quarterly basis.

If CU*Answers does not process your statements, CASS Certification is optional. However, there are other benefits of CASS-certifying member data to consider relating to our household database and other credit union mailing options.

- To comply with the Postal Service outline for addressing (abbreviations, spelling, etc.), and to ensure that you are qualified for the maximum effective postal discounts, the process will update your day-to-day files on CU*BASE in addition to the address printed on the statement.
- Credit unions that do not do any CASS certification lose all automation discounts, resulting in significantly higher postage costs. Depending on your statement processor, if you do CASS-certify, any *individual* addresses considered non-deliverable (where Zip+4 is not assigned during the CASS process) will not be eligible for postal discounts just for those particular envelopes. For example, you might pay \$0.41 for a statement envelope versus a discounted rate of \$0.312 (depending on number of pages and inserts, of course). The higher rate applies only to the individual envelopes that were not certified; remaining statements would still be eligible for the discount.
- Standardizing the address format helps with managing your Household Database and lets you eliminate duplicate addresses when producing mailing labels through CU*BASE.
- By having the information sent back to your online data files, you will be able to take advantage of the postage discounts on other credit union-generated mailings (such as insurance tapes and large promotional mailings).
- Because the address information will already be correct on the CU*BASE system prior to statement generation, the whole statement process will be improved and printing will be faster.

IMPORTANT: In order for the certification to give the maximum value, the entire process should be completed as quickly as possible after the file is created. That means that once the file is generated, it should be sent immediately to Sage Direct.

Once Sage Direct receives the file, it generally requires 1-2 working days for the certification process to be completed. The file will then be returned to the credit union and should be processed by your credit union in a timely fashion.

For self processing credit unions, and online credit unions that do not process their statements through Sage Direct, a fee will be charged for each file that is CASS-certified. This will be billed to your credit union by Sage Direct.

THE PROCESS

The first time you CASS-certify, the following steps need to be repeated two times to ensure all addresses are properly and totally certified—generally, once each month for two consecutive months. The first time certification is done, there are often many exceptions due to inconsistent keying of address data, and those can be cleared up and re-certified during the second run so that your address files are as clean as possible.

After that, CASS-certification should be done at least quarterly to be eligible for postal discounts.

WHAT IS VERIFIED?

The process includes the following files:

MASTER	Addresses for active memberships
MSHIST	Addresses for any memberships that were closed in the current calendar year (<i>in case a final annual statement needs to be generated</i>)
ALTADD	Alternate addresses (this does NOT include records marked as <i>secondary</i> addresses)

Excluded are any records where the *Foreign address* flag is checked, as well as any records flagged not to CASS-certify (see Page 13).

CASS AND DPV AND LACS...OH, MY!

As of 8/1/07, the full CASS certification process includes three key steps:

- **CASS Review** - This step cleans up addresses to use the standard format required by the U. S. Postal Service, including abbreviations, spellings, and the like. This is the step that changes “STREET” to “ST” and fixes street names and directional notations (North, South, etc.) to be according to Postal Service rules.
- **Delivery Point Verification (DPV)** - This is simply a more precise way of verifying a street address. In the past, a street address such as 123 MAIN ST would be checked against a range of valid numbers for Main Street and as long as the number fell within that range, the address would be certified. With the DPV process, if the exact address 123 MAIN ST doesn't appear in the DPV file it will be considered a non-deliverable address and no Zip+4 will be assigned.
- **Locator Address Change Service (LACS)** - This process looks to see if the street address is in the 911 emergency system file. The main purpose is to convert rural route addresses to standardized street address formats. It also affects addresses in apartment complexes and other special situations.

For a full CASS certification run, your files are processed through CASS first, then DPV, and finally, LACS.

THE IMPACT OF LACS

The LACS changes are the ones that are most obvious and maybe could even cause problems with your members. Here are some common examples of LACS-recommended changes:

<i>Original member address as keyed into CU*BASE:</i>	<i>New address after LACS verification:</i>	<i>Comments</i>
RR 1 BOX 49	7959 RIDGEVIEW RD	This is the most typical change, and represents what LACS was intended to do; these generally will not need further attention
9228 HUCKLEBERRY RD	9292 HUCKLEBERRY RD	Street name is the same, but the house number is different (<i>this may occur on addresses that are located in apartment complexes</i>)
1206 ONTARIO RD	1206 CHESTER CT	The house number is the same, but the street name has changed
3501 PARK LANE DR	2851 33RD ST S	Both house number and street name have changed significantly!

See Page 13 for instructions on blocking CASS updates to specific member records, in cases where the LACS change is unacceptable to the member for some reason.

STEP 1A - VERIFICATION OF CU*BASE SOFTWARE

If you are certifying for the first time, CU*Answers must first set up the SFTP scripts to transmit the files to and from Sage Direct. If you have not certified before, contact a CU*Answers Client Service Representative to arrange for pass-through and verification of this programming.

STEP 1B – NOTIFICATION/SETUP WITH SAGE DIRECT

If you are certifying for the first time, Sage Direct must be notified that your credit union wishes to use the CASS certification service. Identify yourself as a CU*Answers Self Processing client.

If you have not certified before, contact the following Sage Direct representative to start this service:

Jennifer Zimelis
Project Administrator
Sage Direct, Inc
3400 Raleigh Ave SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49512-2042
616-940-8336
800-729-8310 x214
616-588-3607 Fax
csr@sagedirect.com

STEP 2 - CASS CERTIFICATION FLAG

In order for you to receive the postal discounts that come with CASS Certification, your certification flag must be turned on in system configuration.

Use the OPER Speed Sequence to display the initial Operation menu, then choose #10 *Credit Union Configurations 1*. From the MNOP09 menu, choose #2, *Processing CU Parameter Config*. Use Enter to proceed to the 4th screen, as shown below:

Session 0 CU*BASE GOLD -
File Edit Tools Help

System Configuration Maintenance

Correspondence to Member	Bank Reconciliation
Indicate method of processing for each feature:	Select type Manual
Share CD renewal notice	Sheet feed letter
Share draft overdraft	Sheet feed letter
Share draft NSF	Notice
Delinquency notice	Notice
Insurance expiration	Notice
Account error correction	Notice
<input type="checkbox"/> Print CD certificate form	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CASS certification used	

Check Printer Setup - Mark if Used	Miscellaneous
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Freeform checks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mask OTB CC number
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Check printer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Auto # generation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Corporate checks	<input type="checkbox"/> Treasury checks
<input type="checkbox"/> Stub message	

Exit Continue

CU*BASE operator edition

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Be sure *CASS certification used?* is checked, then use Enter again until returned to the menu.

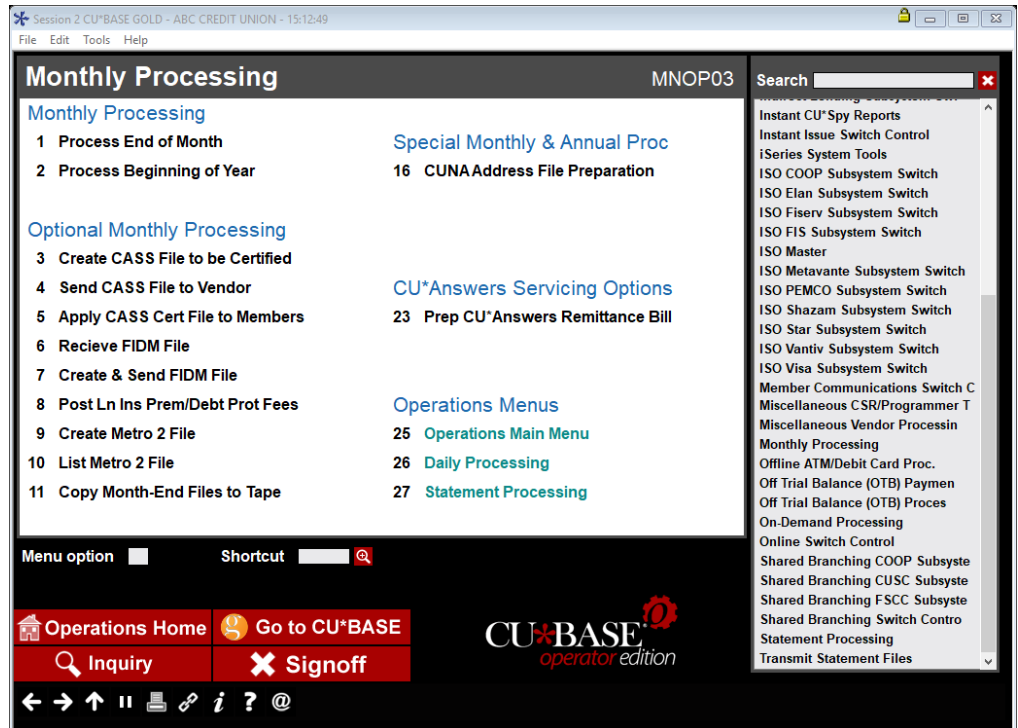
Once this flag is turned on, you will no longer be able to update the 4-digit ZIP+4 field on any master or alternate address record. Changes made to the 5-digit ZIP Code will cause the ZIP+4 field to be cleared until the next time CASS certification is done.

STEP 3 - EXTRACT NAME AND ADDRESS FILES

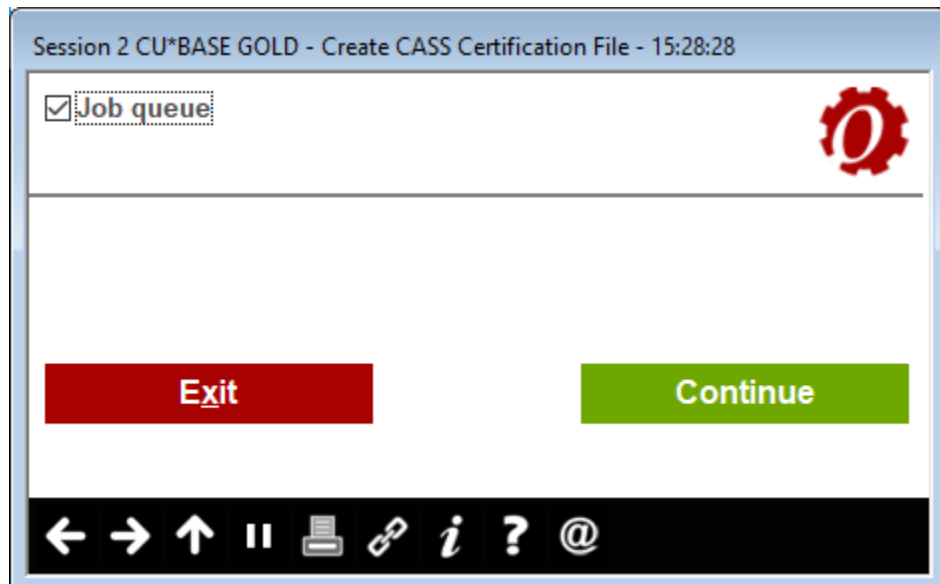
In this step, you will extract the name and address information from your credit union's member files that will be used in the certification process.

IMPORTANT: This step should NOT be done if any member files are being used by anyone else in the CU*BASE system. We recommend this process be completed after business hours when everyone has logged off the system.

Use the OPER Speed Sequence to display the initial Operations menu, then choose #3, *Monthly Processing*. The following menu will appear:



Choose #3 *Create CASS File to be Certified*.



Use Continue and the system will begin creating the file. When the menu returns, the process is complete.

Handling Address Changes After Extraction

Once your name and address file has been extracted, you may continue to add new memberships and perform normal maintenance on addresses as requested by your members. The system will automatically mark any records that are added or changed on your system.

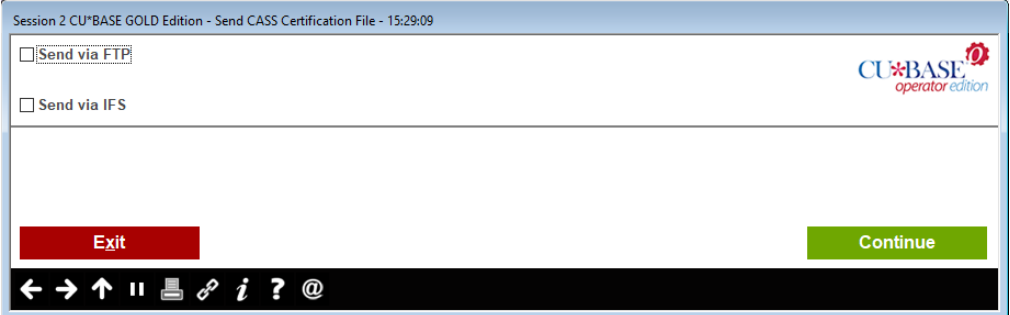
IMPORTANT: *This marking process will only happen if the CASS certification flag is checked in system configuration. See Page 6.*

When the file is received back from CU*Answers and uploaded to your live files (see Step 7), any records that have been maintained during this interim time will remain as they are, and will not be adjusted with the certification changes. Therefore, name and address maintenance should be done as usual, but remember that these addresses may not conform to postal regulations until the next time the entire certification process is done.

For example, if Mary Smith's address reads "123 SOUTH KENT DR." before the file is extracted, it may be changed to "123 S KENT DR" by the certification process. However, if before the file is returned and uploaded, Mary requests that her address be changed to "799 RANDALL ROAD," the system will mark her record and leave it as the new address even when the file is uploaded to live files. Mary's new address will be certified the next time the CASS process is repeated.

STEP 4 - SEND CERTIFICATION FILE TO SAGE DIRECT

Choose #4 *Send CASS File to Vendor* to access the screen below.



If you select *Send via FTP* and use Enter (or click Continue), then the file generated in Step 3 will be encrypted and sent via a secure SFTP transmission to Sage Direct. You and Sage Direct will receive an email stating the file was successfully sent.

If you select *Send via IFS* and use Enter (or click Continue), then the file generated in Step 3 will be downloaded to the IFS folder CASS. Take this option if you are using a vendor other than Sage Direct. This option requires manual upload to your third party vendor.

STEP 5 - SAGE DIRECT PROCESSES FILE AND RETURNS FILE TO CU

Upon receiving the file from the credit union, Sage Direct will process CASS certification on the addresses and return the file to your credit union. This entire process generally requires approximately 1-2 working days.

Sage Direct will return the file encrypted and via SFTP directly to your iSeries. You will receive an email when the file has been successfully uploaded to your iSeries.

STEP 6 - VERIFYING ALL CHANGES BEFORE OVERWRITING LIVE FILES

Once the file is received, it is the credit union's responsibility to verify the actual names and addresses on the file before loading the file back to overwrite the live CU*BASE files. This step is crucial to ensure that the data is correct and that there were no problems with the file during certification. Verification is done by running an audit report. This is accomplished by using this option, without updating production files.

Display the CU*BASE Monthly Processing menu as described in Step 3. Choose #5: *Apply CASS Cert File to Members*.

This field must be left unchecked for this step, to ensure that live files are not affected.

The screenshot shows the CU*BASE operator edition interface. At the top, it says "Session 2 CU*BASE GOLD - Receive CASS Certification File - 15:17:54". Below this, there are several sections: "Job queue" with a checked box, "Copies" set to 1, and "Printer" set to P1. A "Report Options" table is visible, with the following content:

Report Options	Response
<input type="checkbox"/> Update production files	

Below the table, there is a field for "If receiving for single credit union, enter CU #", followed by "& ID" and "Optional". A "Time zone" dropdown menu is also present. At the bottom, there are "Exit" and "Continue" buttons. An arrow points from the text on the left to the "Update production files" checkbox.

Leave the *Update production* field flag unchecked to ensure that live files are not affected by this process.

Select your time zone in the drop down. This time zone flag ensures that file processing can be completed after business hours.

Use Enter (or click Continue) to proceed. The system will automatically produce the audit report and send it to the printer specified on the screen.

Sample Audit Report

Following is a sample of the audit verification report that will be produced. The report shows every address that was altered during certification, showing the original address and the new address.

Account Name	File	Field	Old Value	New Value
60545 SARAH PERSON	MASTER	ADDR1	60 MORROW AVENUE	60 MORROW AVE APT 5GS
60545 SARAH PERSON	MASTER	ADDR2	APT# 5GS	
60564 TIMOTHY TESTING	MSHIST	ADDR1	144-70 41ST AVE	14470 41ST AVE APT 5R
60564 TIMOTHY TESTING	MSHIST	ADDR2	APT. #5R	
60823 JOHN MEMBER	MASTER	ZIP5	10021	10075
60924 JONATHON SOMEBODY	MASTER	ADDR1	430 WATER STREET	430 WATER ST
61020 MARYANNE ANYONE	MASTER	ADDR1	420 EAST 54TH STREET	420 E 54TH ST APT 33F
61020 MARYANNE ANYONE	MASTER	ADDR2	APT 33F	
61177 DAVID ANYONE	MASTER PROBLEM	ADDR1	420 EAST 54TH STREET	18 JAYSON AVE
61177 DAVID ANYONE	MASTER PROBLEM	ADDR2	APT 33F	
61177 DAVID ANYONE	MASTER PROBLEM	CITY	NEW YORK	GREAT NECK
61177 DAVID ANYONE	MASTER PROBLEM	ZIP5	10022	11021

TOTAL PROBLEM ACCOUNTS ENCOUNTERED: 8

If any special problem accounts are marked here, DO NOT proceed to Step 7. See Page 10 for more details.

The first time certification is performed, it is not uncommon for the report to show changes to nearly all of your addresses. However, subsequent certifications should produce far fewer items as most of the addresses will have already been corrected.

If you notice an unusually high number of addresses, it will be important to determine the cause. Do not proceed to Step 7. It may be necessary to repeat the entire process starting with Step 2 to ensure that live data files are not corrupted. **Contact a CU*BASE Client Service Representative for assistance.**

If the volume of changes looks about right, carefully examine the individual changes that have been made. Make a note of any that look incorrect (for example, if the state changes or the city and ZIP code has changed to a completely different area) or where the change might have a major impact on the mail being delivered correctly. Make a note of these individual items in order to perform manual corrections on the accounts once the file has been applied to production files (after Step 7).

DO NOT make the changes now, as they would be overwritten by the upload process in Step 7. For additional instructions, see "Handling Errors and Exceptions" on Page 13.

- **NOTE:** As of 2010, the COUNTY has been added to the CASS Certification process. In cases the county cannot be verified, the system will not update what was manually entered in the County field in CU*BASE.

Special "Problem" Accounts

If any of the items in the list are marked "PROBLEM," DO NOT proceed. Contact a CU*BASE Client Service Representative for assistance.

HINT: To scan for these accounts, while viewing the report in your output queue, enter the word "PROBLEM" in the Find field at the top of the screen and use F16. You may also move to the bottom of the report (enter "B" in the Control field) and note the total number of problems found.

These are records where the system cannot match the address in the *Old Value* column with the original master files currently on CU*BASE. This could indicate that an address was changed on the master CU*BASE files but the record was not flagged properly (see Page 14 for details). It could also mean that the account may not even be the same member as when the file was originally extracted, if the account was closed and reopened under a new name while the file was out for certification.

Any addresses marked "PROBLEM" will not be updated during the upload process (Step 7), and you will need to determine the reason for the problem and maintain the records manually after the upload.

REMEMBER: If major discrepancies are found, such as an abnormally high number of changes, the appearance of duplicate addresses on the report, or any accounts marked "PROBLEM," **DO NOT PROCEED TO STEP 7** or you risk the integrity of your member data. Contact a CU*BASE Client Service Representative for assistance.

STEP 7 - UPLOADING FINAL NAME AND ADDRESS FILE TO CU*BASE

After all verification has been done for the address information on the returned file, this step will take the newly adjusted addresses and overwrite the data on your current CU*BASE files.

IMPORTANT: *This step should NOT be done if any member files are being used by anyone else in the CU*BASE system. We recommend this process be completed after business hours when everyone has logged off the system.*



WARNING!! WARNING!! WARNING!!

If this step is taken before the verification described in Step 6 has been completed, your live CU*BASE address files may become corrupted with bad data. CU*Answers does not warrant that your original data can be restored; therefore, it is extremely important that you are confident the data contained on the file is clean and correct and that any minor exceptions have been noted for later maintenance before proceeding.

Display the CU*BASE Monthly Processing menu as described in Step 3.
Choose *Apply CASS Cert File to Members*.

Now that verification is completed, this field should be checked to update live files.

Session 2 CU*BASE GOLD - Receive CASS Certification File - 15:52:17

Job queue
Copies 1
Printer P1

Report Options Response

Update production files

If receiving for single credit union, enter CU # & ID Optional

Time zone Mountain

Exit Continue

Place a checkmark in the *Update production* field to update your live files.

Select your time zone in the drop down. This time zone flag ensures that file processing can be completed after business hours.

Use Enter (or click Continue) to proceed. A report will be generated showing all of the actual changes made to member files. It is recommended that this report be printed and saved for future reference if any problems or questions arise on the results of the certification.

STEP 8 - FINAL CLEANUP

Once the file has been applied to production files, you will need to make any manual corrections to individual addresses that you noted during the verification process in Step 6.

To manually update addresses, use the normal address maintenance features in CU*BASE (such as **Tool #15 Update Membership Information** or Name/Addr in Member Inquiry (F14)) to update the address. Any items that were marked "PROBLEM" on the audit report require special attention, as they will not have been affected by the upload process and must be maintained manually.

For the rare cases where the address cannot be reconciled to Post Office standards, remove the checkmark on the *Certify Address* flag to prevent this address from being certified again in the future. To avoid losing out on the special postal rates, the use of this flag should be strictly limited. See Page 13 for more information.

HANDLING ERRORS AND EXCEPTIONS

On occasion, the system will change an address that the member assures you is correct. There have even been cases where the city name itself has been changed by the process. Remember also that the LACS process introduces strict rules of which the member may not even be aware. Be patient and work through these exceptions; they all do have a reason. For example:

<i>Member address on CU*BASE:</i>	<i>Changed after CASS Certification to:</i>
123 W. ALLISON KENTWOOD, MI 49512	123 W ALLISON WYOMING MI 49509

Notice that the city name changed. This happened because the member's address was actually **123 Westallison** (one word) and was keyed incorrectly when the membership was originally set up. Because the Post Office could not find a "W. Allison" street in Kentwood, but did find that street name in the Wyoming directory, the address was adjusted to the Wyoming city and ZIP. In this instance, the address would need to be updated to Westallison and the city name and ZIP changed manually. The next time CASS certification was done, the system would recognize the street name as belonging in Kentwood.

In cases where a conflict cannot be worked out, there is a CASS monitoring field located on all of the screens used to enter and update addresses on the system (i.e., opening memberships, updating master information, changing name & address information, etc.). Following is a sample of the screen used to update master information. **Remember, these changes should be made only after the upload process is complete (Step 7).**

Update Membership Information (Tool #15)

The screenshot shows a web application window titled "Session 2 CU*BASE GOLD Edition - ABC CREDIT UNION". The main heading is "Update Membership" with a sub-heading "Individual". The form includes the following sections:

- Date opened:** Aug 26, 1985
- Account base:** [Redacted]
- Branch #:** 01 FRANKENMUTH C U - MAIN OFFICE
- Required Information:**
 - Name:** ALICE MEMBER
 - Gender:** Male, Female (selected), Other
 - Birth date:** Feb 04, 1952
 - SSN:** [Redacted]
 - Name ID:** ME
 - Designation:** MI Individual
 - Death date:** 00000000
 - Home type:** Own, Rent, N/A (selected)
 - Foreign address/citizen:** Unchecked
- Address:**
 - Address #1:** 710 CEDAR ROW
 - City:** SUNSHINE VALLEY
 - State:** CA ZIP code: 49999 0000
 - County:** ANYCOUNTY
 - Date moved to:** 00000000
 - Certify address:** Certify address Incorrect address
- Misc Information:**
 - Driver's license:** M 555 555 1115 555
 - Long last name:** [Redacted]
 - Other ID:** [Redacted]
 - Full middle name:** [Redacted]
 - Last contacted:** Nov 23, 2009
 - Last maintained:** Oct 08, 2019
- Contact Numbers:**

Contact Numbers	Ext	Label	Comments
1. 8883039420		Cell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> Text messages <input type="checkbox"/> Wrong # <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile
2. 5551213695		Wife Cell	<input type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> Text messages <input type="checkbox"/> Wrong # <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile

The *Certify Address* flag on this screen can be unchecked to prevent this address from being included in future CASS certifications.

If you wish to exclude a specific member address from the certification process, remove the checkmark in the *Certify Address* flag (this places a “9”

in the MCCTL field on the MASTER record). This code indicates that when addresses are next sent for certification, this member should not be included.

REMEMBER: *This feature should only be used in rare cases. If your mailing list has too many errors, the entire mailing list may be restricted from automation discounts.*

UNDERSTANDING THE CASS MONITORING FLAG

Throughout this document we have referred several times to the *Certify Address* flag found on all CU*BASE address maintenance screens. The primary use for this field, from the credit union's standpoint, is to flag those rare accounts that cannot be reconciled with postal requirements, so that they are no longer included in the periodic certification process.

Stored as MCCTL in the MASTER file, this field is also used internally by the system to monitor address changes related to CASS certification, and a basic understanding of the sequence of events involved with this field can be helpful in ensuring that things go smoothly. First, following is a description of the codes that may appear in this field if you were to perform a Query on the MASTER file:

0	No maintenance has been done on this account since the last CASS certification process. This code cannot be entered manually. This code is maintained automatically by the system.
1	Maintenance has been performed on this account since the last CASS certification process. This code cannot be entered manually. This code is maintained automatically by the system.
9	Do not include this member in the CASS certification process. To mark an account this way, simply remove the check from the <i>Certify address</i> field using the Update Membership Information command (see Page 13). However, this should be done in rare cases ONLY where the address cannot be reconciled with the postal requirements.

Behind the scenes, here's what happens within this field:

1. When the credit union extracts the file containing names and address (Step 3), the system automatically places a "0" (zero) in all records that were extracted.

REMEMBER: *Records coded with a "9" are not extracted at all, and therefore the flag is not changed on those records.*

2. Any time a change is made to the address on a member record, the system automatically changes the "0" to a "1" to indicate that a change has been made. When the CASS-certified file is uploaded back onto the system (Step 7), any addresses with a "1" in this field are not overwritten.
3. The next time certification is done, all records (except for those coded with "9") are extracted, the field for those records is updated to a "0" and the process begins again.

IMPORTANT: This process will only happen when the *CASS certification used* field in system configuration is checked (see Page 6). If this setting was turned off for any reason, the system will no longer keep track of record maintenance and there may be problems with incorrect addresses once a CASS-certified file is uploaded.