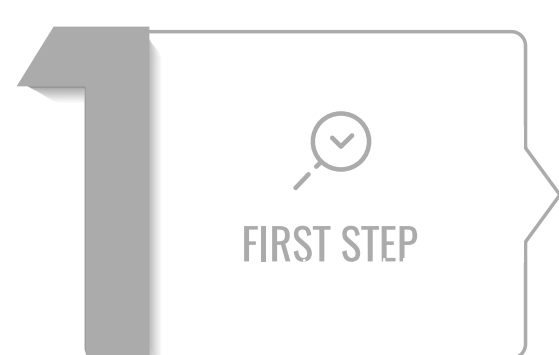# RFID TAG MANDATES
WHAT SHOULD YOU KNOW?

A lot of big named retailers are either announcing new RFID tag mandates or ramping up their requirement, which may leave suppliers with a considerable amount of questions about RFID and the big requirements ahead. Don't worry, in this infographic we walk suppliers through what they need to know about these mandates and the easiest way to meet the requirements.

We broke down the process of how to get started tagging your products in the 7 steps below. If you have additional questions about these steps, feel free to reach out to us on our website chat feature at atlasRFIDstore.com, via email, phone, our chat feature, or our contact us form - all available below!

1 — FIRST STEP

DETERMINE THE ARC SPECS

Once a retailer issues a mandate requiring suppliers to tag products with an RFID tag, the next step is to determine the assigned ARC spec to which your RFID tags must adhere; this will be provided by the retailer. For example, the company may say 'approved tags adhere to Spec N or Spec F'. The Spec, which is similar to a standard, is how you will find and purchase acceptable RFID tags to tag your products.

To see at all of the available Specs approved by Auburn University's ARC Program, click here.

2 — SECOND STEP

PURCHASE ELIGIBLE RFID TAGS

When you have your Spec information, the next step is to find RFID tags that are approved with that Spec and that will work on your product. Browse RFID inlays and purchase a variety of different tags (about 5 of each type) to test a few different options. Each tag should list its approved ARC specs in the specifications - for an example, click here.

In order to test these RFID tags, you will need to rent or purchase an RFID reader/antenna. When testing RFID tags in situations where current environmental obstacles don't need to be considered, a handheld reader like these examples may be the best, and most flexible option for your testing. Even though USB/Desktop readers are cheaper, they aren't recommended for this type of testing because they lack the mobility needed to read the tag from a larger distance and at various angles.

3 — THIRD STEP

TEST YOUR RFID TAGS ON YOUR PRODUCT

RFID tag testing must be done to ensure that the tag can be read easily on the product/product packaging. Test each RFID tag at different places, orientations, and angles, and use Auburn University's RFID Lab Tagging Guideline by Packaging Type as your guide.

To record your results, download our free Tag Testing Worksheet so that you can easily compare the results of multiple tags in one document.

4 — FOURTH STEP

CHOOSE THE IDEAL RFID TAG

After your testing is complete, you should have the results needed to pick the ideal RFID tag for your specific product. If you need to tag multiple types of products, even within the same product category, potentially, you may need to pick multiple tags. Because product size and packaging play a major role in read range, a different tag may be needed for each product type.

5 — FIFTH STEP

ENCODE A FEW RFID TAGS

Once you choose the RFID tag, you need to decide if you will do the encoding or use a third-party vendor to encode the RFID tags for you. Regardless of which you choose, you will need to know the SGTIN-96 that will be encoded on the RFID tags. Another available option is a complete setup service to get you started encoding tags in-house.

The SGTIN-96 is what most tag mandates from retailers require to be encoded on the RFID tags, it stands for Serialized Global Trade Item Number, 96-bits. Click here to jump to our article about the SGTIN-96 which explains what this number is, what it consists of, and more.

In addition to being encoded, some retailers, like Walmart, have additional printing requirements, for instance a UPC barcode and the EPC logo.

6 — SIXTH STEP

SEND 5 ENCODED TAGS TO ARC

Once you have your RFID tags encoded and ready to go, package up 5 individual RFID tags per product and send them to the Auburn ARC RFID Lab for verification. The Auburn RFID Lab will test your encoding against the supplier mandate and either approve or deny your RFID tags.

Here is for the submission form to send in your tags to the RFID Lab for approval, specifically for Walmart's Toy category. For the links for the other categories, send us an email and we can send that link over!

7 — SEVENTH STEP

ONCE APPROVED, TAG YOUR PRODUCTS

Once your encoded RFID tags have been approved, you can now take your encoded RFID tags and place them in the ideal position on your product packaging and confidently send them to the retailer.

Whether it's answering questions, providing resources, setting up your in-house encoding, or printing & encoding your mandated tags here - we strive to make RFID tag mandates easier. If we can be of any help, even if it's simply to point you in the right direction, don't hesitate to reach out to us at any point during your journey of fulfilling your RFID requirements.

atlasRFIDstore.com