

KOHL'S

KOHL'S RFID PLAYBOOK - Private Brands

All Required Categories

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1. General Overview

1.1 Industry Standards to Follow

- Kohl's is following all industry standards set forth by the GS1 EPC Tag Data Standard, Auburn RFID tag placement standard, GS1 tag placement standard, and Auburn University ARC inlay standard.
- All tagging requirements must meet these standards and should be validated through the Auburn RFID Lab ALEC Program prior to arriving in our stores.

1.2 In-Scope

- All Private Brand Apparel Product starting Fall 2027 development season. June 2027 in DC shipments for Kids, July 2027 in DC for remaining Apparel areas.

Categories
All Apparel - Private Brands

Out of Scope:

- All Online Exclusive items.
 - If the in-scope item is sold both in-store and on ecommerce, it must be RFID tagged.
- Items where RFID tags are not compatible with the product, as determined through the Auburn University RFID Lab ALEC Program.
 - Garments with lurex, foil printing or metallic embellishment should be tested with Auburn University RFID Lab ALEC Program.
- All Non Apparel categories (Home, Footwear, Accessories) are out of scope during this announcement. Additional details will be provided on Non Apparel categories at a later date.

2. Getting Started

Step 1: Identify the [Spec](#) for your item(s).

Step 2: Consult your [RFID Packaging Provider](#) to source ARC approved inlays for your Spec.

Step 3: Determine [proper placement](#) of the RFID tag on your product/packaging.

Step 4: Obtain RFID tag samples and [submit to ALEC](#) for approval no later than January 2027.

Step 5: Begin RFID tagging your approved items to arrive in stores by the deadlines noted above.

Step 1: RFID Inlay Spec

- Kohl's references a set of inlay specifications that are performance approved from the Auburn University RFID Lab. Refer to the chart below to see what spec has been assigned to each category. *You can only use an approved inlay from an item's associated inlay list.*

Category	Buyer/Department	Inlay Spec	Approved Inlay List	Must Arrive by Date (MABD)
Apparel	All	R	https://rfidlab.org/arc/spec-r.php	Fall 2027 development

Step 2: Inlay Manufacturer & Packaging Resources

- Continue to leverage nominated packaging suppliers and the brand mandate in apparel. The packaging supplies are required to use RFID inlays from ARC approved inlay manufacturers. The brand mandate is located in Klink
https://link.kohls.com/content/dam/klink/pdfs/L_P_Brand_Assignments.pdf
- Private Brands (APPAREL):** RFID inlays should be embedded into either the hangtags or joker by the approved packaging suppliers.
- Inlay Size:**
 - Use the largest RFID inlay size available that fits your packaging. RPac and Avery have already identified the inlay size for hangtags and jokers for Apparel.
 - If your packaging utilizes a size strip exclusively or does not fit the smallest inlay size available within the approved spec, Kohl's will issue a consistent generic embedded inlay hangtag to be leveraged.
 - For additional clarification, please contact the RFID lab at <https://rfidlab.org/aleccontactform/> to discuss any additional options for your item.

Step 3: Determine Placement of RFID tag

- Please consult the RFID Tagging Guidelines below for guidance on RFID tag placement:
 - Auburn RFID Tag Guideline: <https://rfid.auburn.edu/tagging-location-guide/>
 - GS1 RFID Tag Guideline: <https://www.gs1us.org/content/dam/gs1us/documents/industries-insights/by-industry/apparel-general-merchandise/guideline-toolkit/Guideline-Format-And-Symbol-Placement-for-the-Electronic-Product-Code-EPC.pdf>
- If your item is not represented in the RFID Tag Placement Guidelines, please contact the RFID lab at <https://rfidlab.org/aleccontactform/>.
- Please consult the Kohl's packaging guidelines for preferred application formats and packaging requirements.
- If the preferred tagging location in the RFID Tagging Guidelines does not align with the Kohl's packaging guidelines, please contact the RFID Lab at <https://rfidlab.org/aleccontactform/>.

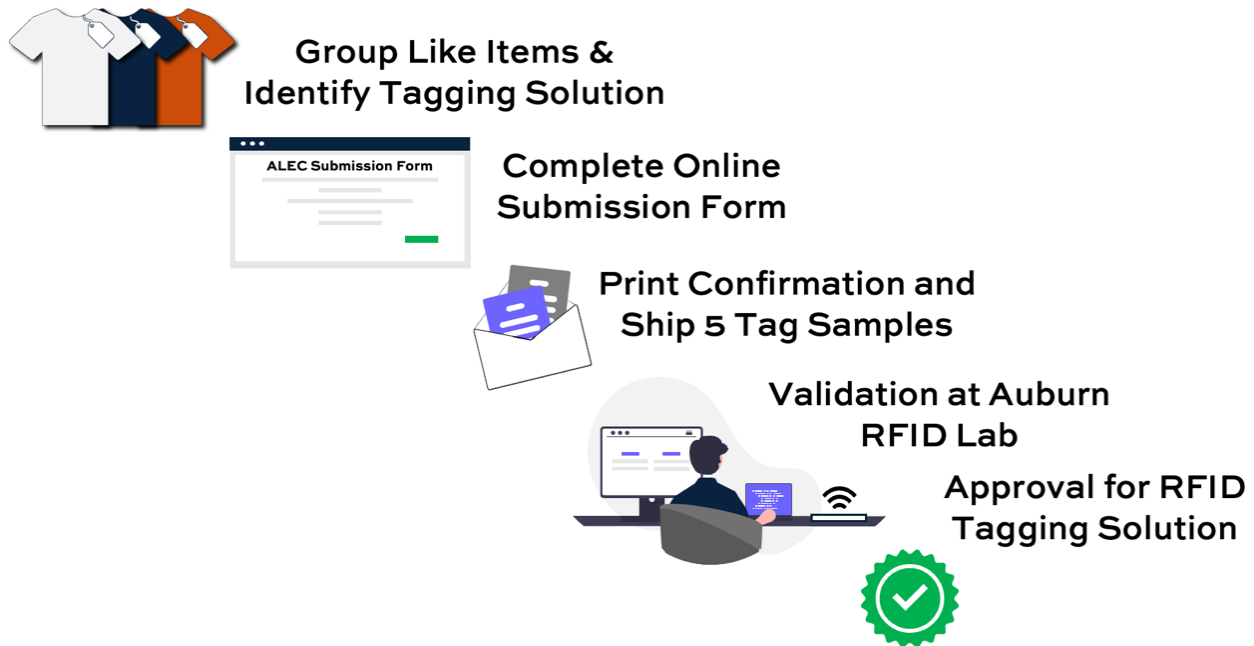
Step 4. ALEC - Approval of Production RFID Packaging Samples

- We are partnering with Auburn University RFID lab for vendor support and quality control to ensure this is seamless for our vendors. ALEC is a comprehensive supplier onboarding, support, and

validation program to ensure product suppliers' success in implementing RFID.

- Auburn University RFID Lab's ALEC program helps Product Suppliers ensure their RFID tagged items meet all industry requirements. Before any shipment of RFID-tagged goods can begin, you must receive RFID Lab approval.
- Refer to the ALEC website for questions and submission instructions:
 - <https://rfid.auburn.edu/alec/alec-validation.php>

ALEC Submission Process



- ALEC submission form: <https://rfidlab.org/alec-submissionform/>
- Submit one representative UPC per Submission Form
 - 5 RFID tag samples are required only for the representative UPC
- Like-items to the representative UPC should be included in the submission item file, and must share the same:
 - Brand, packaging type, packaging provider, RFID inlay model, and tagging location
- Print the confirmation of your submission form after submitting and include it with your shipment of RFID tag samples.
- Actual product or packaging will only need to be sent when specifically requested by the RFID Lab. Any product sent to the RFID Lab will NOT be returned to the product supplier.

ALEC - Updating Previously Approved Submissions

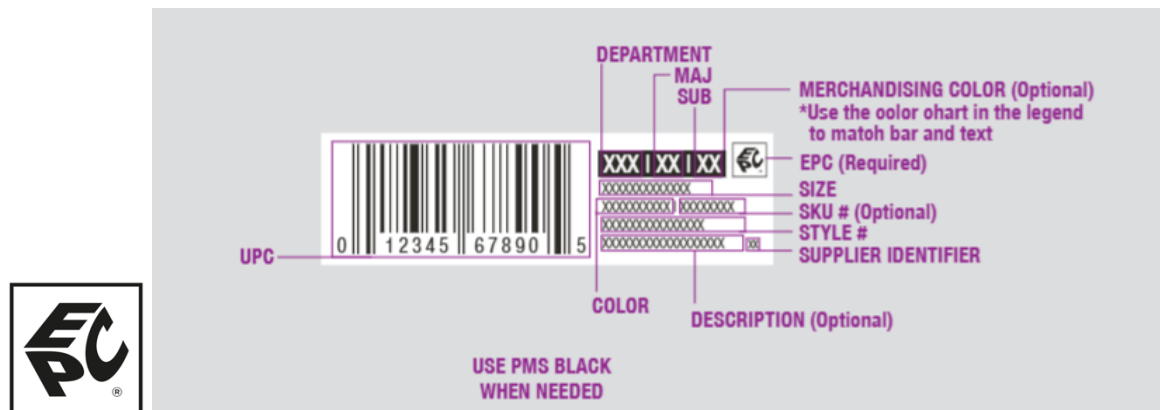
- To add Kohl's to an existing submission for another retailer, change inlay models, change packaging providers, change tagging locations, or add additional UPCs to a submission, complete the Submission Update Form: <https://rfidlab.org/submissionupdate/>
- All submission updates should only reflect items that meet the same criteria as the representative UPC of the submission, including:
 - Product supplier, brand, packaging type, packaging provider, RFID inlay model, tagging location

3. Tagging Requirements

- There should be no staples, perforations, swift tach, folding or die cuts through the inlay, as inlay performance may be affected.
- RFID inlays should not be placed on the bottom of polybags, bottom of boxed items, near the under wire for bras, on liquids, on Silvadur, or near metal/foil, including metallic inks.
- RFID cannot be placed on top of an EAS tag. They can be used together but cannot overlap.
- RFID tags can be sewn into the physical item if the tag can be easily removed.
- For items that are typically stored in metal locked cases, the RFID tag should be on the side of the item that is most likely to be facing outwards.
- Please ensure there is only ONE RFID tag per product.

4. EPC Symbol

- Kohl's requires that the EPC Symbol be shown externally on your packaging to communicate to customers and store associates that your product is RFID tagged.



- The EPC symbol should not be shown on any packaging that does not contain an RFID inlay.
- See this link for the EPC Symbol image file and related documentation:
 - <https://www.gs1.org/standards/epc-rfid/guidelines>
- Kohl's Marketing team will adjust the artwork codes to reflect the correct location of the EPC logo.

5. RFID Encoding & Serialization Requirements

- All inlays must be encoded per the EPC Tag Data Standards (TDS), resulting in unique serialization for each item. The SGTIN-96 tag encoding standard maintained by GS1 must be used.

$$\text{UPC} + \text{Unique Serial Number} = \text{EPC (RFID)}$$

- Each RFID inlay must be uniquely serialized. Please ensure unique serialization is managed when using multiple packaging providers for the same UPC. Learn more about serialization below:
 - <https://documents.gs1us.org/adobe/assets/deliver/urn:aaid:aem:5f88064e-0dbb-495b-9f29-a9ce3758caed/Developing-an-RFID-Serialization-Plan.pdf>
- Tags must be perma locked to prevent tampering.
- All tags must undergo quality and data integrity checks prior to entering the Kohl's supply chain.

6. Supplier Accountability

- Product suppliers should ensure all items delivered to Kohl's have an ARC approved RFID tag.
- Product suppliers should ensure no duplicate serial numbers are used, and that each tag is properly encoded with the correct GTIN for the item it is on.
- Product suppliers will be responsible for all costs incurred for any RFID errors at store level.

7. Acronym Summary

Acronym	Meaning
ALEC	Auburn Lab EPC Compliance
ARC	Arkansas (Auburn) Radio Compliance
EAS	Electronic Article surveillance
EPC	Electronic Product Code
GS1	Global Standards Organization
RFID	Radio Frequency Identification
SGTIN	Serialized Global Trade Item Number
SKU	Stock Keeping Unit
TDS	Tag Data Standards
UPC	Universal Product Code

8. Contacts

Auburn University RFID Lab

General Questions: <https://rfidlab.org/aleccontactform/>

ALEC RFID Submission Form: <https://rfidlab.org/alec-submissionform/>

Version 1.0

Revised April 16, 2026

ALEC Submission Update Form: <https://rfidlab.org/submissionupdate/>

RFID Lab Website: <https://rfid.auburn.edu/>

Source Tagging Workshop: <https://rfid.auburn.edu/webinar-videos.php>

GS1 U.S.

Website: www.gs1us.org

Supplier-oriented introduction to RFID: <https://site.gs1us.org/RFID-success.html>

Serialization Guide:

<https://documents.gs1us.org/adobe/assets/deliver/urn:aaid:aem:5f88064e-0dbb-495b-9f29-a9ce3758caed/Developing-an-RFID-Serialization-Plan.pdf>

Tag Data Standard: <https://www.gs1.org/standards/tds>

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