



Mailpiece Quality Control (MQC) Program—Contents

Self-Study Guide Modules, September 2007

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Welcome to the Mailpiece Quality Control program. This course is designed to assist the individual (or group of individuals) responsible for creating mailpieces for entry into the U.S. Postal Service's mailstream.

This program will help graphic artists, administrators, sales representatives, or anyone else involved in the preparation of large mailings, accomplish their job with proficiency and confidence.

After completing this course, you will better understand the acceptance requirements of the U.S. Postal Service as they relate to mailpiece design. In addition, you will have enough understanding of the requirements of the presorted mailing process to analyze discount and payment options for your clients. You will also have sufficient understanding to consult reference materials to help make your job easier.

Poor mailpiece design can cause delays in the processing and delivery of your mail. Mailpiece quality control is a systematic method of ensuring that designs coming from individuals in your company are acceptable for mailing and are eligible for worksharing discounts from the Postal Service. Good designs give you the confidence that your time and effort will pay off in postal "worksharing" discounts and successful postal processing of your mail.



MAILPIECE QUALITY CONTROL (MQC) PROGRAM SELF-STUDY GUIDE MODULES

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MAILABILITY, EXPEDITED SERVICES, FIRST CLASS MAIL™,
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! *This course deals exclusively with the requirements for DOMESTIC mail. For specifications regarding International mailings, refer to the International Mail Manual (IMM).*

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As the mailpiece quality control (MQC) specialist within your organization, you will either perform an actual mailpiece design function or administer your facility's ongoing quality control procedures concerning physical mailpiece design. From time to time, as an MQC specialist, you may be called upon to perform either function.

You are responsible for the evaluation and approval of the physical mailpiece design as it relates to the processing category, the class of mail, and, in some instances, the postage rate claimed. Completion of this course gives you the background necessary to identify design limitations and suggest positive changes. You will also be familiar with the reference material that contains the answers you are looking for now or in the future.

As the MQC specialist, you can correct problems before the mail is taken to the Business Mail Entry Unit (BMEU) and inconsistencies are discovered. You can become the key quality technician within your facility for planned mailings. Your responsibility will end when the Postal Service accepts your mailpiece, and mailing, into the mailstream.

As the MQC specialist, you must ensure that the physical design of the mailpiece meets postal requirements. You will become the liaison with Postal Service personnel on mailpiece design issues. Your expertise can save your company and/or your client's real time and money in all phases of mail production. If you feel you currently don't know enough about postal standards and regulations, this course will introduce you to nearly all of the basic postal concepts and requirements you'll need in your job.

INITIAL DESIGN ASSISTANCE

If your company processes its own mail exclusively, you will no doubt assist in the physical layout and design of its mailpieces. Assisting your company's clients with their mailpiece design allows you the opportunity to recommend a mailpiece design that:

- Fits the customer's needs.
- Qualifies for the best postage rate possible.
- Qualifies for expeditious processing.

In all cases, you will function as a mailpiece design consultant. You will provide information concerning critical physical design elements. The design must satisfy the needs of your client and simultaneously meet Postal Service guidelines for rate qualification and processing.

The desires of your firm, your client's needs and postal requirements are not always in perfect harmony. Your client may wish to distribute a marketing or advertising mailpiece of a distinctive color and design so that the article stands out in the mailbox, for example. However, the client's color selection may not provide enough contrast between the print and the paper to qualify for the prebarcoding discounts you've quoted and they expect.

The Barcode Sorter (BCS), for example, must be able to see barcodes applied by the customer or by the USPS Optical Character Reader (OCR). The OCR, similarly, must see addresses with an electronic scanning eye and make matches with the address elements in computer memory. The OCR then sprays a barcode containing the necessary sorting information onto the mailpiece.

SOURCES OF HELP

Developing the ability to design a mailpiece qualifying for USPS postage discount programs and yet still meeting individual client needs will require hard work and practice. You can count on continued guidance from your local postal business mail entry (BME) professionals.

The mailpiece design analyst (MDA) is your best ally in judging whether your designs meet technical specifications of the *Domestic Mail Manual* (DMM). In addition, there are other members of the postal business mail entry staff who can assist you in putting together the best mailpiece design possible. This program will introduce you to all of them.

After completing the training, you'll have acquired the basic information necessary to serve as a valuable postal resource and consultant for your company and its customers.

DESIGN APPROVAL

It is important that you have your mailpiece designs evaluated before they are printed. This will smooth their way through the business mail acceptance system. Consult with your local postal professionals to confirm compliance with existing guidelines. Contact them whenever you have a question on certain mailpiece designs. This is especially important when those articles are intended for automation discount postage rates.

To ensure that a mailpiece is automation compatible, contact the local MDA; an account representative (AR), if one has been assigned to your company; or your local postmaster or Business Mail Entry (BME) office.

The MDA is specially trained on the technical characteristics of automated processing equipment and the assessment of related mailpiece designs. If you need assistance and don't know the MDA, AR, or BME in your area, contact your local postmaster or use the MDA locator on the USPS's web site at <http://www.usps.com>.

RECOMMENDING DESIGN CHANGES

If, after examining a mailpiece design, you determine that alterations are needed to meet Postal Service mailability, automation compatibility, or barcode readability requirements, you should recommend appropriate changes.

When this mailpiece undergoes a second review, if additional changes are necessary, you should contact the client again. The key is to ensure that your company's and client's mailpieces are acceptable for mailing and qualify for the best possible postage rate.

CONTINUOUS MAILPIECE QUALITY CONTROL

Mailpiece quality control at each stage of mailpiece design is essential to the smooth entry of business mailings at your local BMEU. As the MQC specialist functioning in a continuous quality control capacity, you should make an initial evaluation of the mailpiece before forwarding it on to the next design stage. At each milestone, or decision point in the process; you need to determine if:

- The mailpiece is acceptable for mailing.
- The mailpiece qualifies for the class of mail and postage rate claimed.
- The mailpiece is compatible for processing on postal automated equipment.
- There are any additional recommendations for improvement such as prebarcoding or the addition of a USPS value-added service.



A more detailed explanation of the duties, responsibilities and hierarchy of postal personnel can be found in the Appendix titled "Postal Contacts" at the end of this workbook.

The mailpiece design and planning process is a series of decisions that represent a balance between the purpose of the mailing and the potential postage costs. A client may need a letter-sized mailpiece to successfully convey their message, but would prefer to pay the lower postcard rates. However, you may delight the very same client by pointing out that properly designed letter-size mailpieces can qualify for additional automation discounts!

Helping your company's artists or your company's clients modify their mailpieces to meet Postal Service standards and guidelines helps ensure a smooth acceptance process. This places you in an important position to determine whether the planned savings from postage discounts will be realized at the Business Mail Entry Unit.

This program will introduce you to the concepts you need to know now, and in the future. The MDA and the rest of the business mail entry staff are available to help you in every step of the process. We have provided margin notations throughout this self-study guide for:



Critical decision points and cautions and important notations.



Specific design tips.



Clarifications and cautions regarding postal acceptance procedures.



Valuable ideas and suggestions about postal products and services.



Materials for further reference not included in this course (often available upon request at your local mailing requirements office or Post Office).

Feel free to use the ample margins to add your own notations. Adding personal reminders will help ensure that you are engaged in your training and are getting the most out of the material.

COURSE ORGANIZATION

The format of the modules in this course represents a logical progression of the mailpiece design and planning process from concept to finish. The matrix on the following page shows the basic information, from top to bottom, that you need to know to determine the mail classification and discount category most appropriate for any particular mailing/mailpiece.

Each module of the MQC self-study course is represented in the decision matrix. The intention is to provide you with a logical approach to these concepts, and to provide a guideline to follow when dealing with clients on design issues. The matrix is designed as a decision tree that flows from start to finish (top to bottom). In your day-to-day dealings with customers, however, you may encounter these issues in any order.

The MQC DECISION MATRIX can be used as a "macro" checklist for design issues during the planning process. It can also be used as a quick reference index for the subject matter contained in this course. Each module of the course, along with a brief description of the subject matter covered in that module, is included in the matrix.

POSTAL TRAINING MATERIALS

Guides

- **TD-34A, *Mailpiece Quality Control Training Program: Administrator's Guide:*** a guide that contains all the information needed to properly implement and administer the course.
- **TD-34B, *Mailpiece Quality Control Training Program: Self-Study Guide:*** a guide that contains all the materials necessary for the candidate to complete the course. There are 10 modules of instruction, all of which contain module application exercises appropriate to the materials contained in that module.

MQC DECISION MATRIX

MODULE	QUESTION/DECISION POINT
<p>CLASSES OF MAIL</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">What is the content? Is it mailable?*</p> <p>Personal letter, bill, business transaction Circulars, solicitations advertising, promotional Merchandise Newsletter, other Publication</p> <p>First-Class Mail Standard Mail Package Services Authorized Periodical</p>
<p>PERIODICALS</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Periodicals Requirements</p>
<p>PROCESSING CATEGORIES</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">What is the size?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Card Letter Flat Parcel</p>
<p>ADDRESSING</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Address Update Required/Desired?</p> <p>Move Update 5-digit Verification CASS Ancillary Service Endorsements</p>
<p>USPS BARCODES</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Automation discounts desired/feasible?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">YES NO</p>
<p>AUTOMATION REQUIREMENTS</p>	<p>↓ ↓ ↓ ↓</p> <p>Barcoded Card/Letter Barcoded Flat Barcoded Parcel</p>
<p>NON-AUTOMATION MAILINGS</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Basic Presort, Machinable, Carrier Route Requirements</p>
<p>POSTAGE PAYMENT METHODS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Postage payment method?</p> <p>Precanceled Stamps Meter Permit Imprint</p>
<p>REPLY AND RETURN MAIL</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Reply/Return Mailpiece Desired?</p> <p>Merchandise Return Service Business/Courtesy/Meter Reply Mail Reusable Mailpieces</p>
<p>EXTRA SERVICES</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Additional Services Desired?</p> <p>Delivery Confirmation Return Receipt COD CONFIRM Insurance Special Handling Registered Certified</p>

* Most mailable items may be sent either by Express Mail, Priority Mail, or First-Class Mail.

RESOURCE KIT

The following additional training materials are provided to you as part of the optional resource kit. While not necessarily required to complete this course, you are encouraged to refer to them during this program when referenced.

This will improve not only your comprehension of the course material, it will also build familiarity with important reference and source material for future use. The materials include:

Publications

- **Publication 32, *Glossary of Postal Terms*:** a comprehensive glossary containing definitions of commonly used postal terms and acronyms.

Manuals

- **Postal Explorer CD:** an electronic version of the *Domestic Mail Manual* with word search and “hypertext link” features. The CD also includes electronic versions of the following postal publications:
- **Publication 417, *Nonprofit Standard Mail Eligibility*:** a comprehensive reference and guide to content-based restrictions and qualifications for Standard Mail nonprofit rates.
- ***International Mail Manual (IMM)*:** the DMM’s international counterpart.

Templates

- **Notice 67, *Automation Template*:** a multi-purpose automation overlay for verifying automation-compatible letter-sized mailpiece designs.
- **Notice 3A, *Letter-Size Mail Dimensional Standards Template*:** used to determine if a mailpiece physically meets the size, shape, and thickness requirements for letter-size mail.
- **Item 07:** a template for aligning facing identification marks (FIMs) and the POST-NET barcodes on letter-size mail.

POSTAL TRAINING MATERIALS REFERENCE

All training materials normally included in this course with the resource kit are noted in the text with the following gray box and icon:



References to electronic versions of postal publications included on the Postal Explorer CD are indicated by a gray box and computer icon.



The publications on the Postal Explorer CD are also available in hardcopy from your local Post Office.

All the course material, including the *Domestic Mail Manual* and this self-study guide, plus much more, is available online through Postal Explorer.



Postal Explorer is available on the World Wide Web at pe.usps.com.

SUMMARY

The discounts the USPS offers mailers for pre-sorted mailings are based on a concept called worksharing. The more of the Postal Service's work you do prior to submitting your mailing, the greater the discount the USPS can offer. The USPS recoups your discount in workhour savings from your presorting, hence the term workshare.

When you submit a discounted mailing, you are actually functioning as a commercial partner with the USPS. Mailpieces meeting automation and barcoded discount requirements bypass one or more of the Postal

Service's sorting operations. This represents savings for the USPS in processing costs, and forms the basis of your discount from full rate postage.

Helping your company's artists or clients modify their mailpieces to meet Postal Service regulations and guidelines helps us process and accept your mail more efficiently. The concept of worksharing for postage discounts places you in an important position to ensure that planned savings from postage discounts are realized at the time of mailing.

Every piece of mail entered into the Postal Service mailstream belongs to a certain class, and the class to which it belongs determines the way it is handled. Contents, shape, urgency, and price are the factors that determine the class of mail best suited for your mailpieces.

This module discusses the classes of mail, including:

- **Expedited Services**—including Express and Priority Mail
- **First-Class Mail**
- **Standard Mail**
- **Package Services**
- **Periodicals**

Each class of mail possesses unique characteristics according to postal regulations spelled out in the Domestic Mail Manual (DMM). This module will give you a basic understanding of these characteristics. In turn, you will be better able to determine the proper classification of prospective mailpieces. Proper classification at the outset ensures that your initial postage estimates are correct, that your target in-home dates are accurate, and that your mailings are accepted smoothly into the postal system. This helps maintain those critical delivery windows for your advertising campaigns, billing cycles, and customer fulfillment, and brings the job in on time, and on budget.

The first portion of the module deals with mailability. That is, regardless of class, is your prospective mailpiece and its contents acceptable for mailing at all?



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT “MAILABILITY”

Upon completion of this module, you should be able to define the following:

- **Basic packaging standards.**
- **The acceptability of “Hazardous,” “Perishable,” and “Restricted” matter.**
- **Prohibited imitations of postal markings.**
- **Nonmailable graphic matter.**



Publication 2: "Packaging for Mailing", contains specific guidelines for the packaging of items to be mailed.

MAILABILITY

The first step in the classification of any mailpiece is determining whether the piece is even mailable in the first place. If a piece is nonmailable, it is prohibited from the mails. It is not possible to pay a higher rate or surcharge to have a nonmailable piece accepted. A nonmailable piece is unacceptable in the mails.

GENERAL STANDARDS

In order to be mailable, fragile items must be packaged to withstand mail processing and transportation. Cushion and brace heavy items sufficiently to prevent damage to other mail. You may not package any item so that its contents could harm employees, equipment, or other mail. The general and specific standards governing items presented for mailing are contained in *Domestic Mail Manual* 601.1.0.



DMM 601.1.0

There are a number of factors that can determine if a particular piece is mailable. The contents of the piece are a major consideration. Federal laws prohibit the USPS from carrying certain materials. Postal mailing rules are based on these legal statutes, or due to the danger presented by the material itself. The Postal Service may accept certain other items under particular circumstances, such as with special packaging and markings.

HAZARDOUS, RESTRICTED, OR PERISHABLE MATTER

When you think of hazardous materials, you might think of explosives or toxic gases that have the potential of immediate disaster. These materials are not mailable. However, there are some hazardous materials that, if properly packaged and labeled, may be mailed safely.

Many items that you might use every day in your home, such as perfumes (**flammable liquids**), pesticides (**poisons**), fire extinguishers (**compressed gases**), and cleaning solvents (**corrosives**), may be mailable if properly prepared.

For now, it is helpful to classify matter that is nonmailable, or is mailable under certain conditions, into one of three main categories: *hazardous*, *restricted*, and *perishable*. The Postal Service defines these three categories as follows:

Restricted Matter

Restricted matter is any matter that is not immediately harmful when it is customarily transported privately, but certain mailing restrictions have been imposed by law. Examples of restricted matter include:

- Intoxicating liquors.
- Matter emitting obnoxious odors.
- Liquids.
- Motor vehicle master keys.
- Firearms.
- Switchblade knives.

Perishable Matter

Perishable matter is any matter that may deteriorate in the mail and thereby lose value, create a health hazard, or cause a nuisance or disturbance under ordinary mailing conditions. The Postal Service accepts some perishable matter if packaged in a specific way or if it is capable of delivery within certain time limits. Examples of perishable matter include:

- Live animals.
- Bees.
- Meat and meat products.
- Dead animals or parts of animals.
- Eggs.
- Plants and plant products.

Hazardous Matter

Hazardous matter is any matter having a clear potential for causing harm to the mail or to persons or property involved in moving the mail. Examples of hazardous matter include:

- Explosives.
- Corrosives.
- Compressed gases.
- Radioactive materials.
- Flammable materials (liquid or solid).
- Toxic and infectious substances.

The term hazardous materials covers a variety of items, ranging from explosives, which are never mailable by air transportation, to radioactive, corrosives, and biological materials, which are mailable under certain conditions. These conditions may involve special packaging, markings, and in some instances written authorization.

Packaging Hazardous Materials

The packaging of your mailpieces must meet the requirements described in DMM 601.1.0 and 601.10.0. These requirements cover containers, cushioning, closures, and reinforcement.

Cushioning must be sufficient to protect against breakage, and absorbent materials in the packaging must be sufficient to absorb the contents in case of leakage.

When you mail something, you expect it to arrive at its destination in good condition without being contaminated or destroyed by other mail that was improperly packaged and marked. Mailing authorized hazardous materials requires strict adherence to packaging requirements to protect the general public, mailers' employees, postal employees, mail processing and transportation equipment, and other mail.

Labeling and Marking Hazardous Materials

When designing mailpieces that contain hazardous materials, legible and appropriate marking of the mailpiece becomes even more important. The names and addresses of both the mailer and addressee must appear on the shipping container. Use a nonsoluble ink or other material that you cannot easily rub off or smear. Both the delivery address and the return address must be large enough to be readable at arm's length.

Plainly state the contents on the outside of the parcel as required in DMM 601.10.0. The only exception is a parcel containing controlled substances, motor vehicle master keys, firearms, or switchblade knives (see DMM 601.8.2).

In almost all instances a parcel required to bear a diamond-shaped hazardous materials warning label is nonmailable. A shipper's declaration for dangerous goods is required on most hazardous material that may be sent by air transportation. The proper shipping name must appear, when appropriate, on the address side of the mailpiece.



Publication 52; "Acceptance of Hazardous, Restricted, and Perishable Matter", offers more complete information as does Publication 14; "Restrictions on Mailing Animals, Plants, and Related Matter."

Hazardous Materials References

The *Domestic Mail Manual* (DMM) 601.8.2, and the *International Mail Manual* (IMM) 131.1, contain postal rules for mailing hazardous materials. You may find additional guidance in Publication 52, *Acceptance of Hazardous, Restricted, and Perishable Matter*.

Mail acceptance clerks at Post Offices, account representatives, and mailing requirements personnel are available to you to provide assistance in determining mailability issues surrounding potentially hazardous articles.

The Postal Service authorizes local postmasters to decide whether articles and substances other than written, printed, or graphic matter are nonmailable. Postmasters must, where appropriate, refuse to accept articles deemed nonmailable. If a determination cannot be made locally, contact your district business mail entry office or your governing Pricing and Classification Service Center (PCSC).

MAILER'S RESPONSIBILITY

Although the Postal Service tries to inform its customers about the mailability of various items, the mailer is ultimately responsible for complying with mailability regulations established by the Postal Service.

Post Offices, bulk mail centers, and other postal facilities will not knowingly accept mailpieces that contain potentially hazardous materials that are not properly marked and packaged. Such mailpieces pose a threat to the safety of postal employees, transportation employees, and the general public.

In addition, certain mailpieces that may be safely mailed by surface mail may become hazardous if transported by air. It is possible that with proper marking and packaging a mailpiece may conform to special air transport requirements, depending on the material.

Caution!

Mailers may be subject to civil or criminal penalties if an item proves to be hazardous or dangerous through the mailer's noncompliance with postal or federal regulations for preparation, marking, and packaging. Be sure to consult the publications referenced in this section and be prepared to seek guidance prior to mailing any materials that may be hazardous.

OTHER NONMAILABLE GRAPHIC MATTER

As might be expected, federal law prohibits from the mails any vile, obscene, or filthy material and matter inciting to violence.

In addition, solicitations that mimic billing statements, unless accompanied by a prominent disclaimer, are nonmailable. Solicitations stating approval by the USPS or the Postmaster General, or conformance to any postal law or regulation, are also nonmailable.



DMM 601.12

IMITATIONS OF POSTAL MARKINGS

Postal regulations also prohibit mailpieces that bear deliberate imitations of postal markings and/or postal trademarks such as “Priority Mail.”



DMM 604.1.5, 608.7.1.1

An example of an allowable official marking is the election mail logo. The Postal Service authorizes the use of this logo only by election officials. Acceptable uses include absentee ballots, ballots-by-mail, and voter registration material. The use of the logo enhances the identification and ensures proper handling of this important type of official communication.

OFFICIAL ELECTION MAIL LOGO

Voting-related materials



SUMMARY

Be cautious when approached about design layouts for teaser copy that implies expedited handling, extra services, or USPS approval. Consult the *Domestic Mail Manual* and your local USPS representatives prior to attempting to mail material that may be hazardous or at all questionable.



EXERCISE 1 - 1

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. A switchblade knife is an example of which of the following types of matter?
 - a) hazardous
 - b) restricted
 - c) perishable

2. Explosives are usually mailable by air transportation.
 - a) true
 - b) false

3. Postal regulations require diamond-shaped warning labels on all mailpieces containing hazardous matter.
 - a) true
 - b) false

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 1 - 1

1. **b, restricted;** the mailing of such devices is highly restricted.
2. **b, false;** explosives, such as fireworks, are never mailable by air transportation.
3. **b, false;** If a diamond-shaped warning label is required, the article is nonmailable in almost all instances.

The purpose of this portion of the module is to introduce you to the Postal Service's expedited products: Express Mail and Priority Mail. We will discuss the characteristics that make these products unique, and the service features associated with each.



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT EXPEDITED SERVICES

Upon completion of this portion of the module, you should be able to do the following:

- Describe what constitutes Express Mail.
- Distinguish Express Mail and Priority Mail from other classes of mail.
- Describe the different Express Mail services and postage rates.
- Discuss mailpiece characteristics and preparation requirements for using Express Mail or Priority Mail.
- State the weight, shape and size restrictions applicable to Express Mail and Priority Mail.
- Describe the authorizations for Express Mail mailings and the payment of postage for those mailings.
- Describe procedures for forwarding and return of Express Mail and Priority Mail.

WHAT IS EXPRESS MAIL?

Express Mail is the U.S. Postal Service's premium service. It is the quickest way to mail an article using the U.S. Postal Service. It provides reliable expedited mail delivery on the same day, overnight, or on the second day. Delivery service is 7 days a week, 365 days a year. It is the only class of mail for which the Postal Service guarantees a delivery time.

Express Mail service is available to every address in the United States and many foreign countries. DMM 110 contains the standards governing Express Mail. Express Mail International Service regulations and rates are in the *International Mail Manual (IMM)*, a separate publication.

You may send any article that is mailable and conforms to size and packaging requirements of this class of service via Express Mail. The Postal Service provides a mailing receipt, and an optional return receipt service is available for a fee.

Express Mail service includes insurance at no extra cost. Additional merchandise insurance may be available, depending on the value and the nature of the item. Reasonable costs for document reconstruction are also covered. See DMM 609.1.0 for procedures on filing claims.

EXPRESS MAIL SERVICE OPTIONS

There are five primary types of domestic Express Mail services as well as Express Mail International Service (DMM 113.4.0):

Express Mail Same Day Airport Service

Same Day Airport Service is for shipments between designated Airport Mail Facilities (AMFs). The mailpiece is available for pickup by the addressee upon arrival at the destinating AMF. [Note: This service is currently suspended for reasons of aviation security.]

Express Mail Next Day Service

Each local Post Office uses an Express Mail Service Directory showing localities qualifying for next day delivery and the deadline acceptance times for Express Mail Next Day Service. If Next Day Service is available for a given destination, the mailpiece may be sent using Post Office to Addressee Service. This service provides delivery (or notification to the addressee of attempted delivery) the following day by a specified time. Post Office to Post Office service is available to some destinations (usually larger cities) within the Next Day Service network. For mailpieces sent via Post Office to Post Office Service to a designated destination facility, the addressee is responsible for picking up the mailpiece at the destinating Post Office.

Express Mail Second Day Service

Localities not listed in the Express Mail Next Day Service Directory receive Express Mail Second Day Service. If you miss the cutoff acceptance time for next day delivery to listed locations, you may also use the Second Day Service option. Mailpieces may be sent to almost any location using Second Day, Post Office to Addressee Service, and to some destination Post Offices using Second Day, Post Office to Post Office Service. Delivery and pickup policies are the same as with Next Day Service, except for the service guarantee period.

Express Mail Custom Designed Service

If a company has a regular need for Express Mail, it may enter into a service agreement with the Postal Service. The service agreement specifies the times and frequency of postal pickup and delivery. This pickup service is available from designated Post Offices and is subject to the standards in DMM 113.4.5. The Postal Service charges the required pickup fee to the customer whenever it provides pickup service.

Express Mail Military Service

The Postal Service provides two or three day service to and from designated postal facilities serving designated Army Post Office/Fleet Post Office (APO/FPO) addresses. Localities and acceptance times are listed in the Express Mail Military Service Directories.

ADDITIONAL OPTIONS

Express Mail Drop Shipment

You may use Express Mail Next Day Service, Express Mail 2nd Day Service, or Express Mail Custom Designed Service to expedite movement of any other class of mail from one domestic postal facility to another. Called Express Mail drop shipment, this service provides for Express Mail treatment of mail from the originating to the destinating postal facility.

After receipt at the destinating postal facility, the Express Mail pouches are opened. The enclosed mail receives the appropriate handling for its class (for example, Standard Mail will get Standard Mail service) from the destinating postal facility to the mail's ultimate destination. More information is in DMM 705.16.0.

Express Mail Reship Service

Express Mail Reship Service requires a service agreement. This agreement allows the Postal Service to collect mail addressed to a Post Office box and send it to another address by Express Mail at a scheduled frequency. For example, suppose you have rented a Post Office box in Los Angeles for the purpose of collecting business reply mail postcards. You may arrange to have the contents of the Post Office box sent to you via Express Mail at your place of business in another state using Express Mail Reship Service. More information is in DMM 507.5.6.

SERVICE GUARANTEE

If your Express Mail piece does not meet the guaranteed delivery time, the Postal Service will refund postage, unless one of the following conditions apply:

- An incorrect ZIP Code or address was written in the delivery address block.
- Delivery was attempted, but not accomplished, within the specified time (i.e., no one was available to sign for the article).
- Forwarding or return service was provided after the article was made available for claim.
- A delay was caused by non-USPS strikes or work stoppages.
- The piece was detained for the purposes of law enforcement.
- Delayed or cancelled flights.

See DMM 113 for a complete description of postage refund for each type of Express Mail.

WEIGHT AND SIZE LIMITATIONS

A piece of Express Mail may not weigh more than 70 pounds. In addition, it may not measure more than 108 inches in combined length (the longest side of a package) and girth (the measurement around the thickest part of a package).

Different restrictions may apply to Express Mail Military Service addressed to APOs or FPOs, and to Express Mail International Service.

Required labels and indicia must always appear on a single optical plane (for example, both must appear on the same side of a six-sided box, or on one side of a flat-rate envelope).



Express Mail Reship Service can help manage float time and more accurately predict mail flow for centralized billing processing. It also helps ensure a local identity for returning mail.

RATES

Except for Custom Designed Service, postage is charged for each piece according to weight and service option. If the Postal Service makes a special scheduled pickup of your Express Mail, there is an additional flat fee for the stop. The number of pieces picked up does not affect the flat fee. For rates and additional fees, see *Domestic Mail Manual* 113 or Notice 123, Ratefold.



Notice 123, Ratefold

Express Mail Flat-Rate Envelope

A flat-rate envelope is available from the Postal Service. Any amount of material that fits in the special flat-rate envelope may be mailed at the 1/2 pound rate. The 1/2 pound rate applies regardless of weight of the material placed in the flat-rate envelope.

AUTHORIZATION AND FEES

No prior authorizations are needed to use Express Mail, except Express Mail Custom Designed Service, and Express Mail Reship which require a service agreement in advance.

POSTAGE PAYMENT

You may pay postage by adhesive stamps, meter stamps, or through an Express Mail Corporate Account. Most Post Offices accept payment by debit or credit cards. You may also use COD service, where the mailer is reimbursed for the price of the shipment and the cost of the postage by the recipient.

In accordance with the limitations in DMM 114.1.1, you may use meter stamps to prepay reply postage (covered in module eight) on Express Mail shipments. You may also use a Manifest Mailing System (MMS) with written authorization and an Express Mail Corporate Account. Permit imprints and precanceled stamps are not allowable postage payment methods.

Express Mail Corporate Account

The Express Mail Corporate Account (EMCA) allows you to pay for Express Mail postage by advance deposit, without having to apply postage to each individual piece. You use your unique corporate account number in lieu of postage at the time of mailing. You must file Form 5639, *Express Mail Corporate Account Application*, along with a deposit, to open an Express Mail Corporate Account (see DMM 114.2.0). Contact your postmaster or local Business Service Network office for more information.

ENVELOPE MARKINGS AND ENDORSEMENTS

The Postal Service handles Express Mail internally in distinctive envelopes, cardboard containers, and sacks. This distinctive equipment ensures that Express Mail receives the highest priority handling of all classes of mail. Shipping containers include:

- Envelopes for letters and documents
- Boxes for heavier items
- Tubes for drawings, maps, and blueprints
- Flat-Rate Envelope (must be used to obtain special flat rate, as explained in DMM 113.1.0)

For each item, you must complete the appropriate Express Mail label, depending on the service offering selected. The Postal Service furnishes these labels, which are self-adhesive, multipart forms. Express Mail labels are also available in pin-feed formats for ease of use with computer printers. EMCA holders may receive preprinted labels at no extra charge. Items that cannot be containerized or sacked (such as a pair of skis) must have the appropriate Express Mail label securely attached and be clearly identified as Express Mail.

You may use Form 3877, *Firm Mailing Book For Accountable Mail* for Express Mail if you customarily mail three or more articles at one time. Form 3877 provides the mailer with a receipt.

POSTAL HANDLING OF UNDELIVERABLE MAILPIECES

The Postal Service forwards Express Mail at no additional charge for 1 year from the date of an address change filing, if the new address is known.

If undeliverable or unclaimed, Express Mail is held for 5 days before it is returned (as Express Mail) at no additional charge to the sender. You may specify return in less than 5 days by providing instructions on the label in the space under the return address.

If Express Mail cannot be delivered due to an incorrect or incomplete address, the Postal Service will attempt to locate the correct address by using a city or telephone directory. Mailers may request specific handling by using an ancillary service endorsement. Ancillary service endorsements are covered in module four: *Addressing*.

EXPRESS MAIL INTERNATIONAL

Express Mail International is reliable high-speed mail service available to certain countries (see Individual Country Listings for service availability). There is no service guarantee for Express Mail International. Express Mail International is available at designated postal facilities authorized to accept domestic Express Mail.

GLOBAL EXPRESS GUARANTEED

Global Express Guaranteed (GXG) is an international expedited shipping option from the U.S. Postal Service and DHL Worldwide Express. It is available from 20,000 participating retail locations throughout the United States. Global Express Guaranteed delivery service is guaranteed to meet the specified service standards or the postage paid may be refunded.

WHAT IS PRIORITY MAIL?

Priority Mail is the Postal Service's product for correspondence, marketing materials, and merchandise that is urgent, but does not require next day service. Priority Mail is an economical expedited product with a delivery standard of 2 to 3 days.

CONTENT

Any mailable matter may be sent as Priority Mail. There are no special restrictions for additions or enclosures. There is no minimum weight for Priority Mail. However, the Postal Service's current rate structure requires any First-Class Mail matter weighing more than 13 ounces to be mailed at Priority Mail rates.

WEIGHT AND SIZE LIMITATIONS

The maximum weight for Priority Mail is 70 pounds. Priority Mail mailpieces may be no more than 108 inches in combined length and girth.

The exception to the rule is for Priority Mail parcels originating in the 48 contiguous states and destinating at APOs or FPOs, where the weight and size limit is restricted according to the latest conditions published in the Postal Bulletin regarding "Overseas Military Mail."

SERVICE GUARANTEE

Within the Postal Service's domestic delivery system, Priority Mail receives special attention through separate, dedicated, distribution centers, transportation, and sortation operations.

While the Postal Service makes every attempt to meet published service standards, there is no delivery guarantee for Priority Mail.



The unique Priority Mail logo and markings can provide an additional impact to a well targeted marketing campaign.

RATES

Priority Mail offers special, unzoned rates anywhere in the country for packages up to 1 pound. Parcels that weigh less than 20 pounds but measure more than 84 inches in combined length and girth are charged the applicable rate for the 20 pound parcel for zones 1-4 (balloon rate). For parcels measuring more than one cubic foot, dimensional weight pricing occurs for zones 5-8. Methods for computing dimensional weight are based on either rectangular or non-rectangular shaped items. To determine the dimensional weight of these parcels refer to DMM 123.1.

Saturday delivery is included at no extra charge. The Postal Service makes no distinction between residential and business deliveries. For a complete listing of Priority Mail postage rates, refer to Notice 123, *Ratefold* or the *Domestic Mail Manual* 123.1.3.



Notice 123, *Ratefold*

Flat-Rate Envelope

A special flat-rate envelope is offered for Priority Mail, similar to the Express Mail flat-rate envelope discussed previously, which may contain any amount of material that can fit in the special flat-rate envelope (this envelope is available only from the Postal Service). Postage for a flat-rate envelope is equal to the 1-pound Priority Mail rate, regardless of the weight of the material placed in the envelope.

AUTHORIZATION AND FEES

No prior authorizations other than those associated with a particular payment option are required to use Priority Mail. The Postal Service does charge a nominal fee for pickup service regardless of the number of pieces you have to pick up.

POSTAGE PAYMENT

You can pay Priority Mail postage by:

- meter stamps.
- permit imprint
- adhesive postage stamps (including a special Priority Mail stamp).

Using a meter strip for payment of single-piece rate is preferable to using stamps, but both are acceptable.

ENVELOPE MARKINGS AND ENDORSEMENTS

To ensure proper handling, each piece of Priority Mail must be marked with the words “Priority” or “Priority Mail” as required in DMM 125.2.0 on the address side of the mailpiece.

The Postal Service provides a number of packaging containers, including boxes and envelopes free of charge. For high volume shippers, customized and personalized packaging is available. To learn more, contact the USPS account representative assigned to your company.

POSTAL HANDLING OF UNDELIVERABLE MAILPIECES

The Postal Service forwards Priority Mail at no additional charge for 1 year from the date of an address change filing, if the new address is known. After one year, the piece will be returned at no charge with the new address attached.

If undeliverable or unclaimed, Priority Mail is returned at no additional charge to the sender. Mailers may request specific handling by using an ancillary service endorsement. Ancillary service endorsements are covered in module four: *Addressing*.

PRIORITY MAIL INTERNATIONAL

With the exception of the flat-rate envelope, Priority Mail International is a parcel service. Written correspondence having the nature of current and personal correspondence is not permitted in Priority Mail International packages.

The weight limit for the Priority Mail International flat-rate envelope is 4 pounds. The weight limit for the Priority Mail International flat-rate box is 20 pounds. The weight limit for parcels is based on individual countries.

**EXERCISE 1 - 2**

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. The Postal Service will refund the postage cost if it fails to meet the guaranteed delivery time for domestic Express Mail.
 - a) true
 - b) false
2. Express Mail Next Day Service may be sent as Post Office to Addressee or Post Office to _____ Service.
3. For Express Mail, there is an additional charge if the Postal Service makes a special pickup of the mailpieces.
 - a) true
 - b) false
4. Express Mail articles may not weigh more than _____ pounds.
5. Postage for Express Mail may be paid by adhesive stamps, meter stamps, or an Express Mail _____ Account.
6. All First-Class Mail matter weighing more than _____ ounces must be sent as Priority Mail.
7. The maximum allowable combined length and girth for an Express Mail or Priority Mail mailpiece is _____ inches.
8. The Postal Service offers unzoned rates, anywhere in the country, for Priority Mail flat-rate envelope weighing up to _____ pounds.
9. The marking "Priority" or "Priority Mail" must appear on the address side of each piece of Priority Mail.
 - a) true
 - b) false
10. _____ pricing occurs for zones 5-8 for parcels measuring more than 1 cubic foot.

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 1 - 2

1. **a, true;** the Postal Service offers a postage refund for Express Mail pieces that do not meet the delivery guarantee.
2. **Post Office;** under this option, the recipient typically makes arrangements to pick up the mailpiece at their local Post Office.
3. **a, true;** a nominal fee is charged for a scheduled Express Mail or Priority Mail pickup.
4. **70;** 70 pounds is the maximum weight for all mailable items.
5. **Corporate;** The Express Mail Corporate Account (EMCA) is a payment option available only for Express Mail.
6. **13;** matter weighing more than 13 ounces and required to be mailed as First-Class Mail must be sent at Priority Mail rates (unless mailed at Express Mail rates). Mailable matter weighing 13 ounces or less may be sent as Priority Mail at the mailer's option.
7. **108;** except for Parcel Post, 108 inches combined length and girth is the maximum size allowable for a mailpiece of any class.
8. **1;** the postal zone is not necessary to calculate the postage for Priority Mail flat-rate envelope weighing 1 pound or less.
9. **a, true;** both Express Mail and Priority Mail mailpieces must be properly identified.
10. **Dimensional Weight;** pricing occurs for zones 5-8 for parcels measuring more than 1 cubic foot.

The purpose of this portion of the module is to show you how to distinguish First-Class Mail from other classes of mail, and to discuss the required mailpiece characteristics and procedures for mailing at First-Class Mail rates.



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT FIRST-CLASS MAIL

Upon completion of this portion of the module, you should be able to do the following:

- Identify the characteristics of First-Class Mail.
- Distinguish among the various types of First-Class Mail and First-Class Mail postage rates.
- State the weight and size restrictions applicable to First-Class Mail.
- Describe the fees, authorizations, permits, and licenses necessary to enter Presorted First-Class Mail mailings at a business mail entry unit.
- Define the “Move Update” requirement for Presorted First-Class Mail.
- Describe First-Class Mail envelope markings and endorsements, and their design specifications.

WHAT IS FIRST-CLASS MAIL?

Virtually anything weighing 13 ounces or less that is mailable may be sent as First-Class Mail. However, since First-Class Mail is frequently transported by airplane, articles that may damage or interfere with aircraft are prohibited (see DMM 133.1.0).

Under current law, certain items must be mailed as First-Class Mail:

- Typewritten or written matter (except for allowable additions to Periodicals, Standard Mail, and Package Services).
- Matter closed against postal inspection.
- Personal correspondence.
- Bills and statements of account.
- Stamped cards.
- Postcards that bear handwritten or typewritten additions.
- Business Reply Mail (BRM).

You may not mail these types of material as Standard Mail, Package Services or Periodicals. Under certain conditions, however, they may be added to Standard Mail, Package Services, or Periodicals as allowable enclosures.

SERVICE GUARANTEE

While the Postal Service makes every attempt to meet published service standards, there is no delivery guarantee for First-Class Mail.

WEIGHT AND SIZE LIMITATIONS

As a maximum size limit, the combined length and girth (explained in module three; *Processing Categories*) may not exceed 108 inches.

First-Class Mail may not weigh more than 70 pounds. Priority Mail is a subclass of First-Class Mail and includes mail weighing more than 13 ounces. Mail weighing 13 ounces or less may be sent as Priority Mail at the discretion of the mailer.

RATES

Rates for single-piece, cards, presort, and automation First-Class Mail are contained in DMM 133.



DMM 101.6.3

Stamped Cards and Postcards

Stamped cards provided by the Postal Service, and privately produced postcards, are designed to be mailed at a postcard rate. Postcards must fall within certain minimum and maximum dimensions including height, length, and thickness. We will cover these requirements in detail in module three: Processing Categories.

Single-Piece First-Class Mail

Single-piece First-Class Mail consists of First-Class Mail matter weighing 13 ounces or less, mailed at the full First-Class Mail rate of postage. Single-piece letter rates are determined by weight in one-ounce increments. Fractions of an ounce are always rounded up to the next higher rate. The maximum weight of a First-Class Mail letter cannot exceed 3.5 ounces.

Presorted First-Class Mail

Presorted First-Class Mail is mail presented in a manner that preserves the orientation and ZIP Code sequence of the pieces. Mailers present these pieces at one Post Office as part of a single mailing of at least 500 pieces, each weighing 3.5 ounces or less for letters, or 13 ounces or less for flats and parcels. All pieces must be within the same processing category and all pieces must be individually addressed.

The mailer must presort the mailpieces to the maximum extent possible (specific methods of presorting are explained in DMM 235). Publication 95, *Quick Service Guide*, gives a good overview of the presort requirements for all discounted preparation options.



**PUB 95: QSG 230b,
230c, 330a**

Many mailers use presort software to automate the sortation of their mailings. The Postal Service certifies presorting software under the Presort Accuracy Validation and Evaluation (PAVE) program. Software vendors voluntarily submit their presorting programs to have them PAVE certified.

Although the Postal Service does not require the use of PAVE-certified software, it does require sortation documentation in certain cases. Mailers may either produce this documentation by PAVE-certified software, or present the documentation in a standardized format.

Automation Rates

Automation rates are available for delivery-point barcoded First-Class Mail letters and cards and must be automation compatible.

Each mailing must consist of at least 500 pieces. Letter-size and card-size mailpieces must bear the correct delivery point barcode to be eligible for the automation rate as described in DMM 233.5.0.



PUB 95: QSG 230d, 330b

Each address in the mailing must be from a list that has undergone the ZIP+4 code or delivery point matching process using Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS) certified software. This software process must occur 90 days for all carrier-route mailings and within 180 days for all non-carrier route automation rate mailings. A list of currently certified programs and vendors is available by calling 1-800-238-3150, or by visiting our website at www.usps.com.

Flat-size First-Class Mail may use either the correct delivery point barcode or the correct ZIP+4 code (9-digit) barcode to qualify for automation rates, but identical CASS requirements apply in either case.

One hundred percent of the total pieces in each automation rate mailing must bear a CASS-certified ZIP+4 code or delivery point barcode for the address on the mailpiece. Mailers must present all First-Class Mail automation mailings in trays appropriate for the size and processing category of the mail pieces.

! *All Green Diamond Bordered envelopes are charged First-Class Mail rates, regardless of content or contrary mailer endorsements.*

AUTHORIZATION AND FEES

Mailers must pay an annual Presort First-Class Mail mailing fee at each Post Office where they enter mail. Payment of this fee allows them to enter both their own and their clients' mail at the Presorted First-Class Mail rates and at any automation rate.

POSTAGE PAYMENT

You may pay postage for presorted First-Class Mail mailings by postage meter, permit imprint, and precanceled stamps.

A postage statement must always accompany any presorted First-Class Mail mailing:

- PS Form 3600-R, Postage Statement—*First-Class Mail—Permit Imprint*, is used for mailings paid by permit imprint.
- PS Form 3600-P, Postage Statement—*First-Class Mail—Meter or Precanceled Postage Affixed*, is used for mailings paid by postage meter or precanceled stamps.
- PS Form 3600-EZ, *First-Class Mail—Easy-Nonautomation Letters, Cards, or Flats—Permit Imprint*, is used for nonautomated noncarrier route mailings paid by permit imprint.
- PS Form 3600-PM, *Priority Mail, Permit Imprint*.

These forms may be completed manually by the mailer or be computer-generated (with prior authorization).

ENVELOPE MARKINGS AND ENDORSEMENTS

All pieces in a Presorted First-Class Mail nonautomation rate mailing must be printed or stamped “First-Class Mail.” You must print the basic required class marking either as part of, or directly below or to the left of the postage payment indication.

Other required markings such as “Presorted” must be included either:

- With the basic class marking.
- As part of the postage payment indication (i.e., permit imprint, meter stamp, precanceled stamp).
- As part of the address block, on the optional endorsement line, one or preferably two lines above the delivery address.

Green Diamond-Bordered Envelope

Only First-Class Mail envelopes are allowed to bear the distinctive “Green Diamond-Bordered” design. When printed on letter-size mail, the border must not enter the OCR read area or barcode clear zone unless a delivery point barcode appears in the address block (as described in module six: *Automation Requirements*).

Single-piece First-Class Mail

Most single-piece rate First-Class Mail does not require class markings on each piece. However, single-piece rate residual pieces tendered as part of a presorted mailing may be required to be marked “Single-Piece” or “SNGLP.”

Automation Mail

In addition to the basic class marking, all pieces in an automation rate First-Class Mail mailing must be printed or stamped “Presorted,” “PRSRT,” or “AUTO” in any of the locations previously listed. The Postal Service does not require the “AUTO” endorsement if the mailpieces are barcoded in the address block. Automation rate mailings not marked auto must include at least the “Presorted” or “PRSRT” rate marking.

POSTAL HANDLING OF UNDELIVERABLE MAILPIECES

The Postal Service forwards First-Class Mail at no additional charge for 1 year from the date of an address change filing, if the new address is known. After 1 year, for an additional 6 months, the piece will be returned at no charge with the new address attached.

If undeliverable or unclaimed, First-Class Mail is returned at no additional charge to the sender. Mailers may request specific handling by using an ancillary service endorsement. Ancillary service endorsements are covered in module four: *Addressing*.

MOVE UPDATE REQUIREMENT

Mailers who claim presort or automation rates for First-Class Mail must demonstrate they have updated the addresses in their mailing lists within 185 days prior to the date of the mailing. The Move Update requirement is explained in greater detail in Module 4.



EXERCISE 1 - 3

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. Which of the following is not required by law to be mailed as either First-Class Mail or Express Mail?
 - a) personal correspondence
 - b) a bill or statement of account
 - c) an advertising circular
 - d) matter intended to be closed to postal inspection
2. A Presorted First-Class Mail mailing consists of a minimum of _____ pieces.
3. Letter-and card-size mailpieces must bear a _____ point barcode to be eligible for prebarcoded rates.
4. Addresses in an automation mailing must be matched to the ZIP+4 code national database using _____ certified matching software within _____ months before mailing.
5. You must pay an annual mailing fee prior to depositing discounted First-Class Mail mailings with the Postal Service.
 - a) true
 - b) false
6. Only First-Class Mail may bear the distinctive red diamond-bordered design.
 - a) true
 - b) false
7. All discounted First-Class Mail mailpieces must be marked "Auto."
 - a) true
 - b) false
8. Full-rate, single-piece, First-Class Mail mailpieces must be marked "First-Class Mail."
 - a) true
 - b) false

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 1 - 3

1. **c, an advertising circular**; mass produced, identical items like an advertising brochure are not required to be mailed as First-Class Mail.
2. **500**; this is the minimum number of pieces required to make a discounted First-Class Mail mailing.
3. **delivery**; a delivery point barcode is required on letter-size mailpieces at the automation rates.
4. **CASS, 6**; Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS) certified software must be used every 6 months to derive the ZIP+4 code information encoded in a qualifying barcode for automation rates.
5. **a, true**; mailers submitting discounted First-Class Mail mailings must pay the First-Class Presort fee at each office of mailing once every 12 months.
6. **b, false**; only First-Class Mail mailpieces may bear the green diamond-bordered design. Borders of other colors (such as red) may be used on mailpieces of any class.
7. **b, false**; at a minimum, all presorted, discounted, First-Class Mail mailpieces must be marked “First-Class Mail.” Pieces may or may not be required to be marked “Auto,” depending on the barcode placement and use of the “Presorted” marking.
8. **b, false**; there is no required marking for full-rate, single-piece, First-Class Mail.

The purpose of this portion of the module is to show you how to distinguish Standard Mail from other classes of mail, and discuss the required mailpiece characteristics and procedures for mailing at Standard Mail rates.



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT STANDARD MAIL

Upon completion of this portion of the module, you should be able to do the following:

- Define Standard Mail.
- Distinguish among the various Standard Mail rates, including Regular, Nonprofit, Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail, and automation discount rates.
- State weight and size restrictions applicable to Standard Mail.
- Describe the fees, authorizations, and licenses necessary for Standard Mail mailings.
- Describe required envelope markings, authorized enclosures, and endorsements for Standard Mail.

WHAT IS STANDARD MAIL?

Standard Mail consists of mailable matter weighing less than 16 ounces that is not mailed or required to be mailed as First-Class Mail and not entered as Periodicals mail.

Standard Mail may be opened for postal inspection, and must be of a non-personal nature. The following articles qualify as Standard Mail:

- Printed matter such as the following:
 - Circulars.
 - Flyers.
 - Catalogs.
 - Booklets.
 - Rebate checks endorsed “Pay to the Addressee” or “Pay to Bearer.”
 - Some personalized computer-prepared material (per DMM 343.2.5).
- Lightweight merchandise under 16 ounces, such as:
 - Plants.
 - Seeds or bulbs.
 - Product samples.

Personal Information

Personal information may not be included in a Standard Mail mailpiece unless all of the following conditions are met;

- a.) The mailpiece contains explicit advertising for a product or service for sale or lease or an explicit solicitation for a donation.
- b.) All of the personal information is directly related to the advertising or solicitation.
- c.) The exclusive reason for inclusion of all of the personal information is to support the advertising or solicitation in the mailpiece.

SERVICE GUARANTEE

Standard Mail may receive deferred service. The Postal Service does not guarantee delivery within a specified time period.

WEIGHT AND SIZE LIMITATIONS

Qualifying Standard Mail mailpieces must be less than 16 ounces. This imposes an effective size limitation due to the necessary weight of the packaging and contents.

RATES

Standard Mail consists of presorted, discounted rate offerings. There is no Standard Mail single-piece rate.

Presorted Standard Mail

To qualify for presort rates, each mailing must consist of at least 200 pieces or 50 pounds of individually addressed pieces. Mailers must properly prepare, presort, package, label, and tray (letter mail) or sack (flats) these mailings for presort discounts. Packaging, labeling, tray-ing, and sacking requirements for the various presort levels are discussed in DMM 445.5.0.

The *Domestic Mail Manual* Eligibility module lists the qualifications for the available Standard Mail rates:

Letters:

- Regular Standard Mail (DMM 243.4.0).
- Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail (DMM 243.6.0).
- Nonprofit Standard Mail (DMM 703.1.0).

Flats:

- Regular Standard Mail (DMM 343.4.0).
- Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail (DMM 343.6.0).
- Nonprofit Standard Mail (DMM 703.1.0).

Parcels:

- Regular Standard Mail (DMM 443.4.0).
- Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail (DMM 443.6.0).
- Nonprofit Standard Mail (DMM 703.1.0).

A minimum per piece rate applies to Enhanced Carrier Route rate pieces weighing 3.3 ounces or less and Regular Standard Mail nonautomation and automation rate pieces weighing 3.3 ounces or less.

For the minimum per piece rates (the minimum postage paid for each piece), the Postal Service categorizes mail as either “letters” or “nonletters” (flats) based on the size standards in DMM 101.1.0. For automation rates, mail is assigned to the “nonletter” category based on the automation-compatible standards in DMM 301.3.0.

Pieces exceeding the weight limits stated above are subject to a two-part, piece/pound rate that includes a fixed charge per piece and a variable pound charge based on weight. The basic postage rate applies to pieces meeting the minimum preparation standards.

Many mailers use presort software to automate the sortation of their mailings. The Postal Service certifies presorting software under the Presort Accuracy Validation and Evaluation (PAVE) program. Software vendors voluntarily submit their presorting programs to have them PAVE-certified.

Usually, presorted mailings must be accompanied by sortation reports printed by Presort Accuracy Validation and Evaluation (PAVE) certified software. Alternatively, this documentation may be printed in a standardized format.

Automation Rates

Automation rates are available for delivery point barcoded Standard Mail letters compatible with barcode sorter processing. Prebarcoded flat-size pieces must be automation compatible.

Each mailing must be presorted and consist of at least 200 pieces or 50 pounds. Letter-size mailpieces must bear the correct delivery point barcode to be eligible for the prebarcoded rate.

Each address must be from a list that has undergone the delivery point barcoded ZIP+4 code matching process using Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS) certified software. This software process must occur within 6 months of the mailing date. A list of currently certified programs and vendors is available by calling 1-800-238-3150, or by visiting our website at www.usps.com.

Flat-size mail may use either the correct delivery point barcode or the correct ZIP+4 (9-digit) barcode to qualify for automation rates, but identical CASS requirements apply in either case.

One hundred percent of the total pieces in each automation rate mailing must bear a CASS-certified ZIP+4 code or delivery point barcode for the address on the mailpiece.

Enhanced Carrier Route Rate

All pieces in an Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail mailing must:

- a. Meet the basic standards for Standard Mail in DMM 343.2.0.
- b. Be part of a single mailing of at least 200 pieces or 50 pounds of pieces of Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail. Automation basic carrier route rate pieces are subject to a separate 200-piece or 50-pound minimum volume standard and may not be included in the same mailing as other Enhanced Carrier Route mail. Regular and Nonprofit mailings must meet separate minimum volumes.
- c. Be sorted to carrier routes, marked and documented under DMM 705.8.10 (if palletized), 245.6.0, 705.10.0, 705.12.0, 705.13.0.
- d. Have a completed delivery address or an alternate address format.
- e. Meet the address quality and coding Standards in DMM 233.5.6 and 708.3.0.

Mailers are responsible for the proper make-up of mail for Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail. You must update the carrier route information within 90 days of mailing.

Carrier route codes must be applied to mailings using Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS) certified address matching software and the current USPS Carrier Route Information System (CRIS) scheme or other approved method (DMM 343.6.2).

Destination Entry Rates

In addition to presort rate discounts, Standard Mail may also qualify for destination rate discounts. Destination entry rate discounted mailings must be prepared in accordance with DMM 246.2.0 and deposited at the corresponding destination postal facility. DMM P950 describes the plant-verified drop shipment (PVDS) postage payment option for destination rate mailings. Only one of these destination entry reductions may be claimed for each mailpiece (DMM 705.15.0).

- DBMC (destination *bulk mail center*).
- DSCF (destination *sectional center facility*).
- DDU (destination *delivery unit*).

AUTHORIZATION AND FEES

An annual mailing fee (DMM 243.1.6) must be paid every 12 months at each Post Office of mailing. Depending on your choice of postage payment method, an additional fee may be required to enter the mail of your clients as well.

NONPROFIT STANDARD MAIL

Qualified nonprofit organizations are those that are not organized for profit and with none of their net income benefiting any private stockholder or individual.

To mail at Nonprofit Standard Mail rates, you must receive authorization from the Postal Service. Proof of nonprofit status (except for qualified political committees), must be provided by the organization when applying for authorization to mail at the Nonprofit Standard Mail rates.

The following types of organizations may be qualified to use Nonprofit Standard Mail (DMM 703.1.0):

- Religious.
- Educational.
- Scientific.
- Philanthropic.
- Agricultural.
- Labor.
- Veterans.
- Fraternal.
- Qualified political committees.
- Voting registration officials.

Nonprofit Standard Mail is subject to the same requirements and restrictions as regular Standard Mail. In addition, there are many requirements that are unique to Nonprofit Standard Mail.

The Postal Service requires a separate nonprofit rate authorization at each entry Post Office. An organization may not delegate or lend the use of its nonprofit rate authorization to any other person or organization. The name and return address of the authorized nonprofit organization must appear either on the outside of the mailpiece or in a prominent location on the material being mailed.

Mailings at the Nonprofit Standard Mail rates may not contain advertising for credit, debit, or charge cards or similar financial instruments. There are restrictions for advertising insurance and travel arrangements as well. Other types of advertising (generally advertising related to the purpose of the organization) are allowed under certain conditions. See Publication 417, *Nonprofit Standard Mail Eligibility*, for more details.

Cooperative mailings may be made only when each of the cooperating organizations is individually authorized to mail at Nonprofit Standard Mail rates at the Post Office where the mailing is deposited.



Publication 417; "Nonprofit Standard Mail Eligibility" is available from your local Business Mail Entry office or postmaster.

POSTAGE PAYMENT

The postage rate that must be paid is either the minimum per piece rate or the piece/pound rate, as reduced in either case by any discounts for which the piece is eligible.

You may pay postage for presorted Standard Mail mailings by postage meter, permit imprint, or precanceled stamps. A postage statement must always accompany any presorted Standard Mail mailing, including:

Standard Mail & Nonprofit Standard Mail

- PS Form 3602-C, *Consolidated—Supplement Standard Mail and Nonprofit Standard Mail*
- PS Form 3602-EZ, *Standard Mail—Easy*
- PS Form 3602-G, *Penalty Permit Imprint*
- PS Form 3602-N, *Nonprofit Standard Mail*
- PS Form 3602-NZ, *Nonprofit Standard Mail—Easy*
- PS Form 3602-R, *Standard Mail*

ENVELOPE MARKINGS AND ENDORSEMENTS

Each piece of nonautomation Standard Mail must be printed or rubber-stamped with the basic rate and class marking “Presorted Standard” or “PRSRT STD.” Qualifying mailings at the nonprofit rates must instead be marked “Nonprofit Organization,” “Nonprofit Org,” or “Nonprofit.” These basic rate markings must be printed either as part of, or immediately adjacent to, the permit imprint, precanceled stamp, or meter stamp.

In addition to the above markings, pieces entered at Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail rate must be identified with an “ECRLOT,” “ECRWSH,” or “ECRWSS” as part of the permit imprint, or it may be printed or rubber-stamped above the address in the area to the left or below the permit imprint, meter stamp, or precanceled stamp. Another choice is to place these additional rate markings in the address area on either the line above the address or, preferably, two lines above the address.

Automation Mail

In addition to the basic class marking, all pieces in an automation rate mailing must be printed or stamped “AUTO” in any of the locations previously listed. The Postal Service does not require the “AUTO” endorsement if the mailpieces are barcoded in the address block.

POSTAL HANDLING OF UNDELIVERABLE MAILPIECES

No forwarding or return services are provided for Standard Mail without a mailer’s endorsement. Undeliverable, unendorsed Standard Mail is treated as waste. Mailers may request specific handling by using an ancillary service endorsement. Ancillary service endorsements are covered in module four: *Addressing*.

! *Tax exempt nonprofit status with the IRS, is not the same as a Nonprofit authorization with the USPS. Prior to printing their mailpieces, be sure that a mailer who states that they are “non-profit”, is actually authorized by the USPS.*

ENCLOSURES

As defined in DMM 243.2.5, some attachments and enclosures may be included with Standard Mail. For example, an invoice, if it relates only to the matter with which it is mailed, may be enclosed or attached in an envelope marked “Invoice Enclosed.” Instructions or directions for the use of the item mailed may also be enclosed or attached.

Incidental First-Class Mail

Incidental First-Class Mail matter may be enclosed in or attached to Standard Mail merchandise (including books but excluding merchandise samples) or any Package Services mailpiece without payment of First-Class Mail postage.

To qualify as “incidental,” the enclosure must:

- Be closely related to the piece to which it is attached.
- Be secondary to that piece.
- Not interfere with postal processing.

Examples of incidental enclosures include the following:

- A bill for the product or publication.
- A statement of account for past products or publications.
- A personal message or greeting included with a product, publication, or parcel.

Nonincidental First-Class Mail

Nonincidental First-Class Mail may be attached to or enclosed in pieces of Standard Mail. Additional postage at the First-Class Mail rate must be applied to the outside of the mailpiece; it can be added to the Standard Mail postage or affixed separately. The mailer must write, stamp, print, or typewrite the endorsement “First-Class Mail Enclosed” on the mailpiece above the address and below the postage.



EXERCISE 1 - 4

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. Standard Mail must weigh less than _____ ounces.
2. All matter mailed at Standard Mail Rates must be personal in nature.
 - a) true
 - b) false
3. Which of the following articles may not be mailed at Standard Mail rates?
 - a) merchandise
 - b) booklets
 - c) flyers
 - d) bill for goods or services
4. Each Standard Mail presorted mailing must consist of a minimum of _____ pieces or _____ pounds.
5. The name of the authorized nonprofit mailer must appear prominently on the outside of any mailpiece mailed at the nonprofit rates of postage.
 - a) true
 - b) false
6. A nonprofit organization may make joint mailings at the Standard Mail nonprofit rates, at their discretion, with other unauthorized entities.
 - a) true
 - b) false
7. Nonprofit mailings are subject to content-based restrictions for:
 - a) editorial content
 - b) advertising
 - c) punctuation
 - d) none of the above
8. A presorted Standard Mail mailing fee must be paid every _____ months.
9. The endorsement “ _____ ” must appear on every piece of presorted regular Standard Mail either as part of, or immediately next to, the postage area.

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 1 - 4

1. **16**; Standard Mail matter weighing 16 ounces or more must be sent as Package Services, or may be mailed as Priority or Express Mail.
2. **b, false**; personalized material is required to be sent at First-Class Mail rates.
3. **d, bill for goods or services**; by definition, a bill must be mailed as First-Class Mail. However, a bill for merchandise may be sent with the merchandise at the Standard Mail rates as an incidental enclosure.
4. **200, 50**; are the minimum volume requirements for a discounted, presorted Standard Mail mailing.
5. **b, false**; the name of the authorized nonprofit organization must appear either prominently on the inside of the piece or on the outside. It is not required to always appear on the outside of the mailpiece. However, if the piece bears any name and return address, it must be that of the authorized organization.
6. **b, false**; an authorized nonprofit cannot share with, or loan their authorization to, another organization. Multiple authorized organizations however, may participate in a joint mailing, under certain conditions.
7. **b, advertising**; some specific types of advertising are prohibited. Other advertising is allowed, however, under certain conditions.
8. **12**; this is an annual mailing fee.
9. **“Presorted Standard” or “PRSRT STD”**; all regular rate Standard Mail pieces are required to have a basic rate marking. Qualifying nonprofit mailpieces must be marked: “Nonprofit Organization,” “Nonprofit Org.,” or simply “Nonprofit.”

The purpose of this portion of the module is to show you how to distinguish Package Services from other classes of mail, and discuss the required mailpiece characteristics and procedures for mailing at Package Services rates.



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT PACKAGE SERVICES

Upon completion of this portion of the module, you should be able to do the following:

- Define Package Services.
- Distinguish among the various Package Services subclasses and rates including regular and special rates and presort discount rates.
- State the weight and size restrictions applicable to Package Services.
- Describe the fees, authorizations, and permits necessary for mailing Package Services mailings, as well as the payment of postage for those mailings.
- Describe required markings, authorized enclosures, and endorsements for Package Services.



Contact your local postmaster or mailing requirements office for the official Zone Chart for your originating Post Office. This listing will also define your local “Intra-BMC” service area by 3-digit ZIP Code prefix.

WHAT IS PACKAGE SERVICES?

Package Services consists of merchandise, printed matter, mailable live animals, and other articles that are not required to be mailed as other classes of mail. Package Services includes a number of subclasses, each with its own unique characteristics and rate structure.

SERVICE GUARANTEE

Package Services may receive deferred service. Although the Postal Service has established delivery standards for Package Services, it does not guarantee delivery by a specific date.

WEIGHT AND SIZE LIMITATIONS

There is no minimum weight requirement for Package Services.

Generally, Package Services mailpieces may be no heavier than 70 pounds or greater than 108 inches in length and girth combined. Mailpieces sent as Parcel Post, however, may reach up to 130 inches in combined length and girth. Bound Printed Matter may weigh no more than 15 pounds.

PARCEL POST RATES

You may mail any Package Services matter at Parcel Post rates, subject to the basic standards. Parcel Post rates are determined by weight (in 1-pound increments with fractions always rounded up to the heavier weight), zone (geographic destination), and machinability. Parcel Post mailpieces mailed at the applicable “Oversized” rate may reach a maximum of 130 inches in length and girth.

Inter-BMC (Bulk Mail Center) rates for machinable parcels

Inter BMC machinable rates apply to articles which weigh 35 pounds or less and are otherwise machinable. These articles originate within the service area of a Bulk Mail Center (BMC) or Auxiliary Service Facility (ASF) and destinate outside that area.

Inter-BMC rates for nonmachinable parcels

Inter-BMC rates for nonmachinable parcels (with the nonmachinable surcharge included) apply to articles which weigh more than 35 pounds or are otherwise nonmachinable. These articles originate within the service area of a BMC or ASF and destinate outside that area. Machinable criteria is covered in module three; Processing Categories.

Intra-BMC rates for all parcels

Intra-BMC rates apply to Parcel Post mailpieces which originate and destinate for delivery within the same service area of a BMC or ASF. There are higher Intra-BMC rates, which include a surcharge, for nonmachinable parcels than for machinable parcels. The Intra-BMC rates also apply to Parcel Post mailpieces originating and destinating within Alaska, Hawaii, or Puerto Rico.

Zone Charts



pe.usps.com

The Postal Explorer CD contains a Zone Chart reference. Use this function to determine the appropriate zone from your origin ZIP Code. Zone Charts may also be accessed at www.usps.com/ncsc/addressmgmt/zonechart.htm

Presorted Parcel Post

USPS regulations include two presort options for Parcel Post. These options are:

1. **Origin Bulk Mail Center (OBMC) presort.**
OBMC presort rates apply to both machinable and nonmachinable parcels sorted to either BMCs or ASFs. To qualify for these discounts, mailings must be presented at a BMC.
2. **Bulk Mail Center (BMC) presort.**
BMC presorted parcels are entered at any postal facility other than a BMC.

Mailings prepared under either presort option must consist of at least 50 pieces of Parcel Post. For further information, including a complete description of the sortation requirements for these options, see DMM 455.4.0.

Parcel Select Rates

Like Standard Mail, Package Services Parcel Post also qualifies for destination rate discounts. These discounts include three different rates:

1. DBMC (destination bulk mail center).
2. DSCF (destination sectional center facility).
3. DDU (destination delivery unit).

DSCF and DDU rate discounted mailings must be part of a mailing of 50 or more pieces sorted to 5-digit ZIP Codes using pallets or sacks. Contact your local postal representatives for further information.

BOUND PRINTED MATTER RATES

The Bound Printed Matter subclass:

- Weighs no more than 15 pounds.
- Consists of 90% printed sheets (not including handwriting or typewriting).
- Is advertising, promotional, directory, or editorial matter in any combination.
- Is securely bound by permanent fastening such as staples, spiral binding, glue, or stitching.

This matter may not be stationery, such as blank pads or printed forms, or have the nature of personal correspondence.

Single-Piece rates

Single-piece Bound Printed Matter rates are determined by weight and zone. There are separate Bound Printed Matter rates for flats and parcels. A barcoded discount is available for single-piece Bound Printed Matter automatable flats or machinable parcels.

A minimum of 50 pieces is required to claim the barcoded discount.



Notice 123, Ratefold

Presorted Bound Printed Matter

Presorted Bound Printed Matter rates are applicable to mailings of 300 or more pieces of identical weight and size (see DMM 465 for exceptions). Postage is determined by zone (geographic destination) and includes both a per piece and a per pound charge. There are two bulk Bound Printed Matter rates: a basic rate and a carrier route rate (see DMM 463.1.0).

MEDIA MAIL RATES

Books, films, sound and video recordings, printed music, manuscripts, and printed educational reference charts and test materials are among the articles that may be mailed as Media Mail (see DMM 173.3.2).

Postage for articles mailed at Media Mail rates is determined by weight without regard to geographic zone. In addition to single-piece rates, there are two levels of presort (5-digit and basic).

Presorted Media Mail

For machinable parcels, the Presorted Media Mail 5-digit rate applies to mailings of at least 300 properly prepared pieces presorted to 5-digit ZIP-Code locations. The Presorted Media Mail basic rate applies to mailings of at least 300 properly prepared machinable parcels presorted to Bulk Mail Centers. The basic rate also applies to Media Mail flats or irregular parcels prepared similarly to Presorted Standard flats or irregular parcels. The size and content of each piece need not be identical when qualifying for either presort rate (see DMM 373.3.2).

LIBRARY MAIL RATES

Books, sound recordings, printed music, and museum materials are among the articles that may be sent at the Library Mail rate, but only by mailers specified in DMM 483.2.

The Library Mail rate is essentially reserved for the exchange of items between schools, libraries, museums, and certain non-profit organizations. Postage for these articles is determined by weight in one pound increments without regard to geographic zone.

Presorted Library Mail

The Postal Service includes provisions for presorting Library Mail to qualify for 5-digit and basic presorted rates. The requirements and the rates for this option are the same as those for presorted Media Mail.

AUTOMATION RATES

The Postal Service offers automation rates for BMC-processed machinable parcels bearing mailer applied 5-digit ZIP Code or ZIP+4 parcel barcodes. To qualify, pieces must be part of a mailing of at least 50 pieces of any Package Services subclass.

The barcoded discount is available for all machinable parcels at Package Services rates except for:

- Parcel Post mail entered at DSCF entry rates or DDU entry rates.
- Bound Printed Matter at the carrier route rates.

This course provides additional information on parcel barcode discounts in modules five and six.

AUTHORIZATION AND FEES

Separate annual mailing fees must be paid every 12 months by each mailer of Presorted Media Mail and by each mailer of Presorted Library Mail at each office of mailing.

Separate annual destination entry fees must be paid every 12 months by each mailer of Parcel Select and by each mailer of Presorted Bound Printed Matter (if claiming destination entry rates) at each office of mailing. All discount options under Parcel Select are covered by a single annual fee at each mailing office.

The Postal Service also offers pickup service for single-piece rate Parcel Post bearing correctly affixed postage. There is a separate fee, per pickup, for this service.

POSTAGE PAYMENT

Postage for Package Services single-piece rate is typically paid by either permit imprint or meter stamp. Postage for Package Services mailings that require a minimum mailing quantity or presort must be paid with meter stamps or permit imprints.

The correct postage statement must always accompany any presorted Package Services mailing, including:

Bound Printed Matter

- Form 3605-BFR, *Bound Printed Matter Flats—Permit Imprint*
- Form 3605-DFR, *Destination Entry Bound Printed Matter Flats—Permit Imprint*
- Form 3605-BFP, *Bound Printed Matter Flats—Postage Affixed*
- Form 3605-DFP, *Destination Entry Bound Printed Matter Flats—Postage Affixed*
- Form 3605-BPR, *Bound Printed Matter Parcels—Permit Imprint*
- Form 3605-DPR, *Destination Entry Bound Printed Matter Parcels—Permit Imprint*
- Form 3605-BPP, *Bound Printed Matter Parcels—Postage Affixed*
- Form 3605-DPP, *Destination Entry Bound Printed Matter Parcels—Postage Affixed*

Package Services—Parcel Post—Parcel Select

- Form 3605-PR, *Parcel Post—Permit Imprint*
- Form 3605-SR, *Parcel Select—Permit Imprint*
- Form 3605-PP, *Parcel Post—Postage Affixed*
- Form 3605-SP, *Parcel Select—Postage Affixed*

(The only change to Parcel Post postage statements is the addition of the entry line for nonmachinable Parcel Select-DSCF parcels (J2) (see DMM 454)).

Media Mail and Library

- Form 3608-R, *Media Mail and Library Mail—Permit Imprint*
- Form 3608-P, *Media Mail and Library Mail—Postage Affixed*

ENVELOPE MARKINGS, ENDORSEMENTS, AND ENCLOSURES

The required subclass markings must appear in the postage area on each mailpiece. Pieces not clearly marked as required are treated as single-piece Parcel Post and are subject to additional postage as necessary.


Certain written additions and enclosures are allowed to accompany Package Services without the payment of additional postage. Permissible additions and enclosures applicable to all Package Services are described in DMM 402. Other written additions or enclosures may be permitted for specific types of Package Services.

Parcel Post

All Parcel Post must bear the subclass marking “Parcel Post” or “PP.” This marking must appear as part of the permit imprint, or above the address and to the left or below the permit imprint.

In addition, mailings submitted for DSCF, DDU, and DBMC entry rates must also be marked “Drop Ship” or “D/S” or “Parcel Select.” or both. If “Parcel Select” is shown in the postage area, then no other marking is required. The marking may appear either in the postage area or in the line above, or two lines above the address as described in DMM 402.2.2.

In addition to the authorized written additions and enclosures described in DMM 243.2.7, any printed matter mailable as Standard Mail may be attached or enclosed.

 *Correct rate markings are critical to the USPS’s rate setting process. As such, they are a key requirement for acceptance at the Business Mail Entry Unit. Check with your local postal officials if you are unsure of the proper rate and class markings.*

Bound Printed Matter

Each piece claimed at single-piece Bound Printed Matter rates must be marked “Bound Printed Matter” or “BPM” in the postage area on the mailpiece. Each piece claimed at pre-sorted Bound Printed Matter rates must also have a “Presorted” or “PRSRT” marking in addition to the basic subclass.

Carrier route Bound Printed Matter must show the proper subclass marking and the rate marking “Carrier Route Presort” or “CAR-RT SORT.” The CAR-RT SORT marking must appear either in the postage area or in the line above, or two lines above the delivery address. Additional authorized enclosures or attachments for Bound Printed Matter include order forms, reply cards or envelopes, any printed matter mailable as Standard Mail, and incidental samples of merchandise.

Media Mail

The words “Media Mail” must appear on each piece mailed at the single-piece rate either as part of the permit indicia or above the address and below or to the left of the postage. You must add the “Presorted” endorsement or “PRSRT” abbreviation to each piece mailed at that rate.

Additional enclosures or attachments authorized for Media Mail include one order form, a reply card or envelope, and incidental announcements of new books.

Library Mail

Each piece of Library Mail must be marked “Library Mail” in the postage area. Presorted Library mail must also bear the required “Presorted” or “PRSRT” markings.

Permissible enclosures for books and sound recordings mailed at the Library Mail rate include one envelope or addressed postcard, one order form, and incidental announcements of books (when mailed with books) or sound recordings (when mailed with sound recordings).

POSTAL HANDLING OF UNDELIVERABLE MAILPIECES

Unless otherwise endorsed, undeliverable Package Services except for BPM, will be forwarded locally (defined as the same single-ZIP Code or multi-ZIP Coded Post Office) for one year at no additional charge.

Nonlocal forwarding for one year will be provided for an additional charge. If the period for forwarding has expired, the Postal Service will return the article to the sender and charge the appropriate return postage (see DMM 507.1.0).

Mailers may request specific handling by using an ancillary service endorsement. Ancillary service endorsements are covered in module four: *Addressing*.

Bound Printed Matter with no ancillary service endorsement and no special service is disposed of by the Postal Service. It is neither forwarded nor returned to the sender. BPM bearing a special services endorsement without an ancillary service endorsement is treated as “Forwarding Service Requested.” (DMM 507.1.5.4).

SUMMARY

While complex, the proper classification of your mailpiece is necessary for a satisfying mailing experience. Knowing the correct class of your prospective mailpiece allows you to more accurately estimate postage costs and delivery times. Proper classification ensures no unexpected surprises or delays during postal acceptance and verification at the Business Mail Entry Unit. Seek expert assistance if you are at all unsure.



Postal classification “experts” can be found among your District’s Business Mail Entry (BME) staff and at the governing Pricing and Classification Service Center (PCSC).

**EXERCISE 1 - 5**

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. Which of the following may be mailed as Package Services?
 - a) personal correspondence
 - b) a bill for services
 - c) merchandise
 - d) matter sealed against postal inspection

2. The maximum length and girth for Package Services articles is 108 inches, except for the _____ subclass, which has a maximum of _____ inches.

3. Intra-BMC (as opposed to Inter-BMC) Parcel Post rates apply when the article is mailed from the service area of a BMC or ASF and is intended for delivery within the same _____.

4. Bound Printed Matter rates apply to certain pieces that weigh no more than _____ pound(s).

5. Mailpieces that qualify for Bound Printed Matter must consist of at least 90 percent _____ sheets, not blank pads or forms, that are permanently _____ together.

6. Presorted Bound Printed Matter may be mailed at a basic rate, a barcoded rate, or a _____ rate.

7. Which of the following entities may not normally mail at the Library Mail rate?
 - a) museums
 - b) savings and loan institutions
 - c) private universities
 - d) nonprofit organizations

8. Each piece of Package Services must be marked: "Package Services."
 - a) true
 - b) false

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 1 - 5

1. **c, merchandise;** of these choices, only merchandise may be sent as Package Services. First-Class Mail matter such as bills and invoices, directly relating to the qualifying material, may be included at the Package Services rates as an incidental attachment or enclosure.
2. **Parcel Post, 130;** only Parcel Post may exceed the 108 inches maximum length and girth.
3. **service area;** Intra is “within” the service area of a BMC or ASF, Inter is “without” or “between.”
4. **15;** fifteen pounds is the maximum for a qualifying Bound Printed Matter mailpiece.
5. **printed, bound;** Bound Printed Matter rates are not intended to apply to pads of stationery, printed forms, or blank pages.
6. **Carrier Route;** The Bound Printed Matter subclass also includes a Carrier Route presort option.
7. **b, savings and loan institutions;** they are a business, not an organization targeted to receive these special rates.
8. **b, false;** each piece of Package Services mail must bear the basic rate marking for the subclass (e.g., Parcel Post or Bound Printed Matter).

The Periodicals mail classification is relatively unique when compared to the other classes of mail:

- Periodicals are subject to distinct and strict content and construction requirements.
- Periodicals mail may not be paid for by the traditional postage payment methods available to the other classes of mail.
- There is a more involved application and approval process, including postal review of publisher's records.
- Authorized Periodicals mailers must inform and notify the Postal Service of any changes in title, frequency, and location of the known office of publication.

For this reason, we are presenting the classification of Periodicals mail as a separate module of the self-study course. You will not typically have to help a mailer classify a Periodicals mailpiece. Due to the inherent requirements, mailers will know whether or not their mailpiece is an authorized Periodicals publication. The purpose of this module is to illustrate some of the unique requirements of Periodicals mail. This will allow you to be more familiar with the issues encountered by any of your clients who might already be mailing authorized Periodicals publications.



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT PERIODICALS MAIL

Upon completion of this portion of the module, you should be able to do the following:

- Describe in general what defines Periodicals mail.
- Distinguish among the various Periodicals rates, including regular and preferred rates.
- Describe the fees and authorizations necessary for Periodicals mailings and the payment of postage for those mailings.

WHAT IS PERIODICALS MAIL?

Periodicals mail consists of newspapers and periodical publications, including magazines, published on a regular basis, at least four times per year.

Only publications that meet the eligibility standards in Domestic Mail Manual 707.4.0 can qualify for Periodicals mailing privileges. To be eligible, a publication must fulfill specific qualification standards and meet the preparation requirements for the applicable presort levels, rates, and discounts.

Basic Characteristics

All authorized Periodicals publications must have the following characteristics:

- The publication must exhibit continuity from issue to issue (it is the same publication).
- The primary purpose of the publication is the transmission of information. It may not be designed primarily for advertising purposes.
- The publication must be issued at a specific, regular frequency. This frequency must be at least four times a year, with the intent to continue publishing indefinitely.
- The publication is formed of printed sheets.
- The publisher maintains a known office of publication from which the business of the publication is transacted. This location must be accessible during normal business hours and must be where the circulation records are maintained, or where they may be made available for examination and review.

SERVICE GUARANTEE

The Postal Service does not guarantee the delivery of Periodicals within a specified time period; however, they are given expeditious distribution, dispatch, transit, and delivery as far as practicable.

WEIGHT AND SIZE LIMITATIONS

General regulations governing the minimum and maximum size standards and appropriate mail processing category apply equally to Periodicals mailings. The Postal Service encourages publishers to fold publications, when practicable, to a size no larger than 12" x 15" inches. Do not roll publications.

AUTHORIZATION CATEGORIES

In addition to the general requirements for Periodicals mailing privileges as previously summarized (see DMM 707.4.0), authorized publications must meet the specific requirements of one of five qualification categories.

1) General Publications

General publications must be published for the purpose of disseminating information of a public character or be devoted to literature, the sciences, art, or some special industry. In addition, a general publication must:

- Have a legitimate list of subscribers who have paid or promised to pay, at more than a nominal rate, for copies to be received during a stated time. At least 50% of a general publication's distribution must be to persons who have paid above a nominal rate, whether via subscription or by purchase of individual copies. Publications primarily designed for free circulation or circulation at nominal rates do not qualify as general publications.
- Not exceed 75 percent advertising in more than half of the issues published in a 12-month period.

2) Publications of Eligible Institutions and Societies

Postal regulations subdivide publications of institutions and societies into two groups:

1. Publications that are authorized to carry only the publisher's own advertising.
2. Publications authorized to carry general advertising.

Publishers Own Advertising. Publications authorized in this subcategory may contain only the publisher's own advertising and not the advertising of other persons or organizations. Under these circumstances, the USPS considers all circulated copies as subscriber copies. The total number of all such copies is the total paid circulation. The kinds of publications restricted to publisher's own advertising under this category include those published by:


- Nonprofit institutions of learning
- Any public or nonprofit private elementary or secondary school
- By a state school supported in whole or in part by public taxation.
- Bulletins published by state boards of health, state industrial development agencies, state conservation or fish and game agencies, or by state boards or departments of public charities or corrections qualify for this category.
- Certain educational radio or television stations.

General Advertising. Publications authorized to carry general advertising under this subcategory must limit their mailed circulation to:

- Members who pay as part of their dues (or separately) at least 30 percent of the publication's actual regular subscription price.
- Other actual paid subscribers.
- Exchange copies.
- A maximum of 10 percent sample or nonsubscriber copies.

The kinds of publications eligible to carry general advertising under this standard include:

- Fraternal societies under certain conditions.
- Trade unions.
- Professional, literary, historical, or scientific societies.
- Churches and church organizations.

 *In essence, a requester publication cannot be what is typically known in the publishing industry as a "House Organ."*

3) Requester Publications

Publications authorized under this category do not require a list of paid subscribers. Rather, the copies are distributed to individuals who specifically request the receipt of the publication.

Requester publications must not be owned or controlled by a concern that produces the publication essentially for the advancement of the main business or calling of those who own or control it.

In addition, authorized requester publications must meet the following criteria:

- Each issue must contain at least 24 pages.
- No issue may contain more than 75 percent advertising.
- The publication must have a legitimate list of persons requesting the publication. At least 50 percent of the distribution must be to these "requesters."

4) Publications of State Departments of Agriculture

These publications qualify for Periodicals rates if they further the objectives of the department and do not contain any advertising matter.

5) Foreign Publications

Publications from foreign countries, having the same general character as authorized domestic Periodicals publications, may qualify for Periodicals rates. The Postal Service bases its review of foreign applications solely on the circulation in the United States. The known office of publication may be the office of the publisher's United States agent.

News Agent Authorization

News agent registry is a type of authorization granted to a person or concern that sells two or more already authorized Periodicals publications published by more than one publisher. The Postal Service must authorize a news agent before the agent may mail Periodicals publications at the Periodicals mail rates.

PERIODICALS QUALIFICATION CATEGORIES

Qualification Category	DMM Reference	Type of Advertising Permitted
General	DMM 707.6.1	general
Institutions and Societies	DMM 707.6.2	publisher's own or general*
State Departments of Agriculture	DMM 707.6.3	none
Requester	DMM 707.6.4	general
Foreign	DMM 707.6.5	general

* Depends on the type of institutions and societies authorization.

RATES

Periodicals rates are among the lowest offered to mailers. Only publishers and registered news agents may mail at these rates. The USPS bases the postage charges for Periodicals matter on a complex combination of per pound charges, per piece charges, and piece charge adjustments for nonadvertising matter and intra-SCF pieces. The Postal Service determines the postage charged for a mailing by applying the applicable per pound rates, per piece rates, minus the applicable adjustments.

Regular Rates

There is a standard (unzoned) per pound rate for the *nonadvertising* portion of a publication. For the advertising portion, rates are broken into pound increments and zone charges, which vary with geographical location. Per piece rates reflect different levels of presort and automation or nonautomation mail.

Preferred Rates

- In-County Rates apply to subscribers' copies of any issue of a Periodicals publication (except a requester publication) when they are entered within the county of publication, for delivery within that county, if either of the following conditions are met:
 - The total paid or requested circulation of such issue is less than 10,000 copies;
 - or
 - The number of paid or requested copies of such issue distributed within the country of publication is more than 50% of the total paid or requested circulations of such issue.
- The copies eligible to be mailed at In-County rate includes those copies of an issue of a publication entered within the county in which it is published, but distributed outside such county on postal carrier routes originating in the county of publication.

- The total number of nonsubscriber copies mailed at in-county rates during any calendar year may not exceed 10 percent of the number of subscribers' copies mailed at those rates.
- Requester publication may be eligible for Nonprofit, or Classroom, or Science of Agriculture Periodicals rates if authorized.
- The nonprofit rate discount is available to certain qualifying nonprofit organizations that are not organized for profit and have none of their net income accruing to any private stockholder or individual. (See DMM 707.10.2 for specific eligibility requirements.) Publishers must obtain prior authorization before claiming the discount.
- Authorized Classroom (DMM 707.10.4) publications that are religious, educational, or scientific publications designed specifically for use in classrooms are eligible for the Classroom rates.
- Science-of-Agriculture rates are available to outside-county copies of Periodicals publications devoted to promoting science of agriculture. Seventy percent of the total number of copies must be distributed during any 12-month period to subscribers living in rural areas.

Domestic Mail Manual 707.10.4 and 707 list the eligibility requirements and postage amounts, respectively, for Periodicals preferred rates.



DMM 707.28.0

Destination Entry Rates

In addition to presort rate discounts, Periodicals mail may also qualify for destination rate discounts. Mailers must deposit destination entry rate discounted mailings at the corresponding destination postal facility. Periodicals mail may qualify for ADC (area distribution center), SCF (sectional center facility), and DDU (destination delivery unit) rates and discounts.

AUTHORIZATION AND FEES

The Postal Service requires payment of a non-refundable fee for all Periodicals applications requesting original entry, additional entry, reentry, and news agent registry. See DMM 707.1.0 for current fee amounts.

The only exception is a reentry application requesting the nonprofit rate, which does not require payment of a fee. The nonrefundable fees cover the Postal Service administrative costs for processing each application.

Application

To request authorization for Periodicals mailing privileges, a publisher must file the appropriate application at the Post Office serving the known office of publication.

DM-204 is a handbook that provides basic information on whether or not your publication can qualify for Periodicals mailing privileges. This handbook includes step-by-step instructions for completing Form 3500, *Application for Periodicals Mailing Privileges*.

Original Entry

The original entry is the Post Office that serves the location of the publisher's known office of publication. Approval of the application allows the publisher to mail at Periodicals rates at the original entry Post Office.

Mailing in Pending Status

While a Periodicals application for original entry is pending, a publisher may mail copies of the publication under the conditions prescribed in DMM 707.5.2. The publication is charged postage at the applicable First-Class Mail or Standard Mail rates while an application is pending.

The Postal Service keeps a record of all deposits and mailings when postage at the applicable Standard Mail rates is paid with an advance deposit account. No record is kept of postage paid at the First-Class Mail rates or for postage not paid through an advance deposit account.

Upon approval of a Periodicals application, the publisher receives a refund that equals the difference between the Standard Mail postage charged for mailed copies and the actual Periodicals mail rates for those same copies. This refund amount is held in trust in the advance deposit account during the pending period.

No refunds are given if, while in pending status, the postage was not paid through an advance deposit account. Refunds are also not given when postage has been paid with stamps, or at the First-Class Mail rates. See DMM 707.5.2 for more information on refunds for pending publications.

Additional Entry

An additional entry under DMM 707.29.0 is a Post Office, other than the original entry office, where a publisher may also present copies of a Periodicals publication for postal acceptance and verification. Postage is paid at this additional entry office, except for publications authorized under the Centralized Postage Payment (CPP) system.

The publisher initiates the establishment, cancellation, or modification of an additional entry by submitting Form 3510 to the original entry Post Office. The application must detail the distribution plan (volume and ZIP Code ranges) justifying the addition or cancellation of the entry point.

Two copies of the most recent issue containing an amended identification statement or a representation of what the amended identification statement will look like must accompany the application.

Applications are required to be submitted at least 30 days before the requested effective date.

Once the Postal Service approves an additional entry, mailers must deposit a mailing at each additional entry site at least once each calendar year. Otherwise, the additional entry authorization will be canceled, and the mailer must reapply.

Reentry

As required in DMM 707.9.0, Form 3510 must also be submitted whenever a publisher requests a change in the title, frequency of issue, or location of the known office of publication of an authorized Periodicals publication.

The form must be accompanied by two copies of the publication. These copies must contain a complete amended identification statement. Alternatively, the publisher may supply a proof copy of the identification statement along with specification of the issue in which it will appear.

A publisher must apply for changes in title or frequency at the original entry Post Office; a change in known office of publication must be submitted to the new original entry Post Office. A publisher must submit Form 3500 and Form 3510 to change the category under which a publication is authorized.

POSTAGE PAYMENT

Payment is normally made through an advance deposit account established at the Post Office of mailing or under the CPP system. Mailers must pay the First-Class or Priority rates, by adhesive stamps, meter stamps, or permit imprint, on copies that do not qualify for the Periodicals rates.

Postage Statements

A postage statement must be submitted with the first mailing of each issue of a Periodicals publication. Under specific standards, the Postal Service may authorize the submission of a monthly postage statement.

Compute periodicals postage on Form 3541, *Postage Statement—Periodicals One Issue or One Edition*.

Centralized Postage Payment (CPP) System

The Centralized Postage Payment system (CPP) allows the publisher to pay postage, by advance deposit account, at the New York Pricing and Classification Service Center (PCSC).

ENCLOSURES

Postage on nonincidental First-Class Mail matter and Standard Mail attachments and enclosures also may be paid only by precanceled stamps, meter stamps, or permit imprint.

Enclosures in Periodicals publications are handled as follows:

- Nonpermissible Enclosures
Nonpermissible enclosures (ineligible for Periodicals rates) included with the mailed copies of a Periodicals publication are subject to postage at the proper First-Class Mail or Standard Mail rate, as applicable.
- Nonincidental First-Class Mail and Standard Mail Attachments
Postage for nonincidental First-Class Mail matter and Standard Mail attachments or enclosures included with mailed copies may be paid for under the same conditions as nonpermissible enclosures. The total weight of all Standard Mail matter may not exceed 300% of the weight of the host Periodicals publication, and must be less than 16 ounces.
- Incidental First-Class Mail matter
Incidental (allowable) attachments and enclosures are eligible for Periodicals rates based on the total weight of the attachments and the publication. The advertising rate is charged if the publication contains advertising.
- Ride Along Pieces
Periodicals Ride-Along pieces (limited to only one per mailing) are Standard Mail material attached to or enclosed with Periodicals mail and paid for at the Periodicals Ride-Along rate. The Ride-Along rate must be paid on each copy in the mailing. The Ride-Along piece must not exceed any dimensions of the host publication, must not exceed (the lesser of) 3.3 ounces or the weight of the host publication, and must not obscure the title of the publication or the address label.

POSTAL HANDLING OF UNDELIVERABLE MAILPIECES

The Postal Service forwards Periodicals mail at no additional charge for 60 days from the date of an address change filing. After 60 days, or if the piece is undeliverable, the USPS provides a separate address correction or reason for nondelivery.

The Postal Service charges the current address correction fee for the notification. The actual piece is disposed of by the USPS. Mailers may request the return of the mailpiece by using the appropriate ancillary service endorsement. Pieces will be returned at the applicable First-Class Mail or Priority Mail single-piece rates.

**EXERCISE 2 - 1**

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. You must publish a Periodicals publication on a regular frequency, at least _____ times a year.
2. A publication that is designed primarily to advertise may qualify for Periodicals mail rates.
 - a) true
 - b) false
3. Postal regulations for publications of institutions and societies divide these publications into those authorized to carry either “publisher’s own” or “general” _____ .
4. Each issue must contain at least 24 pages, and no issue may contain more than 75 percent advertising. This statement is true for which category of Periodicals:
 - a) general publications
 - b) publications of institutions and societies
 - c) publications of state departments of agriculture
 - d) requester publications
5. The “original entry office” is the Post Office which serves the publisher’s “known _____ of publication.”
6. A publisher must complete and submit a Form 3510 to the Postal Service for which of the following changes to an authorized Periodicals publication?
 - a) reentry due to a change in stated frequency of issue
 - b) application for additional entry Post Office
 - c) a name change
 - d) all of the above
7. Which of the following rate categories is *not* a Preferred Periodicals rate?
 - a) In-County
 - b) destination SCF
 - c) Classroom
 - d) nonprofit
8. After approval, the publisher may apply for a postage refund for the difference between Periodicals postage and the First-Class Mail rates paid while the application was pending.
 - a) true
 - b) false

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 2 - 1

1. 4; Periodicals publications must be published at least four times a year at stated intervals.
2. **b, false**; in order to be approved, a qualifying Periodicals publication must not be designed primarily to advertise.
3. **advertising**; publishers of publications from institutions and societies restricted to their own advertising include: nonprofit or public institutions of learning, state boards of health, and some public radio and television stations.
4. **d, requester publications**; this limitation ensures that requester publications must maintain a meaningful editorial content.
5. **office**; the “known office of publication” is the physical location where a publisher conducts normal business, and where the publisher’s subscriber records are kept, or can be made available for review.
6. **d, all of the above**; all of these changes must be authorized by filing a Form 3510.
7. **b, destination SCF**; is an entry rate. It is available to all Periodicals mailers and is not a preferred or special rate.
8. **b, false**; refunds are never given for pending Periodicals publications mailed at the First-Class Mail rates.

The purpose of this portion of the module is to introduce you to the unique marking and construction requirements for Periodicals Mail. These features help to make the Periodicals class of mail distinct from other classes. Due to the inherent nature of the Postal Service's automated processing equipment, however, design characteristics for automation compatibility are the same for Periodicals as for all other classes. These requirements will be covered in later modules.



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT PERIODICALS MAIL

Upon completion of this portion of the module, you should be able to do the following:

- Describe in general the construction requirements applicable to Periodicals Mail.
- Describe the indication of postage payment for those mailings.
- Describe required envelope markings, authorized enclosures, and endorsements for Periodicals.

IDENTIFICATION OF PERIODICALS

Postal regulations require that authorized Periodicals publications be prominently identified with the authorized title.

Publication Title

You must show the publication title of a Periodicals publication on the front or cover page. The position, type style and type size must be easily distinguishable from all other printed matter on the cover.

Identification Statement

An identification statement (DMM 707.4.11.2), in easily read type, must appear in all copies of authorized Periodicals publications and in all copies under a pending status. Unless otherwise noted, you must include the following items in the ID statement:

- Publication title and number: The publication title must be displayed. If assigned, an International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) must be used. Otherwise, the number assigned by the Postal Service must be displayed. As an alternative, the publication number may appear on the front or cover page instead of in the identification statement.
- Date of issue: You may omit the date of the Periodicals publication issue from the ID statement if the issue date is displayed on the front or cover page.
- Statement of frequency: The statement of frequency must be included (see DMM 707.4.11.5 for format).
- Issue number: The issue number of the Periodicals publication may be omitted if it appears on the front or cover page. Consecutively number each issue of the publication.
- Subscription price: If the publication has a stated basic subscription price, that price may appear in the ID statement.
- Name and Address of Known Office of Publication: The ID statement must include the physical street address of the location where the publisher conducts the publication's business and makes available for postal review the publication's circulation records.

- Periodicals Imprint: The imprint in the ID statement must state "Periodicals Postage Paid at ...(original entry Post Office)." If the publication is mailed at two or more offices, via additional entries, the imprint must read "Periodicals Postage Paid at ...(name of original entry office) and at additional mailing offices."
- Notice of Pending Application: While a Periodicals application is pending the imprint must read "Application to Mail at Periodicals Postage Rates is Pending at...(original entry Post Office)."
- Change of Address Orders: The publisher's mailing address for change of address orders must also appear in the ID Statement. The statement must appear in the normal text type of the publication and read "POSTMASTER: Send address changes to (publication's name and mailing address)." Publications that are wrapped may use the alternative in DMM 707.3.6.1. Change of address information requests may also be shown on the label carrier or the containers of publications prepared in envelopes, closed wrappers, or polywraps.



A complete and properly located ID Statement is a critical acceptance issue. Ensure the correct content and location prior to printing.

Location

The placement of an ID statement differs, depending on whether the publication is bound or unbound. For both types, the ID statement may be shown on one of the first five pages, or in the masthead of the editorial page. The masthead location is allowable if the location of the editorial page is referred to in the table of contents on the front page of the publication.

The ID statement in a bound publication may also be on one of the last three editorial pages inside the back cover.

The ID statement in either a bound or an unbound publication may appear on the table of contents page.

PERMISSIBLE COMPONENTS AND CONSTRUCTION METHODS

A Periodicals publication may, under DMM 707.3.3, be made up of different components and construction methods as allowable by postal standards. The most basic component of a Periodicals publication is the page(s) which form the printed sheet(s).

Pages

Pages are the printed sheets forming the publication that may bear advertising, nonadvertising, or both. This includes pages having textual and graphic matter, blank spaces for writing or marking, and material to be completed or used by the reader.

A minor portion of the total pages may have unusual characteristics, such as a different size, shape, or construction, or portions may be wholly or partially separable, and pages prepared for folding out. No folded page may have dimensions (when folded) that exceed the dimensions of the publication.

Bound/Unbound

Periodicals publications may be prepared in either bound or unbound format as permitted by postal standards as follows:

- A bound publication is one in which the pages are securely held together by two or more staples, spiral binding, glue, stitching, or other permanent fastening.
- All other publications are considered unbound, including folded multisheets and single sheet publications, and those in which the pages are loose and collated (“nested”) or held together by one staple.

Parts and Sections

A publisher may prepare a publication in parts or sections. Parts and sections are pages that are physically separate subdivisions of the publication.

Each part or section must show the publication title, and the number of parts or sections in the issue must be stated on the cover of the first part or section. Items that are not eligible to be mailed at the Periodicals rates as permissible components may not be prepared as parts or sections.



Construction and component regulations for Periodicals Mail are closely reviewed by Business Mail Entry Unit personnel during acceptance. Check with local acceptance personnel prior to printing if you are at all unsure of the pertinent regulations.

Supplements

A supplement is one or more printed sheets that are not bound into a publication. A supplement may be devoted to a single topic and may contain material different from that in the host publication.

The supplement may not be mailed by itself at Periodicals rates and may not bear a permit imprint or a separate price. The external dimensions of a supplement may not exceed those of the host publication, except when both are completely enclosed in an envelope or polybag.

A loose supplement to a bound Periodicals publication must contain at least 25% nonadvertising matter and bear the endorsement “Supplement to” followed by the title of the publication, the name of the publisher, or the words “Periodicals Publisher.”

A bound publication with one or more supplements must be enclosed in a mailing wrapper.

A supplement to an unbound publication may contain any amount of advertising, nonadvertising, or both. The supplement must be combined with and inserted within the publication. If the supplement is prepared loose, then the unbound publication and the loose supplement must be enclosed in a mailing wrapper, and bear the endorsement “Supplement to” followed by the title of the publication, the name of the publisher, or the words “Periodicals Publication.”

Mailing Wrappers

A mailing wrapper is an envelope sleeve, partial wrapper, or polywrap used to enclose the publication for mailing. Advertising is permitted on the mailing wrapper and is included when measuring the issue’s advertising percentage.

All single copies of an unbound publication that include any enclosure and are mailed to an APO or FPO address must be completely enclosed in a mailing wrapper. Mailers are encouraged to place all small or flimsy publications in mailing wrappers.

Mailing wrappers that completely enclose the host publication must bear the Periodicals imprint “Periodicals Postage Paid at (Post Office of mailing),” or simply the word “Periodicals” in the upper right corner of the address area.

Protective Covers

An additional cover may be added to the outside of the publication for added protection. This protective cover must cover both the front and back of the host publication and extend to within at least 3/4 inch of the edge opposite the fold or binding. Exception: Flat-size pieces may have short covers as provided in 301.3.7.2. The protective cover must be permanently attached when the host publication is bound.

The publication title must be visible through or displayed prominently on any protective cover or wrapper. Publishers may place requests for change of address information from subscribers on wrappers or envelopes.

Sealing

Periodicals mail must be prepared so that it can be easily examined. The mailing of publications at Periodicals rates represents the publisher’s consent to postal inspection of the contents.

IMPERMISSIBLE COMPONENTS

Although they may accompany Periodicals publications under certain conditions, the following materials are never eligible for Periodicals rates:

- Materials bearing a separate subscription price or different subscription instructions than the host publication.
- Matter bearing the word “Catalog.”
- Material with a First-Class Mail, Standard Mail or Package Services permit imprint.
- Matter bearing an International Standard Book Number (ISBN).
- Matter bearing an ISSN or USPS number different from that of the host publication.
- Any products, including wall, desk, and blank calendars. Calendars consisting of printed pages are not considered products so long as they are not offered for sale.
- Any Package Services material.
- Any matter not formed of printed sheets (except as permitted in DMM 707.3.3.1a)

The complete text of the pertinent regulations governing proper construction of Periodicals mailpieces is contained in DMM 707.3.0.



DMM 707

ENCLOSURES

Enclosures submitted with a qualifying Periodicals host publication are considered either incidental to the host piece, or nonincidental. Incidental First-Class Mail enclosures are charged Periodicals rates along with the host piece. Nonincidental enclosures must have separate postage paid.

Loose Enclosures at Periodicals Rates

Allowable incidental enclosures in a Periodicals publication include:

- A receipt, request, or order for a subscription to any authorized Periodicals publications or a publication pending Periodicals authorization. (DMM 707.3.3.4).
- A reply form for the addressee to provide new address information to the publisher.
- Incidental First-Class Mail matter that is closely related, but secondary to, the Periodicals publication. Examples of proper incidental First-Class Mail enclosures are a bill for the publication, a statement of account for past publication purchases, or a personal message or greeting.

Enclosures of First Class Mail or Standard Mail

Nonincidental First-Class Mail and Standard Mail enclosures are permitted with Periodicals publications if the applicable First-Class Mail or Standard Mail rates are paid. Postage may be placed on the enclosure itself with precanceled or meter stamps, or on the outside of the Periodicals mailpiece with precanceled stamps, meter stamps, or permit imprint.

A permit imprint used to pay postage on a nonincidental enclosure must not be visible when mailed. As an alternative, publishers may include the permit imprint indicia and required markings in the publication's identification statement.

The marking "First-Class Mail Enclosed" or "Standard Mail Enclosed," as appropriate, must be placed either on the outside of the host publication or in the ID statement. This statement must not appear on issues that do not include an enclosure.

Ride Along Pieces

Ride-Along pieces must not be constructed so that the Ride-Along piece becomes detached from the host piece during normal processing. Ride-Along pieces not affixed to bound publications or inserted within unbounded publications must be enclosed together with the host publication in a full wrapper, polybag, or envelope. A Periodicals piece that includes a Ride-Along piece must maintain the same uniform thickness and processing category as it would without the Ride-Along piece. If claimed at automation rates, pieces must be automation compatible according to regulations in DMM 707.15.3. The marking "Ride-Along Enclosed" must be placed on or in the host publication if it contains an enclosure or attachment paid at the Ride-Along Rate. Ride-Along pieces may not exceed any dimension of the host publication except when the host publication and the Ride Along piece are contained in an envelope, polybag, or other complete wrapper. They may not exceed 3.3 ounces and must not exceed the weight of the host publication. The Ride Along piece must not obscure the title of the publication or the address label.

ATTACHMENTS

The following may be attached to a cover, protective cover, or mailing wrapper of a publication.

- Stickers not obscuring the publication title.
- All items allowed as loose enclosures as described in DMM 707.3.3.3 or 3.3.4.
- Material normally allowed within the contents of the publication composed of advertising, nonadvertising, or a combination of both may be attached to the cover or protective cover only when the publication and attached material are enclosed in a wrapper. In all cases, no portion of the publication title may be obscured.

ADVERTISING

Advertising in a Periodicals publication (discussed in the preceding section) is restricted or prohibited as specified for each of the five periodicals qualification categories listed in DMM 707.6.1.3.

For postal purposes, the term advertising includes all material for which a valuable consideration is paid, accepted, or promised, that calls attention to something to get people to buy it, sell it, seek it, or support it.

Publishers must prepare all advertisements as an integral part of a Periodicals publication. You may print advertising on the pages of any component of a publication, subject to the applicable standards.

When determining the advertising portion of an issue of a publication, all advertising must be included in the measurement except for the specific types of enclosures excluded by standard in DMM 707.3.3.4.

Marking of Paid Reading Matter

Editorial or other reading matter for which payment or other valuable consideration is accepted or promised must be plainly marked “advertisement” by the publisher. If this matter occupies more than one page, only the first page need be marked “advertisement.”

ADDRESSING

Each mailpiece must bear the addressee’s name and address, including the correct ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code. The use of a simplified address format or exceptional address format is prohibited on copies intended to count as subscriber or requester copies meeting the applicable circulation standards. Such copies may be mailed as sample or promotional copies.

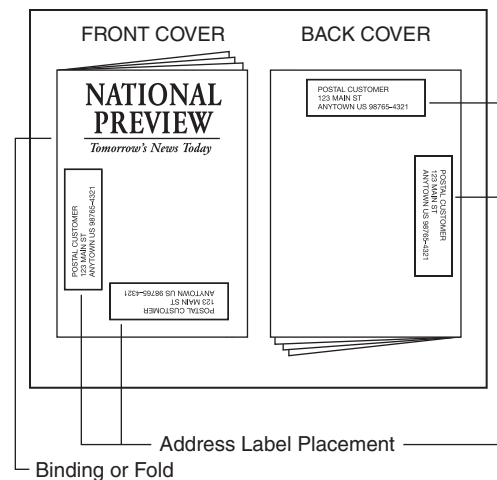
Location

The delivery address, whether placed on a label, directly on the host publication, a component, or mailing wrapper, must be clearly visible on or through the outside of the mailpiece. Addresses placed on a mailing wrapper must be positioned on the flat side, not on the fold. The address for a polybagged publication must not appear on a component (e.g., a label carrier) that rotates within the bag, and the address must remain visible throughout the full range of motion.

Labels

White or light-colored paper must be used for address labels. The address should be machine-printed in black or other strongly contrasting ink.

PERIODICALS ADDRESS PLACEMENT



Label Carrier

A label carrier may be used to carry the delivery address for the mailpiece. It consists of a single, unfolded, uncreased sheet of card or paper stock securely affixed to the cover of a publication or large enough so that it does not spin or rotate inside the wrapper. The label carrier must contain the following information:

- The Periodicals imprint or Periodicals endorsement in the upper right corner of the address side unless “Periodicals” is printed on the address side of the polybag.
- The publication title or the name and address of the publisher.
- A return address if it carries the mailer endorsement “Address Service Requested.”

At the publisher’s option the label carrier may also show any of this information:

- Subscription order form.
- Subscription renewal information.
- Request for address correction information from the addressee.
- If First-Class Mail or Standard Mail is enclosed, the appropriate endorsement (e.g., “First-Class Mail Enclosed”) or the permit imprint for payment of postage for the enclosure may be placed below the Periodicals imprint or endorsement.
- Incidental text calling attention to information on the reverse, or to information within the contents of the Periodicals publication, may be placed on the front of a label carrier.

Detached Address Labels

Saturation mailings of Periodicals flats may, at the option of the mailer, be mailed using detached address labels (DALs). A saturation mailing is defined as a mailing sent to at least 75 percent of the total addresses within each carrier route or 90 percent of the residential addresses within the route, whichever is less. Deliveries need not be made to every carrier route of a delivery unit or 5-digit ZIP Code.

Additional standards for the format, physical requirements, packaging, Post Office notification, and labeling of cartons are shown in DMM 602.4.

DAL mailings are not eligible for any automation rates, but may qualify for a carrier route rate, subject to the applicable standards. Postage for each piece is based on the combined weight of the flat and the address label.

Postage must be prepaid at the applicable Periodicals rate of postage shown in DMM 602.4.5. The DAL must show a notice of entry in the upper right corner of the address area.

SUMMARY

Periodicals mail is a unique and exclusive classification of mail. Only certain specific types of publications may qualify. The design, construction, and content requirements are quite strict. The application review process can sometimes be viewed as lengthy and intrusive. However, handbook DM-204 will aid in this process.

Despite all of this, Periodicals mail is one of the most desirable classifications of mail. The status conferred upon a publication authorized Periodicals rates has an instant recognition value among potential advertisers and subscribers. Special handling and consideration is given to Periodicals mail in the postal system. The content and circulation requirements as spelled out in the *Domestic Mail Manual* are necessary in order to maintain the integrity, and hence the value, of this unique classification of mail.



Exercise 2 - 2

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. A Periodicals publication fastened together with one staple is considered an unbound publication.
 - a) true
 - b) false

2. Which of the following places in a Periodicals publication is an acceptable location for the identification (ID) statement?
 - a) on one of the first five pages
 - b) in the masthead on the editorial page (if listed in the table of contents)
 - c) on one of the last three editorial pages inside the back cover in a bound periodical
 - d) all of the above

3. Each physically separate part or section of a Periodicals publication must show the publication title.
 - a) true
 - b) false

4. A qualifying supplement to a Periodicals publication may bear its own permit imprint.
 - a) true
 - b) false

5. An additional protective cover may be added to a publication so long as it covers both the _____ and _____ of the publication and extends to within _____ inch of the edges opposite the fold or binding.

6. Which of the following is not a true statement regarding eligible supplements to Periodicals publications?
 - a) A supplement to a bound publication may not contain more than 75% advertising matter.
 - b) All supplements to a bound publication must bear the endorsement “Supplement To” followed by the title of the publication or publisher.
 - c) A supplement is formed of one or more printed sheets that are bound into a Periodicals publication.
 - d) The final dimensions of a supplement (length and height) must not exceed the dimensions of the host publication, unless completely enclosed in an envelope or polybag.

7. Which of the following items do not qualify for the Periodicals rates as a permissible component or enclosure?
 - a) products and merchandise items
 - b) calendars not offered for sale
 - c) subscription forms
 - d) protective covers or mailing wrappers

8. Which of the following are allowable “incidental” enclosures at the Periodicals rates of postage?
 - a) a subscription order form
 - b) a reply form for subscriber address information
 - c) a bill for the publication itself
 - d) a statement of account for past purchases of the publication
 - e) all of the above

9. Reading matter for which a publication has accepted payment to include in their publication must be plainly marked _____ by the publisher.

10. The delivery address label for a Periodicals publication may be placed in the fold of the publication or its wrapper.
 - a) true
 - b) false

11. A label carrier (placed on top of a publication enclosed in a clear wrapper) may or may not contain the title of the Periodicals publication, depending on the wishes of the publisher.
 - a) true
 - b) false

12. The label carrier may “slide” inside the wrapper, but it is not allowed to be able to completely “rotate” within the confines of the wrapper.
 - a) true
 - b) false

Answers to Exercise 2 - 2

1. **a, true;** a binding consists of at least two staples.
2. **d, all of the above;** are acceptable locations for the ID statement.
3. **a, true;** each separate part or section must show the publication's official title. In addition, the first part or section must clearly state the number of parts or sections comprising that particular issue.
4. **b, false;** a separate permit imprint indicates that the piece can be mailed on its own. Therefore, the piece cannot be considered a supplement to the publication, and is not eligible for Periodicals rates of postage.
5. **front, back, 3/4;** in addition, the publication title must either be visible through, or printed on, a protective cover or wrapper.
6. **c, a supplement is...that are bound into a Periodicals publication;** supplements are not bound into a publication. If they were, they would not be a supplement, they would be part of the host publication.
7. **a, products and merchandise items;** products may not be sent at the Periodicals rates of postage.
8. **e, all of the above;** all of these additions are allowed at the Periodicals rates of postage (either as advertising or nonadvertising, depending on the circumstances).
9. **advertisement;** reading material for which a consideration has been paid (or promised) must be marked as advertising.
10. **b, false;** the delivery address must be placed on the flat side of a mailing wrapper, not in the fold.
11. **b, false;** a label carrier must display the title of the publication.
12. **a, true;** a label carrier may not "spin" or "rotate" within the confines of the mailing wrapper.

The primary purpose of identifying a processing category is to place the mailpiece into the mail processing stream that will most effectively transport the mail. This ensures that your mailings will receive proper handling and expeditious delivery. In addition, the processing category of a mailpiece determines what types of automation discounts are available.

The size of a mailpiece may be determined by the required medium for a particular customer's message (such as a catalog). This can also work in reverse, that is, the desired postage rate can determine the medium. First, you choose the desired postal rate or preparation option, e.g., automation letters. Then, based on the requirements, the designer can "work backwards" to the required piece size.

Individual mailings need to be separated into one of the following five mail processing categories, based solely on the physical dimensions of the mailpiece:

- Letter-size.
- Flat-size.
- Machinable parcels.
- Irregular parcels.
- Outside parcels.



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT USPS PROCESSING CATEGORIES

Upon completion of this module, you should be able to do the following:

- Describe the Postal Service's automated mail processing equipment.
- Describe the minimum and maximum allowable dimensions for a mailpiece.
- Define the meaning of the phrase "rectangular in shape."
- Differentiate between letter-size, and flat-size mailpieces.
- Define the requirements for machinable, nonmachinable, and outside parcels.
- Define the terms aspect ratio, balloon rate, residual shape surcharge, nonmachinable surcharge, and oversized rate.
- Dimensional weight.

USPS MAIL PROCESSING

The Postal Service processes mail by manual, mechanical, or automated operations.

- Manual operations require an employee to read each address on the mail, then sort the mail into “pigeon holes” in a letter or flat case.
- Mechanical operations require an employee to read each address on the mail, then key information in a machine that sorts the mail according to that information.
- Automated operations require only that an employee feed and remove mailpieces from a machine that both reads and sorts the mail.

If your presorted mail is not compatible with USPS automation requirements (such as a letter-size mailpiece with a pen enclosed), it has to be processed mechanically or manually. This is time-consuming and costly and will likely reduce the worksharing discounts you might otherwise be entitled to on mail entered at the Business Mail Entry Unit (BMEU).

The USPS sorts or “processes” mailpieces differently according to their size. The various sizes, or processing categories, of mailpieces are a reflection of the size limits of the sorting equipment or method used to process that particular type of mail. The type of equipment the Postal Service uses to process your mailpieces often determines your potential discounts.

AUTOMATED LETTER PROCESSING EQUIPMENT

The Postal Service processes and distributes mail through a variety of mechanized and automated equipment. The most efficient and accurate processing comes from the use of automated, high-speed, computerized mail sorting and processing equipment. The Postal Service uses two basic types of automated equipment to process letter-size mail: Optical Character Readers and Barcode Sorters.

Optical Character Reader (OCR)

An *optical character reader* (OCR) also known as Multiline Optical Character Reader (MLOCR) scans addresses on letter-size mail, determines the ZIP+4 code and the delivery point information, and converts that information into a *POSTNET* (Postal Numeric Encoding Technique) barcode. The OCR then prints a delivery point barcode in the lower right portion (barcode clear zone) of the mailpiece. An initial sortation of the mailpiece by ZIP Code is then performed. OCRs read information printed in the address block.

OCRs verify address information against an internal database. After locating the address, the OCR must be able to see all elements clearly. This is why a complete address and “good” print quality are so important.

The OCR then does an initial sort of the mailpiece, based on the barcode. From that point on, the mailpiece is sorted by reading and interpreting the barcode using high-speed barcode sorters (BCSs). These machines are capable of reading, barcoding, and sorting mail at a rate of 36,000 pieces per hour or 10 pieces per second.

If you accurately barcode your letter-size mailpieces, they can skip the entire OCR process and go straight to a barcode sorter (BCS). It is mail in this category that the Postal Service has designated to receive the maximum postage discount.

Barcode Sorter (BCS)

A Postal Service barcode sorter (BCS) “reads” POSTNET barcodes on letter-size mailpieces and sorts the mail accordingly. These machines do not read addresses, so an incorrect barcode applied by a customer will cause the piece to be missorted. The BCS is capable of reading and sorting 36,000 pieces per hour, approximately 11 pieces per second.

A BCS can now find a barcode almost anywhere on the face of a letter-size mailpiece. This includes both in the address block area and barcode clear zone (defined later in this course). This allows mailers to use their addressing mechanisms to apply barcodes and qualify for lower rates and take advantage of faster, more efficient mail processing. The barcode must be printed within 4 inches of the bottom edge of the piece as part of the address block or within the barcode clear zone in the lower right corner.

The Postal Service offers voluntary certification for the computer systems and printers for POSTNET barcoding. The software used for ZIP+4 code, delivery point and carrier route matching is also certified. You can obtain a list of vendors offering this hardware and software from your local Postal Business Center or by visiting our website at <http://www.usps.com>.

When purchasing any ZIP+4 matching software, make certain that the product bears the Postal Service certification seal if you plan to claim automation discounts. The software must be Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS) certified. The Postal Service also offers voluntary hardware certification for barcode printing.

FLAT MAIL PROCESSING EQUIPMENT

At the present time, the Postal Service has two types of flat sorting equipment that are explained below. Flats cost the Postal Service more to process than letter mail. Because of this, the postage rates for flats are higher than the postage rates for letters.

AFSM 100

The AFSM 100 streamlines the flat mail processing operations and reduces manual processing. The AFSM 100 is capable of processing 20,000 flats per hour. It includes an optical character reader (OCR), barcode reader (BCR) and an online video coding system (VCS) for processing OCR rejects. It has three high speed feeders that are capable of feeding two flat mail pieces per second. The AFSM 100 has 253 buckets that have three pockets each. These 759 pockets are where the flat mail pieces are injected and then circulate around the chain-driven transport section (carousel) of the machine and fall into one of the 120 flat trays that serve as sortation bins for the machine. These 120 stackers have the capability of future expansion. The AFSM 100 is the Postal Service’s most efficient automated flats processor.

UFSM 1000

The UFSM 1000 is a flat sorting machine that has been retrofitted with automatic feeders, optical character readers and an upgraded control system. This machine processes oversized flat mail that in the past, would have to be worked manually. After the flat has been inducted into the machine, it is fed between two belts to its proper bin. The UFSM 1000 is capable of processing 10,000 flats per hour.

PARCEL SORTATION

The Postal Service began its automated parcel sortation efforts after the letter mail initiatives. New and more productive equipment continues to be deployed. The addition of the linear inline parcel sorter (LIPS) and the UFSM 1000 has enabled the Postal Service to automate the distribution of mailpieces previously sorted entirely by hand.

Small Parcel and Bundle Sorter (SPBS)

The Small Parcel and Bundle Sorter (SPBS) sorts small parcels, irregular parcel post and bundles of mail into as many as 100 separations. The SPBS is an operator-paced machine that sorts between 650 and 1000 pieces per induction station per hour. Mail is introduced through input hoppers, which feed induction station conveyors. The conveyors present parcels to the operators who key the mail pieces to three or five digit ZIP Code destinations. The mail pieces are then mechanically transported to the associated distribution bin. SPBS machines are typically used at processing and distribution centers (P&DCs) & bulk mail centers (BMCs) throughout the nation.

Large Parcel Sort System (LPSS)

The Large Parcel Sort System (LPSS) scans large packages and sorts packages based on their barcode. Packages are sorted through a quick array of machines equipped with sensors that carefully move the packages along, preventing them from being damaged.

Bulk Mail Center Parcel Barcode Sorting (PBCS) System

The Postal Service began deployment of the package barcode sorting (PBCS) system to all bulk mail center (BMC) parcel sorters in 1992. The system, which is integrated into the existing parcel sorter's high speed induction units, consists of an overhead omnidirectional scanner that reads mailer and USPS-applied barcodes. A system controller and a USPS-designed printer/applicator prints and applies barcoded labels on mail pieces without barcodes. The productivity inherent in this system has allowed the Postal Service to begin offering barcode discounts to mailers who apply 5-digit UPC barcodes to their machinable parcels.

Automated Package Processing System (APPS)

The Automated Package Processing System (APPS) is the Postal Service's next generation machine for sorting parcels and bundles of mail. The APPS will further automate package processing by providing greater processing capacity through automatic package induction, singulation, and address recognition.

The APPS utilizes an automated induction system with state-of-the-art recognition technology to maximize processing efficiency. The camera based system captures images from multiple sides of the bundle for use with bar code reading (BCR) and optical character recognition (OCR) software. Once the images are lifted, the mail piece is placed onto the carousel sorter awaiting resolution of the destination information. Image clarity is essential for the successful performance of the automated recognition. If the BCR and/or OCR is unable to resolve the destination information from the images, these same images will be sent to a remote encoding center (REC) for keying. If the images at the REC are of insufficient quality, the piece will be rejected from the APPS and sent to a staffed semi-automatic induction station. If the piece image is unable to be resolved at the semi-automatic induction station the mailpiece is then sent away from the APPS to a manual processing operation.

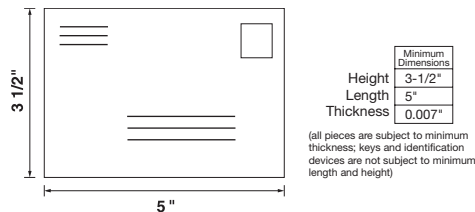
MAILABILITY

Mailpiece design and construction that conforms to Postal Service requirements reduces costs for you and the Postal Service. Proper design and construction of a mailpiece also ensures its mailability. Mailpieces not meeting required minimum criteria, or exceeding certain maximums, are nonmailable. As a reminder, nonmailable means that the piece, as designed, is prohibited from the mailstream. No fee, surcharge, or additional postage may make a nonmailable item mailable.

MINIMUM DIMENSIONS

Unless prepared as Customized MarketMail, all mailpieces that are 1/4" thick or less (except keys and identification devices) must be rectangular in shape. In addition, all mailable matter must be at least 0.007 inches thick.

MINIMUM DIMENSIONS



Generally, the placement of the delivery address generally establishes which dimensions of the piece are the length and the height for determining mailability. The length is the dimension that is parallel to the address as read. The height is the dimension perpendicular to the length. For parcels, length is the distance of the longest dimension and girth is the distance around the thickest part.

This general rule does not apply to:

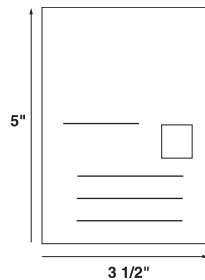
- Automation rate flats.
- Standard Mail Enhanced Carrier Route flats.
- Standard Mail Customized MarketMail.
- Pieces thicker than 1/4" that are not prepared and mailed as a flat.

Improper placement of the address on a mailpiece may result in a failure to meet minimum size standards and can make the mailpiece nonmailable and prohibited from the mailstream.

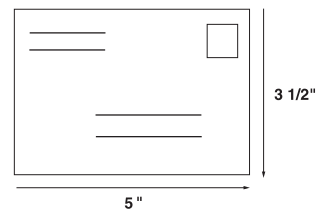
The same size mailpiece, if under 1/4 inch in thickness, can be both mailable and nonmailable, depending upon the orientation of the delivery address. Be sure to take this into account when considering the layout of "pamphlet" style mailpieces.

NONMAILABLE

(must be at least 5" long)



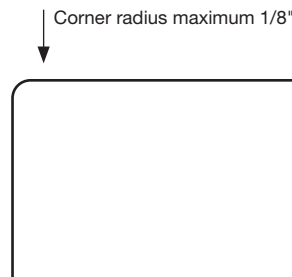
MAILABLE



Rectangular In Shape

Rectangular in shape means that the opposite sides of a mailpiece must be equal in length and meet at right angles. Square mailpieces are mailable. The requirement to be rectangular does not exclude a square shape. However, because the minimum mailable size is 3 1/2 by 5 inches, the smallest size a square mailpiece could measure is 5 by 5 inches.

Rounded (finished) corners are permissible on letter-size card-type mailpieces or post cards made of cardstock that does not exceed a radius of 0.125 inch (1/8 inch). See Exhibit 1.1.1c. DMM 601.1



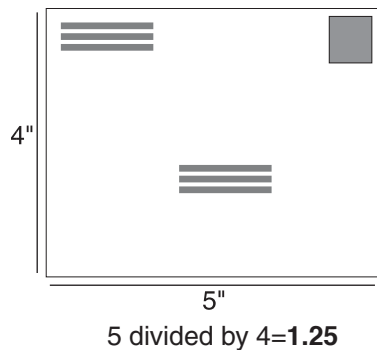
First-Class Mail square mailpieces, not meeting aspect ratio, weighing 1 ounce or less are subject to the current applicable non-machinable surcharge as specified in DMM 301.2.1c. Standard Mail square lettersize pieces, not meeting aspect ratio, weighing 3.3 ounce or less are subject to the nonmachinable letter rates as specified in DMM 243.1.5

! Letter-size mailpieces of any class not meeting the aspect ratio requirements are ineligible for automation discounts.

Aspect Ratio

The aspect ratio of a mailpiece is its length divided by its height. For letter-size mail, this should be not less than 1.3 nor more than 2.5. Mailpieces outside this range can cause problems in the Postal Service’s sorting equipment as they tend to tumble or jam during processing. Follow the instructions in the shaded area in the upper right corner of Notice 3A to determine whether a mailpiece meets the aspect ratio requirement.

NONMACHINABLE ASPECT RATIO: 1.25



MAXIMUM DIMENSIONS

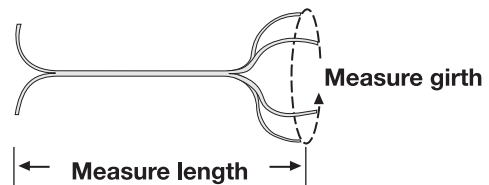
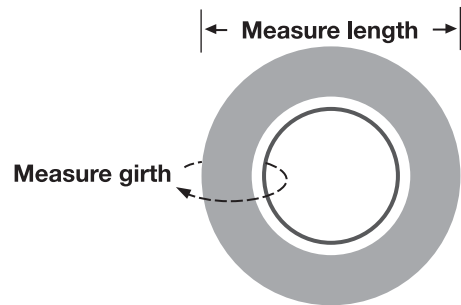
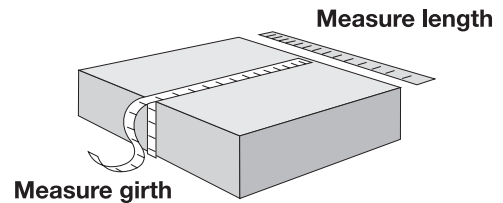
To be mailable, no mailpiece may weigh more than 70 pounds or measure more than 108 inches in length and girth combined. Package Services Parcel Post only, however, may be up to 130 inches in combined length and girth. Length is the distance of the longest dimension and girth is the distance around the thickest part.

KEYS AND IDENTIFICATION DEVICES

Keys and identification devices are acceptable for mailing if they bear, or have securely attached, a company name and complete mailing address. The attachment must have instructions to return the item, and a statement guaranteeing the payment of postage due upon delivery. These items usually have instructions to the effect “If found, please drop in nearest mail box. Postage Guaranteed.”

This service is available to all who wish to use it. No application is required. The items are self-identified and must bear the statement guaranteeing payment of postage. Postage is collected upon delivery in the same manner as postage due is collected for the return of other undeliverable or shortpaid items.

HOW TO MEASURE LENGTH AND GIRTH



Special Standards

Standard Mail Customized MarketMail

705a

Related QSGs: 010, 012, 750 Nonprofit: 670

Quick Service
Guide

Physical Standards (705.1.1.3)	<p>Maximum weight: 3.3 ounces. Shape: rectangular, nonrectangular, or irregular. Uniform thickness not required. Attachments up to 1/4 inch thick are permitted (243.2.6.5, 343.2.6.5). Dimensions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Minimum: 3-1/2 inches high, 5 inches long, and 0.007 inch thick. ■ Maximum: 12 inches high, 15 inches long, and 3/4 inch thick. <p>To determine length and height, see next page. For flexibility standards, see 705.1.1.3e.</p>						
Rates and Fees (705.1.2)	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"></th> <th style="text-align: center;">Regular</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Nonprofit</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Per piece postage</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$0.460</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$0.334</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Pieces pay the Regular or Nonprofit Standard Mail 5-digit nonentry rate for Not Flat-Machinable pieces. Destination entry discounts and additional presort discounts are not available. Annual \$175.00 presort mailing fee.</p>		Regular	Nonprofit	Per piece postage	\$0.460	\$0.334
	Regular	Nonprofit					
Per piece postage	\$0.460	\$0.334					
Eligibility Standards (705.1)	<p>Mailings of 200 or more addressed pieces sorted and marked as described below. Pieces may be letter-size or flat-size. Pieces must weigh no more than 3.3 ounces. Pieces may be rectangular, nonrectangular, or irregularly shaped up to 3/4 inch thick. Pieces must meet content eligibility standards for Standard Mail. Nonprofit rates require specific authorization (703.1). Each piece must have a complete delivery address (including exceptional address format and occupant address formats) with the correct ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code. Simplified address format is not permitted. A certified process must be used at least once a year to ensure accuracy of 5-digit ZIP Codes. If carrier route information line is used, information must be updated within 90 days of mailing using a CASS-certified process. Carrier route information not required. Ancillary service endorsements and detached address labels not permitted.</p>						
Postage Payment and Documentation (244)	<p>Precanceled stamp (604.3), meter (604.4), or permit imprint (604.5). Additional standards apply to mailings of nonidentical-weight pieces. Documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Postage statements: Regular: Form 3602-R; Nonprofit: Form 3602-N. ■ Supporting documentation: Required unless correct rate is affixed to each piece or each piece is of identical weight. Mailings of nonidentical-weight pieces or using more than three different container types require standardized documentation (708.8). ■ Plant-verified drop shipment: at origin verification, Form 3602-C (or postage statement register) and Form 8125; at each destination, signed Form 8125. If individual postage statements are used for each destination, 200-piece minimum required at each DDU. 						
Mail Preparation (705.1.4)	<p>Marking on each piece in postage area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Regular: "Presorted Standard" or "PRSRT STD." ■ Nonprofit: "Nonprofit Organization" or "NONPROFIT ORG." or "NONPROFIT." ■ Additional required markings: "CUSTOMIZED MARKETMAIL" or "CUST MKTMAIL" or "CMM" in postage area or on one or two lines above delivery address or in an optional endorsement line or carrier route information line. Carrier release endorsement: "Carrier—Leave If No Response" below return address. <p>Preparation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sortation: Mail bundled by 5-digit ZIP Code or optional carrier route and prepared in 5-digit, 5-digit scheme (L606), carrier route, or 5-digit carrier routes containers to a destination delivery unit. No minimum volume (piece or weight) for individual bundles or containers. No required minimum per destination delivery unit. ■ Containers: Mailer-supplied containers or USPS-supplied 1- or 2-foot letter trays, flat trays, sacks, or pouches with appropriate container labels (245.4 for letters or 345.4 for flats). If more than three types of containers are used, the mailing must be prepared using an approved manifest mailing system under 705.2. Mailer-supplied containers must be marked "Postmaster Open and Distribute." 						
Enter and Deposit (705.1.1)	<p>Must be deposited at a destination delivery unit using standard entry procedures, Priority Mail or Express Mail drop shipment (705.16), or plant-verified drop shipment (PVDS) (705.15).</p> <p>For the specific DMM standards applicable to this category of mail, consult the DMM sections referenced above and the general sections within each DMM module.</p>						

705a

Standard Mail—Customized MarketMail

Quick Service Guide

Packaging and Container Sequence (705.1.4.5, 705.1.4. 7)

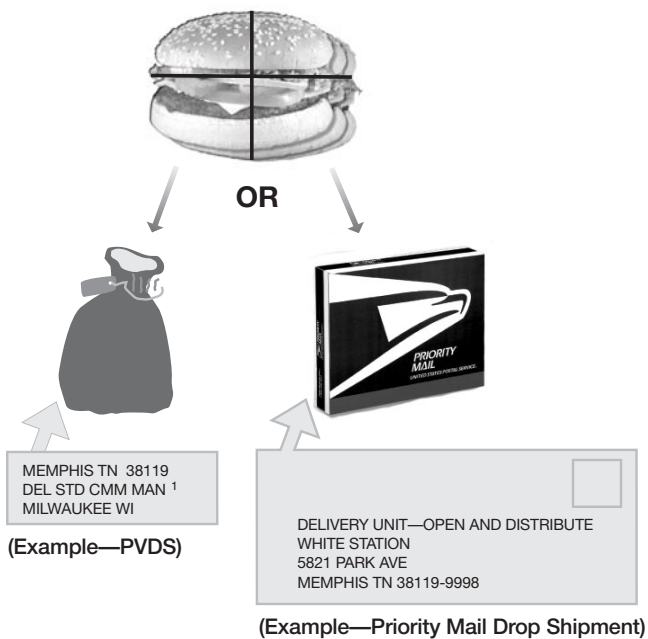
5-Digit

Packages: Required with 2 or more pieces to the same destination; maximum package weight, 20 pounds.

Package Labels: Not required.

Containers: Mailings must be prepared in 5-digit, 5-digit scheme (L606), carrier route, or 5-digit carrier routes letter or flat trays, sacks, or mailer-supplied containers. No minimum required.

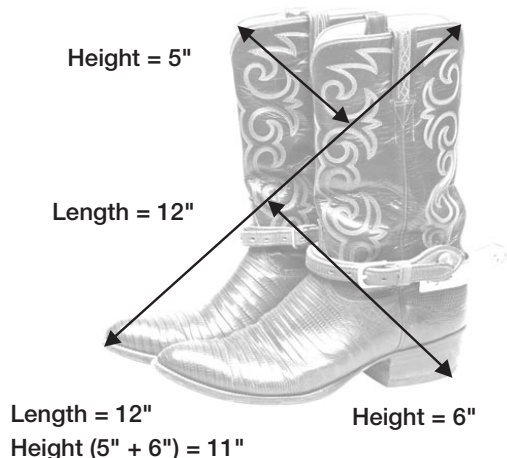
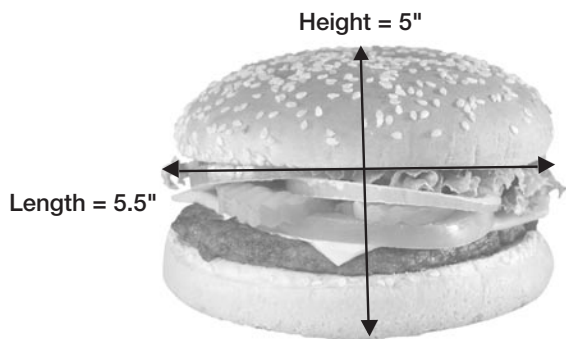
PVDS Labels: For Line 1, use city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code on mail. For Line 2, use "DEL STD CMM MAN." For Line 3, use office of mailing.



1. Use "DEL LTR STD CMM MAN" for letter trays; use "DEL FLTS STD CMM MAN" for flat trays; use "DEL STD CMM MAN" for sacks or mailer-supplied containers.

Determining Length and Height (705.1.1.3)

Length is determined by drawing a straight line between the two outer points most distant from each other. **Height** is determined by drawing perpendicular lines to the points that are the greatest distance above and below the axis of length. The sum of these two lines determines the height.

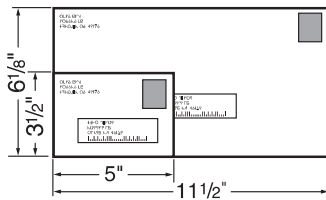


LETTER-SIZE MAILPIECE DIMENSIONS

Once it is determined to be mailable, the Postal Service bases a mailpiece’s processing category solely on its physical dimensions, not address orientation. Letter-size mail consists of those pieces with the following dimensions:

	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum</u>
Height	3-1/2 inches	6-1/8 inches
Length	5-inches	11-1/2 inches
Thickness	0.007 inch	1/4 inch

LETTER-SIZE DIMENSIONS



For automation rate eligibility, mailpieces exceeding 4-1/4 inches by 6 inches must be a minimum of 0.009 inch thick (DMM 201.3.2). If the mailpiece exceeds any one of the maximum dimensions for letter-size mail, it enters the flat-size category (flats are covered next) as long as it does not exceed any maximum flat-size dimension.

Notice 3A, Letter-Size Mail Dimensional Standards Template, can be used to determine qualification for the letter-size processing category, as well as the aspect ratio.

Nonmachinable Mail

The physical dimensions or placement of the address may subject a piece of mail to a nonmachinable surcharge. Nonmachinable mail may result in processing delays or damaged mail because the mail is not compatible with machine processing. For this reason, mailers are discouraged from designing nonmachinable mailpieces. The nonmachinable surcharge is explained in detail in Module 7.

ODD-SHAPED ITEMS IN ENVELOPES

Pens, bottle caps, and similar odd-shaped items are nonmachinable in letter-size envelopes and are subject to the nonmachinable surcharge.

STAMPED CARDS AND POSTCARDS

Stamped cards provided by the Postal Service and privately produced postcards are designed to be mailed as a subclass of First-Class Mail, the card rate. Postcards are not subject to the nonmachinable surcharge. The Standard Mail rate structure does not include a card rate. Generally, Standard Mail mailpieces that are a minimum of 3 1/2" high by 5" long and .007" thick up to 6 1/8" high by 11 1/2" long and 1/4" thick are eligible for a letter rate. Pieces exceeding 4 1/4" or 6" (or both) are required to be at least .009" thick to be machinable. Standard Mail mailpieces exceeding this height and/or length but not meeting the thickness requirement are subject to a nonmachinable surcharge as explained in Module 7.

Postcard Construction

Each card or double card claimed at the card rate, must be:

- Rectangular
- At least 3 1/2" high, 5" long and .007" thick
- Not more than 4 1/4" high, 6" long and .016" thick

Cards must be constructed of unfolded and uncreased paper or cardstock that is uniformly thick. They must be of a lighter color that allows addresses and postmarks to be legible. In general, attachments are not allowed. Cards claimed at the card rate are not subject to the nonmachinable surcharge.



DMM 201.1.2.6

Postcard Layout

First-Class Mail postage rates for cards are lower than those for letters. To ensure that the Postal Service gains the projected savings in processing these smaller-sized mailpieces, there are additional restrictions on address placement and layout for cards claimed at presorted and automation card rates.

The address side of a postcard may either be divided horizontally or vertically as explained below. Cards not designed as such are required to pay the First-Class Mail letter rates. All cards claimed at the automation rate must comply to the standards for automation compatible mail in DMM 201.3. and 201.1.0.

Vertically Divided Postcards

This format allows dividing the address side of the card into a left side and a right side, with or without a vertical rule. The delivery address, postage and any Postal Service markings or endorsements must appear on the right side measuring 2 1/8" measured from the right edge of the card, top to bottom inclusive.

Cards claimed at the presorted rate may have nondelivery address information extending into the right side only if placed above the delivery address. There must be 1/8" of clear space around the delivery address.

nondelivery address information extending into the address side only if placed above the delivery address. There must be 1/8" of clear space around the delivery address.

Wells Water Company 60813 Parrall Rd, Any Town, NY 12345		WELLS WATER COMPANY 60813 PARRALL RD ANY TOWN NY 12345	
SERVICE PERIOD METER FROM TO PREVIOUS		ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED	
ACTUAL CU USAGE	/100 CU FT	BASE	IRRIKATION
DCVA	FIRE FLOWS	ACCOUNT NO.	
PREVIOUS	CURRENT	LATE PYMC CHG	AMOUNT DUE
\$	\$	\$	\$
METER RATES: Schedule number 1 meter reading to be rounded off to nearest 100.			
ll...ll			

Horizontally Divided Postcards

This format allows dividing the address side of the card into an upper and a lower portion, with or without a horizontal rule. The delivery address, postage and any Postal marking or endorsement must appear completely within the portion containing the delivery address that must be 1 1/2" high measured from the top or bottom edge of the card, as applicable, right edge to left edge inclusive. As an alternative, when the delivery address appears within the lower portion, it is permissible for the postage, return address, and any Postal marking or endorsement to appear in the upper portion. Cards claimed at the presorted rate may have

50%

★ Memorial Day Sale ★
Sale Ends MONDAY May 28

50% OFF	Solid Silk Blend and Spring Patterned Sportcoats.....	reg. \$295	NOW \$147.50
50% OFF	Classic Super 100% Business Express Suit Separates..... (Jacket and Matching Trousers)	reg. \$395	NOW \$197.50
50% OFF	Corporate Collection Suits.....	reg. \$495	NOW \$247.50
50% OFF	Ultaroth Polyknit Dress Pants.....	reg. \$ 95	NOW \$47.50
50% OFF	Featherweight Blazers.....	reg. \$295	NOW \$147.50
50% OFF	Featherweight Dress Pants.....	reg. \$195	NOW \$97.50

Offer not accepted on prior purchases and may not be combined with any other offers and is not applicable at Factory or Outlet stores, not through catalog or Internet. For store information, call 1-800-229-4997 or visit us at www.emmerthclothing.com

Emmerth Clothing
 ESTABLISHED 1961

Please deliver on or before May 21
 ll...ll
 CARRIE WITT
 1234 ELM ST
 ANY TOWN NY 12345-6789

Presorted First-Class Mail U.S. Postage P&H Any Town NY Permit # 99

Presorted and/or single-piece rate First-Class Mail Postcards can be less expensive than some Standard Mail rates.

Double Postcards

A double card consists of two attached postcards (folded together), one of which is designed to be detached by the recipient and returned by mail as a single card. Double postcards are not sealed against inspection and are examined to ensure that the reply half does not include an additional message as the reply half may not convey a message to the original addressee or a statement of account. It is to be used for response purposes. They must be prepared so that the address on the reply half is on the inside when the double card is mailed. The first (outgoing) half of a double card must be detached when the reply half is mailed for return. Postage is charged only for the addressed half when originally mailed. The reply half need not bear postage when originally mailed, but it must bear postage at the applicable rate when returned. The reply half may be prepared as business reply, courtesy reply, metered reply or as a merchandise return service label. Plain stickers, seals or a single wire stitch (staple) may be used to fasten the open edge at the top or bottom once the card is folded. Sealing on the sides of the card is prohibited for purposes of inspection.

FLAT-SIZE MAILPIECE DIMENSIONS

By definition, a mailpiece is considered flat-size if it exceeds any one of the maximum dimensions for letter-size mail. This is assuming it does not exceed any maximum flat-size dimension.

A mailpiece must not exceed any of the maximum physical dimensions to be classified as a processing category. A mailpiece may appear to be a letter in two dimensions but will actually be considered a flat when the third dimension is found to exceed the letter-size maximum.

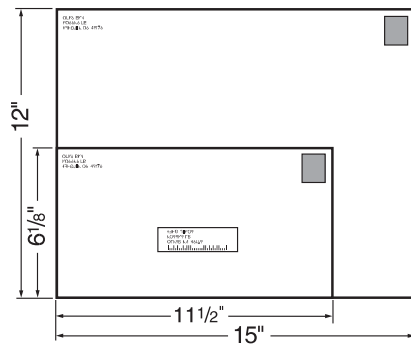
Flat-size mail consists of those pieces with the following dimensions:

- More than 11 1/2 inches long.
- or
- More than 6 1/8 inches high.
- or
- More than 1/4 inch thick.

Maximum Dimensions:

- Maximum length: 15 inches.
- Maximum height: 12 inches.
- Maximum thickness: 3/4 inch.

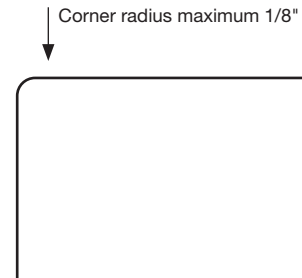
FLAT-SIZE DIMENSIONS



A flat-size mailpiece must exceed at least one of the letter-size maximums.

Finished Corners

Rounded (finished) corners are permissible on flat-size mailpieces that does not exceed a radius of 0.25 inch (1/8). DMM 301.1.1.



**EXERCISE 3 - 1**

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

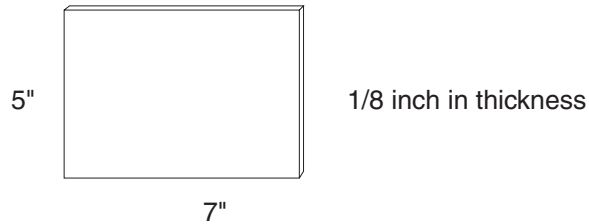
1. All mailpieces, except for keys, identification devices and Customized MarketMail, that are _____ inch thick or less must be _____ in shape and at least _____ inches high and _____ inches long.
2. Square mailpieces are mailable.
 - a) true
 - b) false
3. A letter-size mailpiece may be no more than _____ inches high or _____ inches long or _____ inch thick.
4. To determine the aspect ratio of a letter-size mailpiece, you:
 - a) Multiply the length by the thickness.
 - b) Divide the length by the height.
 - c) Divide the height by the length.
 - d) None of the above.
5. Pens, bottle caps, and similar _____ -shaped items are mailable in letter-size envelopes when the nonmachinable surcharge is paid.
6. A mailpiece qualifying for postcard rates must be a single piece of cardstock no more than _____ inches high by _____ inches long.
7. A qualifying double postcard is charged postage for both the addressed half and the reply half when originally mailed.
 - a) true
 - b) false
8. A flat-size mailpiece may be no more than _____ inches long or _____ inches high or _____ inch thick.
9. Placement of the delivery address establishes which dimension is the length and which is the height for determining mailability.
 - a) true
 - b) false



EXERCISE 3 - 1

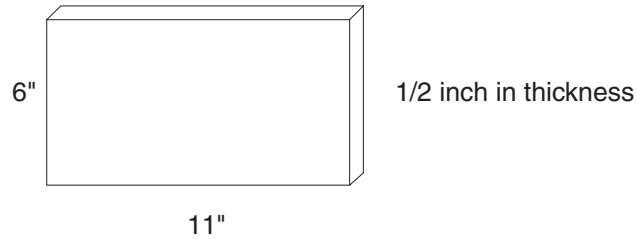
Identify the following mailpieces as either letter-size or flat-size.

10. The following mailpiece is:



- a) letter-size
- b) flat-size
- c) neither

11. The following mailpiece is:



- a) letter-size
- b) flat-size
- c) neither

12. The aspect ratio of the mailpiece in question number 11, above, is:

- a) 1
- b) 1.5
- c) 1.4
- d) 1.9

13. For automation rates, a mailpiece exceeding 4 1/4 inches or 6 inches (or both) must be at least _____ inches thick.

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 3 - 1

1. **1/4, rectangular, 3 1/2, 5**; only keys and identification devices are not subject to these minimum requirements. All other pieces not meeting these minimums are nonmailable.
2. **a, true**; a square is considered a rectangle and is mailable, assuming the minimum length, height, and thickness requirements for mailability are met.
3. **6 1/8, 11 1/2, 1/4**; are the letter-size maximum dimensions. Pieces exceeding any one of these maximums are considered flats, so long as they do not exceed any flat-size maximum.
4. **b, divide the length by the height**; the result of this calculation determines the aspect ratio. The aspect ratio of a letter-size mailpiece must fall between 1.3 to 2.5 (inclusive), otherwise the mailpiece is considered to be nonmachinable.
5. **odd**; these items may now be mailed in letter-size envelopes at single-piece and Presorted First-Class and Standard Mail rates when the appropriate nonmachinable surcharge is paid at the time of mailing.
6. **4 1/4, 6**; in addition, the piece must be no more than 0.016 inch in thickness.
7. **b, false**; postage is charged only for the addressed half when originally mailed.
8. **15, 12, 3/4**; these are the flat-size maximum dimensions.
9. **a, true**; the length is the dimension parallel to the address as read. The height is perpendicular to the address as read.
10. **a, letter-size**; this piece meets the minimum requirements for mailability and does not exceed any letter-size maximum.
11. **b; flat-size**; this mailpiece exceeds the letter-size maximum thickness of 1/4 inch, but does not exceed any flat-size maximum.
12. **c, 1.4**; the length of this mailpiece divided by its height equals 1.4.
13. **.009"**; To qualify for automation rates, mailpieces exceeding 4 1/4 inches or 6 inches (or both) must be a minimum of .009 inches thick.

PARCELS


Mailpieces that are neither letter nor flat-sized (except for some qualifying automation flat-size pieces) are “parcels.” They may be either machinable, irregular, or outside parcels, based on their characteristics.

The contents of a parcel will frequently determine its overall size and shape. Therefore, it may be difficult or perhaps impossible to alter the dimensions of a parcel to comply with specific criteria for mechanized processing. At the very least, if possible, you should make changes to avoid the “balloon” rate, and the nonmachinable surcharge (covered later in this section).

Even without altering the basic size, shape, or weight, there are some things you can do to enhance the processing and delivery of your parcel. Proper and legible addressing and avoiding some of the more negative characteristics of “outside” parcels can go a long way to ensuring efficient delivery.

MACHINABLE PARCELS

Machinable parcels are those articles that can be processed by parcel sorting machines deployed in the Postal Service’s bulk mail centers (BMCs). Parcel sorting machines are large machines with an input station controlled by a computer, which mechanically sorts and distributes parcels. Machinable parcels include mailpieces that meet the minimum and maximum criteria listed below and do not have any characteristics that would make them flat-size mail, irregular parcels, or outside parcels.

 Only machinable parcels qualify for the USPS parcel barcode discounts.

Machinable Parcel Dimensions

Machinable parcels consist of those pieces that are rectangular and within the dimensions listed in DMM 401.1.5:

	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum</u>
Height	3 inches	17 inches
Length	6 inches	34 inches
Thickness	1/4 inch	17 inches
Weight	6 ounces ¹	35 pounds ²

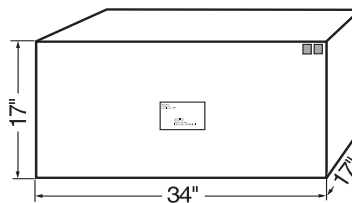
¹3.5 ounces for lightweight parcels prepared under DMM 401.1.5.2.

²For books or other printed matter, the maximum weight is 25 pounds.

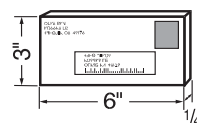
Soft goods wrapped in paper or plastic bags, and enveloped printed matter weighing up to 5 pounds, are machinable only if all applicable packaging standards in DMM 601.3.5 are met.

MACHINABLE PARCEL DIMENSIONS

Maximum



Minimum



Note: A mailpiece measuring exactly 1/4" thick must be 3 1/2" high.

Additional Design Guidelines for Machinable Parcels:

- **Geometric Shapes:** The preferred shapes for machinable parcels are squares, cubes, and rectangles. Acceptable shapes include any soft parcel that meets the minimum and maximum dimensions without compression. Shapes that are not preferred include round objects, triangular objects, and cylindrical objects.
- **Packaging Materials:** The preferred packaging material for parcels is any stiff cardboard. Materials that cause problems with automated sorting equipment include heavily waxed or oiled materials and black wrapping paper; these should not be used.
- **Sealing Materials:** The preferred sealing material for parcels is reinforced tape of almost any type. Sealing materials that are unacceptable include string, twine, rope, or any material that does not adhere to the surface of the package.

Other Machinable Parcels

Some parcels that do not meet all the general criteria for machinable parcels may be successfully processed by bulk mail center (BMC) parcel sorting equipment. A BMC plant manager may authorize a mailer to enter such parcels as machinable parcels rather than irregular parcels, if the parcels are properly labeled, entered at a Post Office within the service area of the authorizing BMC, and are destined for delivery within the same BMC service area.

IRREGULAR PARCELS

Irregular parcels are those parcels that, because of size or weight, cannot be processed by bulk mail center (BMC) parcel sorting machines. Irregular parcels are pieces that do not meet the criteria for machinable parcels. This includes mailpieces with any of the following characteristics:

- Less than 6 inches long.
- Less than 3 inches high.
- Less than 1/4 inch thick.
- Less than 6 ounces (unless prepared under DMM 401.1.5.2).

- Rolls and tubes up to 26 inches long.
- Merchandise samples that are not individually addressed and are not letter-size or flat-size.
- Unwrapped, paper-wrapped, or sleeve-wrapped articles that are not letter-size or flat-size.
- Articles enclosed in envelopes that are not letter-size, flat-size, or machinable parcels.

OUTSIDE PARCELS

Outside parcels are those parcels that, because of their size, shape, density, container, or nature of contents, cannot be processed in postal sacks. Outside parcels include any of the following items:

- A parcel more than:
 - 34 inches long.
 - 17 inches wide.
 - 17 inches high/thick.
 - 35 pounds (25 pounds for books and other printed matter).

or

 - A carton containing more than 24 ounces of liquid in glass container(s).
- 1 gallon or more of liquid in metal or plastic containers.
- Can, (paint, etc.).
- Roll, or tube, longer than 26 inches.
- Metal-banded boxes or wooden or metal boxes.
- Unpackaged articles including tires, exhaust pipes, trailer hitches, etc.
- Harmful and hazardous matter except ORM-D materials.
- Books, printed matter, and business forms weighing more than 25 pounds.
- A high-density parcel (see DMM 601.5.1) weighing more than 15 pounds and exerting more than 60 pounds per square foot pressure on its smallest side.
- Parcels packaged in containers that do not "slide" on parcel sorter chutes.

NONMACHINABLE SURCHARGE

Nonmachinable mailpieces mailed at the inter-BMC/ASF Parcel Post, intra-BMC/ASF Parcel Post, DSCF Parcel Select, and DBMC Parcel Select rates may be subject to a nonmachinable surcharge in addition to normal postage. The surcharge applies to all the items previously listed as outside parcels with the following additions:

- Nursery stock placed in plastic, vinyl, or paper bags (sealed or unsealed).
- Any roll or tube, regardless of length.
- A film case weighing more than 5 pounds or with strap type closures (unless receiving prior authorization).
- Insecurely wrapped parcels.

If a mailer pays the special handling fee (covered in module ten, Extra Services), then the nonmachinable surcharge is waived.

BALLOON RATE

Any Parcel Post or Priority Mail piece weighing less than 20 pounds and measuring more than 84 inches in length and girth (up to 108 inches) is charged the applicable 20 pound rate, regardless of weight. Depending on their characteristics, Parcel Post pieces subject to this balloon rate may also be charged a nonmachinable surcharge if they have any of the characteristics in DMM 101.7.1.

OVERSIZED RATE

Only Parcel Post mailpieces may exceed the normal 108 inch length and girth maximums. Parcel Post mailpieces may measure up to 130 inches in combined length and girth. Parcel Post mailpieces exceeding 108 inches in length and girth are charged a special oversized rate.

The Parcel Post nonmachinable surcharge does not apply to pieces mailed at the oversized rate.

DIMENSIONAL WEIGHT

Postage for parcels addressed for delivery to Zones 5-8 and exceeding 1 cubic foot (1,728 cubic inches) is based on the actual weight or the dimensional weight (as calculated in DMM 123.1.4.1 or 1.4.2), whichever is greater.

1. Follow these steps to determine the dimensional weight for a rectangular parcel:
 - a) Measure the length, width, and height in inches. Round off (see DMM 604.7.0) each measurement to the nearest whole inch.
 - b) Multiply the length by the width by the height.
 - c) If the result exceeds 1,728 cubic inches, divide the result by 194 and round up (see DMM 604.7.0) to the next whole number to determine the dimensional weight in pounds.
2. Follow these steps to determine the dimensional weight for a nonrectangular parcel:
 - a) Measure the length, width, and height in inches at their extreme dimensions. Round off (see DMM 604.7.0) each measurement to the nearest whole inch.
 - b) Multiply the length by the width by the height.
 - c) Multiply the result by an adjustment factor of 0.785.
 - d) If the final result exceeds 1,728 cubic inches, divide the result by 194 and round up (see DMM 604.7.0) to the next whole number to determine the dimensional weight in pounds.
 - e) If the dimensional weight exceeds 70 pounds, the parcel pays the 70-pound rate.

SUMMARY

The correct classification of your mailpiece's processing category is crucial. The processing category often determines (and limits) the rates, discounts, and preparation options for which your mailpiece will qualify.

For instance, not all flat-size pieces will qualify for Standard Mail ECR preparation discounts. Letter-size mailpieces that do not meet the aspect ratio requirements do not qualify for automation rates.

In certain cases, you may need to know the intended postal discounted rate before you can design the piece or package. Failure to take processing category into account before, during, and sometimes after, the design stage can lead to delays and potentially higher rates during the postal acceptance and verification process at the business mail entry unit (BMEU).



EXERCISE 3 - 2

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. The maximum height and thickness for a machinable parcel is:
 - a) 1/4 inch
 - b) 11 1/2 inches
 - c) 15 inches
 - d) 17 inches

2. The Postal Service offers a discount for machinable parcels with the appropriate mailer applied _____.

3. A parcel is categorized as an irregular parcel if its weight is less than:
 - a) 6 ounces
 - b) 8 ounces
 - c) 11 ounces
 - d) 25 pounds

4. Rolls and tubes up to 26 inches long are:
 - a) machinable parcels
 - b) irregular parcels
 - c) outside parcels
 - d) nonmailable

5. Metal boxes, wooden boxes, and metal-banded parcels are considered:
 - a) machinable parcels
 - b) irregular parcels
 - c) outside parcels
 - d) nonmailable

6. A parcel containing books or other printed matter is categorized as an outside parcel if its weight is more than:
 - a) 1 pound
 - b) 10 pounds
 - c) 25 pounds
 - d) 35 pounds

7. Parcel Post and Priority Mail pieces weighing less than _____ pounds and measuring over _____ inches combined length and girth are charged the applicable _____ pound rate.

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 3 - 2

1. **d, 17 inches;** the maximum height and thickness for a machinable parcel is 17 inches. The maximum length is twice that; 34 inches.
2. **barcode;** discounts are available for barcoded parcels.
3. **a, 6 ounces.**
4. **b, irregular parcels;** rolls and tubes are not machinable on USPS parcel sorters. Rolls and tubes greater than 26 inches in length are outside parcels.
5. **c, outside parcels;** while mailable, these types of parcels are never machinable and are subject to the nonmachinable surcharge.
6. **c, 25 pounds;** printed matter is typically a high-density parcel, hence the lower weight limit.
7. **15, 84, 15;** referred to as a “balloon” rate. This regulation ensures that the postage charged for this type of piece covers the cost of handling.

The purpose of an address is to specify the delivery location (mailing address) of a mailpiece. Mailpieces with complete and properly formatted addresses allow the Postal Service to provide consistent, on-time delivery. To receive proper delivery of your mailpieces, and to benefit fully from mail processing automation you need to correctly address your mailpieces.

The purpose of this module is to introduce you to the correct procedures for addressing and return addressing your mail. In addition, we will cover the methods available for updating and verifying your current addresses. We will also point out areas of special concern involving mailpiece design.



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT ADDRESSING

Upon completion of this module, you should be able to do the following:

- Define the purpose of an address.
- Identify the elements of an address and describe the proper guidelines for an address block design.
- Identify the standard Postal Service abbreviations used in addressing.
- Define the purpose of Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS) certified address matching software.
- Describe the features of ancillary service endorsements.
- Describe the [delivery address](#) and [return address](#) placement guidelines.
- Determine when a return address is required.

DELIVERY ADDRESS

All mail must bear a delivery address. Except for simplified addresses, a complete delivery address contains the following elements, from top to bottom.

- Non-address Information
- Attention Line
- Recipient Line
- Delivery Address Line
- City, State and ZIP or ZIP+4 code

A mailpiece may not have more than one delivery address.

Publication 28, *Postal Addressing Standards*, is a publication designed that provides guidelines for proper standardized addressing.

DELIVERY ADDRESS FORMAT

The Postal Service and the mailing industry have jointly developed standardized formats for addresses. These formats enhance the processing and delivery of mail and reduce Undeliverable-As-Addressed (UAA) mail. This provides for mutual cost savings through improved efficiency.

The Postal Service encourages mailers to use these standards to improve delivery of their mail. You will also improve the quality of the address information stored in your customer files.



To ensure compatibility with the Postal Service's Optical Character Readers, follow the address printing and location requirements outlined in the previous module.

STANDARDIZED ADDRESS FORMAT

1. NON-ADDRESS DATA	▶ XX 1234567890-XX
2. INFORMATION/ATTN:	▶ MR STANLEY DOE
3. RECIPIENT	▶ LAST NATIONAL BANK
4. DELIVERY ADDRESS	▶ PO BOX 345
5. CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE	▶ NEW YORK, NY 10163-0345

1) Nonaddress Data Line

Nonaddress data, such as accounting numbers, subscription codes, presort codes, advertising, or logos, if used, should appear on the topmost line, above the name of recipient line or above the information/attention line.

2) Information/Attention Line

The line above the recipient line is an optional line for additional address information. Use this line to direct mail to the attention of a specific person or to provide other information that facilitates delivery (the name of a department within a company, etc.).

3) Name of Recipient Line

The name of the recipient (business or individual) should appear on the line above the delivery address line. This should be either the third or fourth line from the bottom, depending on possible overflow from the delivery address line.

4) Delivery Address Line

The USPS designates the line immediately above the Post Office (city), state, and ZIP Code as the delivery address line. The street address, Post Office box number, private mailbox designator (“PMB” or alternative “#”) and number if addressed to a commercial mail receiving agency (CMRA) address or rural route number and box number (or highway contract number and box number) should appear on this line.

Mail addressed to occupants of multiunit buildings should include the apartment number, suite, room, or other unit designation. Place this information immediately after the street address, on the same line.

If the delivery line is too long, place the apartment number or other secondary address element on the line above the delivery address line (wrap up). If a building name is necessary, place it on the line above the delivery address line.

5) Post Office, State and ZIP Code Line

For domestic mail, the Post Office (city), state, and ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code information should be the last line of the address.

Always use the standard two-letter state abbreviations. ZIP+4 codes must be printed as five digits, a hyphen, and four digits.

If field lengths do not allow all three elements to fit on one line, place the ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code on the line immediately below the city and state (wrap down). Left justify the ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code with the other lines of the address (however, this is not a recommended procedure).

ZIP Codes are required on Express Mail, presorted and automation rate First-Class Mail, Periodicals mail, Standard Mail, Package Services mail (except single-piece Parcel Post), all mail sent to military addresses within the US and to APO and FPO addresses, all official mail (penalty mail), all business reply mail, and all merchandise return service mail. Although not recommended because it impedes service, ZIP Codes may be omitted from single-piece rate First-Class Mail (including Priority Mail), single-piece rate Parcel Post and pieces bearing a simplified address.

STANDARD ABBREVIATIONS

The Postal Service and the mailing industry have standardized abbreviations over the years to ensure recognition by automation equipment. Use abbreviations to keep the necessary information on one line whenever possible.

Generally, 28 spaces (positions) are available in a mailer’s data line for use in addressing. The abbreviations will confine the necessary information of the delivery address line or the Post Office, state, and ZIP Code to the 28 space limitation.


Standardized two-letter state abbreviations are listed in Publication 28, *Postal Addressing Standards*, Appendix B.



PUB 28, APPENDIX B

Street Names

The Postal Service prefers complete street names. Street names should always be spelled out in their entirety and never abbreviated. The Postal Service recommends abbreviations of street names only when necessary to contain the information on one line and directionals and suffixes have already been abbreviated. The abbreviations must be USPS-approved abbreviations.

 All discounted mailings require a correct 5-digit or ZIP+4 code. Do not omit the hyphen in the ZIP+4 code! The hyphen is a required element in a proper ZIP+4 code.

Street Suffix Abbreviations

At one time, there were 26 streets named “Peachtree” in the United States, with 15 of them in Atlanta, Georgia. These “Peachtree” streets were located in a total of 12 different ZIP Codes. A mailpiece addressed to Atlanta with the street name Peachtree, but with no suffix or secondary name, will likely be delayed in delivery.

The street suffix is very important in verifying the ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code. Always abbreviate the suffix using the postal-approved standard. When the street name contains two consecutive words that *can* be suffixes, spell out both words and abbreviate only the actual suffix.

EXAMPLE:

289 MAIN AVENUE DRIVE

Should be abbreviated as:

289 MAIN AVENUE DR

“AVENUE” is actually part of the street name and should not be abbreviated.

A list of USPS approved street suffix abbreviations is in Publication 25, *Designing Letter Mail*, Appendix D.

Directionals

A street address can contain a predirectional and/or a postdirectional in its name. It is abbreviated if it is one of the eight official geographic directional abbreviations (i.e., N, S, E, W, NE, NW, SE, SW).

EXAMPLE:

101 WEST MAIN STREET

Should be abbreviated as:

101 W MAIN ST

Secondary Address Unit Designators

Mail addressed to multiunit buildings should include the secondary address unit designator. Common designators include apartment number, suite number, room number, department name, floor number, and unit name. Abbreviate the designators whenever possible.

EXAMPLE:

101 W MAIN ST APARTMENT 12

Should be abbreviated as:

101 W MAIN ST APT 12

In this case, the designator is “apartment.” Do not use the pound sign when the correct designator is known. However, if you must use the pound sign, leave a space between the sign and the number.

Post Office Box Addresses

For a Post Office box address, use the prefix “PO BOX,” followed by a space, and then the box number. In addition to being a proper address for an actual Post Office box, the PO BOX term is also used in caller service addresses.

DUAL DELIVERY ADDRESSES—DIFFERENT LINES

The Postal Service discourages the use of dual delivery addresses including both a street address and a Post Office box number. If used, do not place both addresses on the same line.

Mail bearing both a street address and a Post Office box number should contain two separate address lines. The mail is delivered to the address appearing on the line immediately above the city, state, and ZIP Code line.

EXAMPLE:

ABC COMPANY
PO BOX 100
1 ANY LANE
ANYWHERE US 98765-4321

The Postal Service will deliver a mailpiece addressed as above to the street address, not the PO Box. This is because the street address is on the line directly above the city, state, and ZIP Code line. When a PO Box is included in an address, place it on the line directly above the city, state, and ZIP Code.

FOREIGN ADDRESSES

The very last line of mail addressed to a foreign country should contain the country name printed in capital letters (no abbreviations). When using foreign postal codes, place them on the line above the country of destination. For additional information on mailing to foreign countries, check the *International Mail Manual* or contact your local Post Office for assistance.

EXAMPLE:

MR THOMAS CLARK
117 RUSSELL DRIVE
LONDON WIP7HQ
ENGLAND

Canadian Addresses

For mail addressed to Canada, the last line of the address must show only the country name, written in full (no abbreviations) and in capital letters. There must be two spaces between the province abbreviation and the postal code, as shown below between ON and K1A OB1.

EXAMPLE:

MRS HELEN K SAUNDERS
1010 CLEAR STREET
OTTAWA ON K1A OB1
CANADA

MILITARY ADDRESSES

Overseas mail addressed to military personnel must show grade; full name, including first name and middle name or initial; and unit number. The last line must contain the APO or FPO designation and the appropriate two-letter "state" abbreviation (AA, AE, or AP), followed by the ZIP+4 or 5-digit ZIP Code.

EXAMPLES:

PC1 DAVID LEE JONES
X-1 DIV/ADMIN
USS KITTY HAWK (CVA-61)
FPO AP 96634-2770

PFC SUSAN M SMITH
COMPANY A 122 SIG BN
UNIT 20511 BOX 4290
APO AA 34049-2342

ALTERNATIVE ADDRESS FORMATS

The use of alternative address formats allows the mailer to simplify their address database management, and/or direct the delivery of their mailpiece to either a named recipient or generic occupant such as Postal Customer or Occupant.

The regulations governing the use of alternative addressing formats are in DMM 602.3.0.

! Mail for military addresses is often delivered overseas. You may need to include a customs declaration for your mailpiece. Check with your local Post Office prior to mailing.

Exceptional Address Format

Mailers have the option of using an “exceptional form of address” on their mailpieces. You may use either one or two lines for the exceptional form of address.

EXAMPLE:

JANE DOE OR CURRENT RESIDENT
1 ANY ST APT 2
ANYWHERE US 98765-4321

JANE DOE
OR CURRENT RESIDENT
1 ANY ST APT 2
ANYWHERE US 98765-4321

CURRENT RESIDENT OR
JANE DOE
1 ANY ST APT 2
ANYWHERE US 98765-4321

The word “Occupant” may be substituted for “Resident” and the word “Current” is not mandatory. The exceptional address format may not be used on:

- Express Mail.
- Mail sent with any special service.
- Mail bearing an ancillary service endorsement.
- Certain types of Periodicals.
- Mail addressed to an overseas Post Office.

Occupant Address Format

To selectively address mail to a rural route and box number, a street address, or a Post Office box, without addressing the customer by name, use the following format:

1. “Postal Customer” (or “Occupant”, “Householder”, or “Resident”).
2. Delivery address (street and number, including apartment number, Post Office box and number, or rural route and box number).
3. Post Office (city), state, and ZIP Code.

EXAMPLE:

POSTAL CUSTOMER
1 ANY ST APT 2
ANYWHERE US 98765-4321

The Occupant Address Format may not be used on:

- Mail addressed to an overseas post office.
- Periodicals Publications intended to count as subscriber or requester copies to meet applicable circulation standards.


Simplified Address Format

Mail may carry the simplified address format (“Postal Customer”) in lieu of a complete delivery address when general distribution is desired to:

- each boxholder on a rural route or highway contract route.
- each family on a rural route or highway contract route (at any Post Office).
- all Post Office boxholders at a Post Office without city carrier service.

You may use a more specific address, such as “Rural Route Boxholder,” followed by the name of the Post Office and state. The Postal Service does not permit more descriptive designations such as “Farmer,” “Food Buyer,” “Voter,” etc.

As per DMM 602.3.2.2, only official matter mailed by agencies of the federal, state, or local government may be distributed to each stop or possible delivery on city carrier routes, or to each Post Office boxholder at a Post Office with city carrier service using the simplified address format.

 Only government agencies may saturate city delivery routes with simplified addressed mailpieces; private businesses may not. You can contact the delivery Post Office to determine which routes are eligible.

OPTIONAL ENDORSEMENT LINES

A mailer may prepare mailings without applying pressure-sensitive package labels or facing slips to the top piece of packages. Instead, the mailer may use a specific optional endorsement line above the address block or on the address label on the top piece of mail in a package.

Strict requirements exist concerning placement, characters used, alignment of margins, and type sizes allowed in optional endorsement lines. Format specifications are in DMM 708.7.0.

ACS and Mailer Keylines

Detailed information about ACS and mailer keylines can be found in Publication 8, Address Change Service. There are two types of keylines that may be placed on a mailpiece.

ACS keyline is used in conjunction with Address Change Service. It provides an effective means of matching ACS notifications with the appropriate records in address

files and is required if change of address information is to be received electronically. An ACS mailpiece consists of a participant code that is provided to authorized mailers by the National Customer Support Center (NCSC) and an optional keyline code. The participant code consists of seven alpha characters, aligned left, and must be preceded by a single pound sign (#) delimiter. It may be placed in the leftmost position in the optional endorsement line or on the mailpiece or an address label directly below the ancillary service endorsement and immediately above the address block.

A mailer keyline is created by the mailer and consist of four to sixteen characters. (alpha, numeric or alphanumeric). This is only true if the Participant Code is preprinted on the envelope other wise the Participant Code is the top line. A barcode may not be placed above a mailer keyline. An example of what a keyline may look like is #JSN0069TWK2874#.

EXAMPLES:

ACS Participant using the ACS keyline option (COA and Nixie records provided via ACS):

```
#BXBJDCK *****5-DIGIT 98765      (ACS participant code and presort level info)
#JSN0069TWK2874#                    (ACS Keyline)
|||||                               (Barcode)
POSTAL CUSTOMER
123 MAIN STREET
ANYTOWN US 98765-4321
```

ACS Participant using an internal keyline (Only COA records provided via ACS):

```
#BXBJDCK *****5-DIGIT 98765      (ACS participant code and presort level info)
JSN0069TWK2874                      (internal Keyline)
|||||                               (Barcode)
POSTAL CUSTOMER
123 MAIN STREET
ANYTOWN US 98765-4321
```

ACS Participant using neither the ACS keyline option nor an internal keyline (Only COA records provided via ACS):

```
#BXBJDCK *****5-DIGIT 98765      (ACS participant code and presort level info)
|||||                               (Barcode)
POSTAL CUSTOMER
123 MAIN STREET
ANYTOWN US 98765-4321
APO AA 34049-2342
```

 For Letter-size mailpieces, the delivery address should be positioned within the OCR Read Area, as discussed in the previous module.

LOCATION

The placement of an address on a mailpiece establishes the height and length dimensions. This is true on all mailable matter except automation rate flat-size mail, and parcels exceeding 1/4" thick.

The layout of your mailpiece must include a clear space for the delivery address, required markings, and postage. The address must be visible and legible. Place the address on the same side as the postage. For a parcel, this should be the side with the largest surface area.

On larger mailpieces, the address area may be simply a clear space on the face of the piece. If this is the case, format the address area so that the return address is in the upper left and the postage is in the upper right, relative to the delivery address.

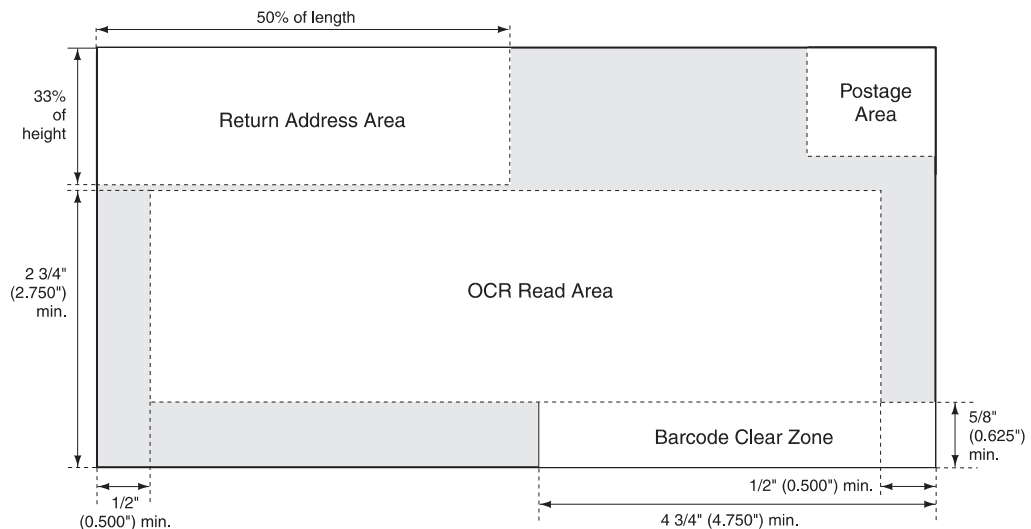
For letter-size mailpieces, follow the layout/design guidelines below and those listed in Publication 25, *Designing Letter and Reply Mail*.

Window Envelopes

For letter-size envelopes, the delivery address window must be parallel with the longest edge. For flat-size, the window may be parallel with any edge. The window opening must be large enough to show the entire address throughout the full range of motion of the insert.

If covered, the window material must be transparent enough to allow the address to be legible. Print the address on a white or lightly colored insert.

OCR READ AREA





EXERCISE 4 - 1

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. The name of the recipient should be placed on a line _____ the delivery address line.
2. If necessary, you may “wrap down” the ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code information from the city, state and ZIP Code line, to the last line of the address.
 - a) true
 - b) false
3. When printing a delivery address, which of the following should not be abbreviated:
 - a) the state name
 - b) the street name
 - c) the suffix
 - d) the predirectional
 - e) the secondary unit designator (e.g., “Apartment”)
4. Which of the following is not an official pre- or postdirectional?
 - a) North
 - b) Southeast
 - c) Below
 - d) West
5. When dual delivery addresses are used (i.e., a PO box and street address on separate lines), the Postal Service always delivers to the Post Office box address.
 - a) true
 - b) false
6. The “exceptional address format” (e.g., Jane Doe or Current Resident) cannot be used on which of the following types of mail?
 - a) letter-size Standard Mail
 - b) flat-size First-Class Mail
 - c) mail with an ancillary service endorsement
 - d) all of the above
7. Any mailer can distribute mail bearing the “simplified address format” (i.e., Postal Customer) to both city delivery and rural carrier routes.
 - a) true
 - b) false
8. A covered window envelope’s window material must be transparent enough to allow the address to be legible.
 - a) true
 - b) false

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 4 - 1

1. **above**; the name of the recipient should appear on a line above the delivery address information line(s).
2. **a, true**; if required by space constraints, the ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code may appear, by itself, left justified on the last line of the delivery address.
3. **b, the street name**; the street name should always be spelled out in its entirety.
4. **c, below**; the official directionals are North, South, East, West, Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, Southwest and are abbreviated as N, S, E, W, NE, NW, SE, SW respectively.
5. **b, false**; the Postal Service will deliver to whichever address (either PO Box or physical street address) is on the line directly above the city, state, and ZIP Code line. Therefore, it is important to place the PO Box on the line above the city, state, and ZIP Code.
6. **c, mail with an ancillary service endorsement**; mailpieces requesting either their return or updated delivery address information must be addressed to a specific individual or business.
7. **b, false**; only government agencies may distribute mailpieces with the simplified address format to city carrier routes.
8. **a, true**; the window's material must be transparent enough so that the automated equipment can successfully read the address block.

BASIC STANDARDS FOR DISCOUNTED RATES

All pieces in a presorted, discounted First-Class Mail mailing must bear a delivery address that includes the correct ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code. Except for simplified addresses, all pieces in a Standard Mail presorted mailing must have a delivery address with the addressee's name and correct ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code.

All Package Services mailpieces must also have a delivery address, including the correct ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code except for single-piece Parcel Post, on which the ZIP Code may be omitted. In addition, the sender's return address must appear on all Package Services (except unendorsed Bound Printed Matter) mailpieces.

ZIP+4 CODE

The most complete ZIP Code is a nine-digit number consisting of five digits, a hyphen, and four digits. The first five digits represent the ZIP Code of the delivery area. The sixth and seventh digits (the first two after the hyphen) identify a smaller geographic area called a sector. The final eighth and ninth digits identify an even smaller area of that sector called a segment.

Together, the final four digits identify such discrete geographic areas as a street side between intersections, a building, or a group of floors in a building. The ZIP+4 code might also designate a span of boxes on a rural route, or a group of Post Office boxes to which a single USPS employee makes delivery.

Firms and businesses receiving large volumes of mail may be assigned a ZIP+4 code exclusive for their business. This type of ZIP+4 code is referred to as a "Firm Unique" ZIP+4 code.

ADDRESS ACCURACY

The ability of the Postal Service to properly deliver a mailpiece to the intended recipient depends upon the quality of the address information. If the addressee has moved, the Postal Service may unavoidably delay, or even be forced to dispose of, the mailpiece.

Obviously, maintaining proper address list hygiene improves the deliverability of all mailpieces produced from a list. The quality of delivery depends on the accuracy of the mailing list.

Zip Code Accuracy Requirement

The Postal Service requires mailers to verify the accuracy of their ZIP Codes for all discounted First-Class Mail and Standard Mail mailings. You must verify the ZIP Code accuracy of the addresses in your mailings at least once a year. Mailers meet this requirement by using a USPS-approved method for ZIP Code verification. These methods are:

- List processing by CASS-certified address matching software.
- Manual verification using the current edition of Publication 65, *National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory*.
- Surveying the addressees on the mailer's address list to inquire about the accuracy of ZIP Code information.
- USPS manual list correction service (DMM 507.6.0).
- Electronic lookup on the USPS web page (www.usps.com).
- All 5-digit ZIP Codes must be verified and corrected within 12 months before the mailing date.

CASS-Certified Address Matching Software

The Coding Accuracy Support System, or CASS, is a certification test employed by the USPS to measure the quality of address matching software. This certification is offered to mailers, service bureaus, and software vendors to ensure the accuracy of delivery point barcodes, ZIP+4 codes, 5-digit ZIP Codes, and carrier route information.

Mailings claimed at carrier route rates are required to have their address records CASS certified within 90 days before the date of mailing. Mailings claimed at automation (bar-coded) rates are required to have their address records CASS certified within 180 days before the date of mailing.



A mailer certifies that they have met the ZIP Code Accuracy standard by signing the postage statement.

Mailers using privately owned Multiline Optical Character Readers (MLOCRs) must obtain Multiline Accuracy Support System (MASS) certification for the address matching software used on their MLOCRs. This certification is required to claim automation rates on mailpieces processed by these MLOCRs.

Call the National Customer Support Center (NCSC) at 1-800-642-2914 to obtain information on how to become a CASS-certified vendor or user, or for answers to other questions concerning the CASS-certification process. A complete list of vendors is also available on our website @ <http://www.usps.com>.

Move Update Requirement

To qualify for all First-Class Mail discounted rates the mailer must obtain current forwarding (Change of Address, COA) information for every address before they mail. Unless it is newly obtained from the customer, an address must be processed using an address update method within 185 days prior to the mailing date.

This is called the “move update” requirement. This ensures that the Postal Service will not have to rehandle and redeliver mailpieces that had previously received a discount from full rate postage.

The approved methods for obtaining forwarding information are:

1. National Change of Address Link (NCOALink™) – This method is provided by licensed vendors. It accesses up-to-date address information for customers who have moved. It improves deliverability of mail and reduces the cost and the time required to forward the mail. This method is provided through licensed vendors.
2. FASTforwardSM for:
 - a. Multiline Optical Character Reader (MLOCR) – identifies mailpieces during processing that are addressed to intended recipients that have moved from the address on the mailpiece and forwards them by applying the new address and sorting to the address where the customer moved.

b. Mailing List Correction – provides a list processing method of identifying change of addresses (available now until 9/30/05).

3. Ancillary Service Endorsement – a request for updated address information using one of required endorsements (except for Forwarding Service Requested) printed directly on the piece (explained below).
4. Address Change Service (ACS) – an electronic format for notification using the Change Service Requested or Address Service Requested endorsements.
5. Mailer Move Update Process Certification and USPS-approved alternative method – Administered and approved by the NCSC.


PS Form 6014 Certification of Move Update Compliance is used by mail owners and mail preparers to acknowledge that the Move Update requirement has been fulfilled. Although not required to receive discounts for Standard Mail mailings, at the present time, periodic use of one of these methods will enhance the deliverability of your addresses. More information on these processes is available by calling the National Customer Support Center (NCSC) at 1-800-238-3150.

ANCILLARY SERVICE ENDORSEMENTS

This course will focus on the ancillary service endorsements as a method of meeting the move update requirement and obtaining updated address information. The use of an ancillary service endorsement also allows the mailer to determine how the Postal Service will handle the piece if it is undeliverable.

Only the first three ancillary service endorsements on the chart on page 14 meet the “move update” requirements for First-Class Mail discounts. The table cross references the handling of Undeliverable-as-Addressed (UAA) mail for First-Class Mail and Standard Mail pieces.

ANCILLARY SERVICE ENDORSEMENT LOCATIONS

USPS 475 L'ENFANT PLZ SW WASHINGTON DC 20260-6800 RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED ¹	FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED ³	
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED ²		
NATIONAL CUSTOMER SUPPORT CENTER UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE 6060 PRIMACY PKWY STE 201 MEMPHIS TN 38188-0001		
CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED ⁴		

Location

You may print the endorsements in one of the following locations:

1. Immediately below the return address.
2. Immediately above the delivery address.
3. Immediately to the left of the postage area, below any rate marking.
4. Immediately below the postage area and any rate marking.

You must print an ancillary service endorsement such as "Address Service Requested" in at least 8-point type. Maintain a minimum 1/4 inch clear space around (above, below, and to both sides) the endorsement to ensure legibility.

The Postal Service requires a return address on the same side of the piece bearing the ancillary service endorsement. Orient the endorsement so that it reads in the same direction as the return address.

Maintain a reasonable degree of color contrast between the endorsement and the background of the piece. Brilliant envelopes and reverse printing are not permitted.

Undeliverable-As-Addressed Package Services

Except for Bound Printed Matter, unendorsed Package Services must be either forwarded or returned as applicable by regulation; it may not be disposed of. If this mail is received at the wrong Post Office because it has an incorrect ZIP Code, it is not transported to the correct delivery unit. Unendorsed, undeliverable Bound Printed Matter, however, is disposed of as waste.

Correctly addressed, unendorsed Package Services that is misdirected or has the wrong sack label is redirected to the correct unit for delivery. This is just another example of the importance of address quality on your mailpieces.

Maintain the quality and the deliverability of your address lists using at least one of the options available. The Postal Service requires the use of one of the approved methods for all discounted First-Class Mail mailings.

Ancillary Service Endorsements cannot be used on mailpieces with an exceptional address format (i.e. Jane Doe or Current Resident). The complete rules and regulations governing the forwarding and return of mail for all classes are contained in *Domestic Mail Manual*, DMM 507.1.0.

! When choosing an ancillary service option, do not underestimate the charges for returned items, particularly those returning at the weighted fee!

Don't forget the 1/4 inch clearance requirement. This is a common error. The USPS cannot guarantee proper handling if you do not meet this requirement. In addition, an "Exception to Regulation" is required before mailing.

QUICK SERVICE GUIDE 507d—ANCILLARY SERVICE ENDORSEMENT

For a detailed description of USPS actions, see 507.

Mailer Endorsement and USPS Action	Priority Mail and First-Class Mail	Standard Mail	Package Services
Address Service Requested¹			
<i>Forwarding and return. New separate address notification provided.</i>			
Months 1 through 12: mailpiece forwarded; notice of new address provided, address correction fee charged.	Forwarded at no charge.	Forwarded at no charge.	Forwarded locally at no charge; forwarded out of town as postage due.
Months 13 through 18: mailpiece returned with new address attached.	Returned at no charge.	Weighted fee charged. ²	Return postage charged at appropriate single-piece rate.
After 18 months or if <i>undeliverable at any time</i> : mailpiece returned with reason for nondelivery attached.	Returned at no charge.	Weighted fee charged. ²	Returned if undeliverable or if addressee refused to pay postage due. Forwarding (where attempted) and return postage charged at appropriate Package Services single-piece rate.
Return Service Requested			
<i>No forwarding, only return. New address notification provided.</i>			
Mailpiece returned with new address or reason for nondelivery attached.	No charge.	Appropriate single-piece First-Class Mail or Priority Mail rate charged.	Return postage charged at appropriate single-piece rate.
Change Service Requested^{1,3}			
<i>No forwarding or return. New address notification provided.</i>			
Separate notice of new address or reason for nondelivery provided; mailpiece disposed of by USPS.	Manual notice: N/A. Electronic notice: \$0.06 ea. Automated letters: ■ first two notices—\$0.00 ea. ■ additional—\$0.05 ea.	Manual notice: \$0.50 ea. Electronic notice: \$0.25 ea. Automated letters: ■ first two notices—\$0.02 ea. ■ additional—\$0.15	Manual notice: \$0.50 ea. Electronic notice: \$0.25 ea.
Forwarding Service Requested			
<i>Forwarding and return. New address notification provided only with return.</i>			
Months 1 through 12: mailpiece forwarded.	Forwarded at no charge.	Forwarded at no charge.	Forwarded locally at no charge; forwarded out of town as postage due.
Months 13 through 18: mailpiece returned with new address attached.	Returned at no charge.	Weighted fee charged. ²	Return postage charged at appropriate single-piece rate.
After 18 months or if <i>undeliverable at any time</i> : mailpiece returned with reason for nondelivery attached.	Returned at no charge.	Weighted fee charged. ²	Returned if undeliverable or if addressee refused to pay postage due. Forwarding (where attempted) and return postage charged at appropriate Package Services single-piece rate.
Temp—Return Service Requested			
Piece returned with new address or reason for nondelivery attached. If temporary change of address, piece forwarded; no separate notice of temporary change of address provided.	No charge.	N/A	N/A
No Endorsement			
<i>UAA handled by class of mail.</i>	Same as USPS action for "Forwarding Service Requested."	Mailpiece disposed of by USPS.	Same as USPS action for "Forwarding Service Requested," except Bound Printed Matter disposed of by USPS. Parcel Post, Media Mail, and Library Mail with no endorsement obligates the mailer to pay any applicable forwarding and return postage charges at a Package Services single-piece rate (507.1.5.4).

- For Address Change Service with First-Class Mail and Priority Mail, see 507.1.5.1, for ACS with Standard Mail see 507.1.5.3a.
- Weighted fee is the appropriate single-piece First-Class Mail or Priority Mail rate for the piece plus the nonmachinable surcharge if it applies (101.1.2), multiplied by 2.472 and rounded up to the next whole cent. For letter-size weighted fee rates, see 243.1.6.2.
- For First-Class Mail and Priority Mail, Change Service Requested is only available with electronic Address Change Service (ACS). Only available for Priority Mail pieces containing perishable matter that bear the endorsement "Perishable." Delivery Confirmation and Signature Confirmation are the only two special services permitted with this endorsement.
- For First-Class Mail and Priority Mail, Change Service Requested is only available with electronic Address Change Service (ACS). Only available for Priority Mail pieces containing perishable matter that bear the endorsement "Perishable." Delivery Confirmation and Signature Confirmation are the only two special services permitted with this endorsement.



EXERCISE 4 - 2

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. All pieces in discounted Standard Mail and First-Class Mail presorted mailings must bear a delivery address including the correct ZIP Code.
 - a) true
 - b) false
2. Mailers are required to use an approved method of verifying the accuracy of the 5-digit ZIP Codes in all discounted First-Class Mail and Standard Mail mailings within 12 months before the mailing date.
 - a) true
 - b) false
3. All mailings at automated (barcoded) rates must be produced from address lists that have been processed using CASS-certified software.
 - a) true
 - b) false
4. Which of the following is an approved method for obtaining the current forwarding information necessary to meet the “move update” requirements for discounted First-Class Mail?
 - a) list processing by CASS-certified software
 - b) National Change of Address Link (NCOA^{Link}™)
 - c) a survey of the addressees
 - d) all of the above
5. Which ancillary service endorsement is not a valid method for meeting the “move update” requirement for First-Class Mail?
 - a) Return Service Requested
 - b) Forwarding Service Requested
 - c) Address Service Requested
6. Which of the following is a proper location on the face of a mailpiece for an ancillary service endorsement?
 - a) immediately below the return address
 - b) immediately above the delivery address
 - c) immediately below the postage area and rate markings
 - d) all of the above
7. Ancillary service endorsements such as “Address Service Requested” must be printed in at least _____ point type with a _____ inch clear space above and below the endorsement.

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 4 - 2

1. **a, true**; partially addressed pieces or pieces with an incorrect ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code are not acceptable for mailing at the discounted Standard Mail or First-Class Mail rates of postage.
2. **a, true**; the approved methods are: list processing via CASS-certified software, manual verification using the National Five-Digit ZIP Code Directory, survey of the addressees, USPS manual list correction service, and electronic lookup on the USPS web page (www.usps.com).
3. **a, true**; Mailings claimed at the automation (barcoded) rates are required to have their address records CASS-certified within 180 days before the date of the mailing.
4. **b, National Change of Address Link (NCOA^{Link}™) list processing** provides access to up-to-date address information for customers who have moved. It improves deliverability of mail and reduces the cost and the time required to forward the mail. This method is provided through licensed vendors.
5. **b, Forwarding Service Requested**; since the piece is forwarded for months 1-12, this service does not return to the mailer the updated address information necessary to meet this requirement.
6. **d, all of the above**; all of these are valid positions for an ancillary service endorsement.
7. **8, 1/4**; both requirements ensure legibility. If these requirements are not met, the Postal Service cannot guarantee that the service will be rendered as requested.

RETURN ADDRESS

A clear, correct, return address indicates to the USPS where the sender of a mailpiece wants it returned if it cannot be delivered. The USPS also uses the return address to provide ancillary services requested by the mailer (such as “Address Service Requested”).

Clearly visible mailer endorsements ensure that letter carriers provide the service requested. Design mailpieces with the delivery address, return address, endorsement, and postage payment all clearly visible and printed in the same direction.

Elements of the Return Address

The return address contains elements corresponding to those for the delivery address. A return address is required in the circumstances that follow. If the sender’s name is not included in the return address, another clear designation (apartment, suite or room number) is required to ensure proper handling of ancillary services and/or return of the piece. ZIP or ZIP+4 codes are required in the return address of all mail on which postage is paid with precanceled stamps or company permit imprints. It is also required on Periodicals mail when “Address Service Requested” is specified. Official Mail (penalty mail also requires a ZIP Code in the return address.

Required Use of a Return Address

The mailer’s actual return address and name must appear legibly on:

- Mail of any class, when its return is requested.
- Mail of any class when an ancillary service endorsement is used.
- Official mail (government mail).
- Mail bearing precanceled stamps.
- Mail bearing a company permit imprint.
- Priority Mail.
- Periodicals in envelopes or wrappers.
- Package Services (except unendorsed Bound Printed Matter).
- Registered mail.
- Insured mail.
- COD mail.
- Certified mail if a return receipt is requested.
- Express Mail if a return receipt is requested. The return address on the Express Mail label meets this standard.

One Post Office Name

Postal regulations prohibit a return address from including more than one Post Office name. Therefore, mailpieces with more than one return address from different cities are not acceptable for mailing under any condition.

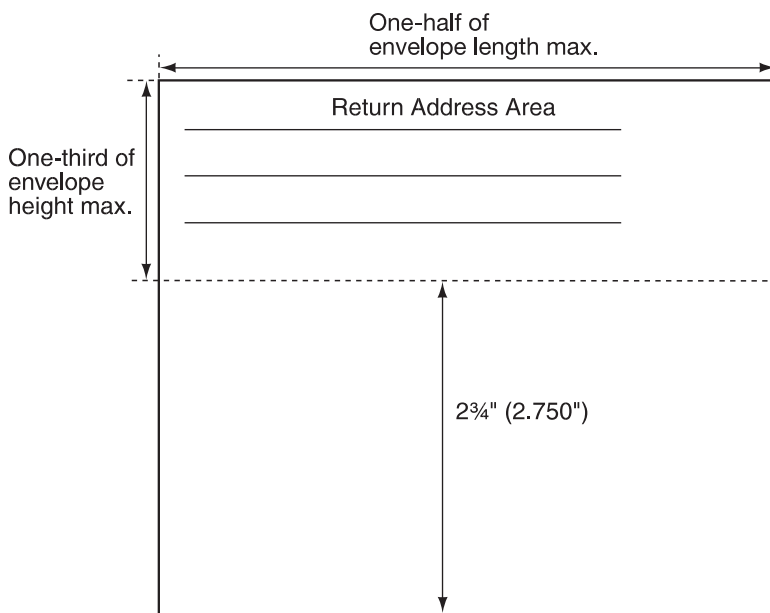
Location

The return address should appear in the top left corner of the address side, or address area, of the mailpiece, parallel to the delivery address; the return address should not appear on the reverse side of a mailpiece.

When properly placed on a letter-size mailpiece, the return address should extend no more than half the length of the mailpiece from left to right, and no more than one-third the height of the mailpiece from top to bottom.

Additionally, the return address should be at least 2 3/4 inches above the bottom edge of the mailpiece. To help prevent OCR readability of the return address, the return address should be to the upper left of, and in a less prominent font than, the delivery address.

RETURN ADDRESS BLOCK LOCATION FOR LETTER-SIZE MAILPIECES



Publication 28; Postal Addressing Standards, is a complete reference for all types of addresses. Contact your local Post Office for a copy of this comprehensive guide.

SUMMARY

The use of a complete, correct and properly formatted delivery address is crucial to the timely delivery of your mailpieces. The Postal Service offers a number of methods to help ensure that the addresses in your database and on your mailpieces are current. In addition, through the use of ancillary service endorsements, you can designate how you want the USPS to handle any mailpieces that are Undeliverable-As-Addressed (UAA).

The intent of this module is to provide you with working knowledge of the factors that affect proper delivery addressing. Publication 28; *Postal Addressing Standards*, is the definitive, “must-have” postal resource for anyone involved in address database management and address printing for mailing.

**EXERCISE 4 - 3**

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. The elements of a proper return address are the same as those of a properly formatted _____ address.
2. The actual name of the sender is required to appear in all return addresses.
 - a) true
 - b) false
3. The sender's actual name and return address is required on any mailpiece:
 - a) sent as presorted First-Class Mail
 - b) sent at presorted Standard Mail rates
 - c) bearing an ancillary service endorsement
 - d) bearing a simplified address
4. Two return addresses are permissible on mail bearing a company permit imprint:
 - a) true
 - b) false
5. A return address should appear in the top _____ corner of the address side or address area of the mailpiece, _____ to the delivery address.
6. On a letter-size mailpiece, the entire return address should be located at least:
 - a) 2 inches above the bottom edge of the mailpiece
 - b) 2 1/4 inches above the bottom edge of the mailpiece
 - c) 2 1/2 inches above the bottom edge of the mailpiece
 - d) 2 3/4 inches above the bottom edge of the mailpiece
 - e) 3 inches above the bottom edge of the mailpiece
7. On a letter-size mailpiece, the entire return address should be no more than:
 - a) one-half the length of the mailpiece
 - b) one-third the length of the mailpiece
 - c) one-half the height of the mailpiece
 - d) one-third the height of the mailpiece
 - e) both a and d
 - f) both b and c

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 4 - 3

1. **delivery**; a return address consists of the same elements as a delivery address including a recipient line, a delivery address line, and a city, state, and ZIP Code line.
2. **b, false**; the name of the sender is only required to appear under certain circumstances. However, if the actual name of the sender is not used, then any pertinent secondary information, such as apartment or suite number, is required.
3. **c, bearing an ancillary service endorsement**; without the sender's name and return address, the USPS cannot render the service requested in the mailer endorsement.
4. **b, false**; mailpieces with more than one return address are not acceptable for mailing under any condition.
5. **left, parallel**; this is the general standard for return address location.
6. **d, 2 3/4 inches above the bottom edge of the mailpiece**; this helps ensure that the OCR will not mistake the return address for the delivery address.
7. **e, both a and d**; this ensures that the return address does not dominate the face of the mailpiece and so obscure the efficient location of the delivery address.

One of the best ways for mailers to save money and ensure timely and efficient postal handling is to submit qualifying automation rate mailings. The Postal Service provides worksharing discounts to mailers who can presort and prebarcode their mail. Qualifying barcoded mailpieces enjoy significant postage discounts, especially for large volume mailings, and provide for accurate and fast processing on high speed barcode sorters in postal facilities.

The Postal Service offers discounts for letters, flats, and not flat machinable mailpieces that bear a qualifying barcode and meet the required physical specifications. This module covers the specifications and printing requirements of all barcodes for which the Postal Service offers discounts to mailers.



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT USPS BARCODES

Upon completion of this module, you should be able to do the following:

- Define the [purpose](#) and [structure](#) of a POSTNET barcode.
- Define the [purpose](#) and [structure](#) of an Intelligent Mail® barcode (IMB) (Formerly known as the 4-State Customer Barcode)
- [Describe the difference between a ZIP+4 barcode and a delivery point barcode.](#)
- [Describe where the delivery point numbers are derived.](#)
- [Decode a POSTNET barcode to maintain quality control.](#)
- [Describe the types of barcodes used for prebarcoding parcels.](#)
- [Discuss the dimensional tolerances and the technical considerations for printing barcodes of all types.](#)

POSTNET BARCODE

In 1980 the Postal Service invented a unique barcoding method called POSTNET, for POSTal Numeric Encoding Technique. The POSTNET barcode is a graphic method of encoding ZIP+4 code information. The POSTNET barcode is used for sortation of letter flat-size mail and parcels under 6 oz. A POSTNET delivery point barcode on letter-size mail enables the Postal Service to possibly sort the mail in the sequence that the carrier walks his route.

Producing Barcodes For Your Mail

Every mailpiece in an automation rate mailing must bear a qualifying barcode. Letter- and flat-size mailpieces require POSTNET barcodes. Letter and flat-size mailpieces require either a POSTNET barcode or IMB. Software and hardware that can preprint a barcode on your mail is available from various manufacturers at a relatively low cost. Some types of equipment can print a barcode on your envelope insert and allow the barcode to show through a window.

Other equipment can print barcodes on labels and allow you to apply the barcoded labels to your mailpieces. Addressing machines range from small desktop units to sophisticated add-on adapters for large mail stuffing/folding/labeling machines.

Under the concept of worksharing, you can benefit from the largest allowable discounts on your domestic mail, if you can successfully produce qualifying barcodes and meet all other automation and presort requirements.

Publication 95, Quick Service Guide, provides a thorough overview of mail preparation requirements. QSG 201a, 230d, and 240c, for descriptions of the preparation for First-Class Mail and Standard Mail automation letters and flats.



**QSG 230d, 330b,
240c, 340b**

Barcode Benefits

Once the barcode is applied on letters, it can be read by the more efficient barcode sorters (BCS). Letter-size mail bearing a delivery point barcode bypasses the more complex optical character reader (OCR) and the postal handling associated with OCR processing, saving time and money for you and the Postal Service.

The benefits of preprinting accurate, qualifying barcodes on your mailpieces include the following:

- Faster mail processing.
- Reduction in postage costs for the mailer.
- Reduction in operating costs for the Postal Service (which promotes rate stability).
- More consistent delivery times and decrease in misdeliveries.

POSTNET BARCODE

The POSTNET barcode represents the digits of the ZIP+4 code (required for automation rate flat-size mail) and the delivery point code (required for automation rate letter-size mail) for the delivery address on the mailpiece.

The POSTNET delivery point barcode is usually unique for each address in the mailing, and provides the most efficient way in the modern postal system to sort a mailpiece to its final destination.

Delivery Point Barcode

A delivery point barcode provides the Postal Service with the ability to uniquely identify the precise delivery point of a given mailpiece and to sort the mail in delivery sequence using a BCS. The correct delivery point barcode must be derived from a CASS-certified delivery point code address matching process.

The ZIP+4 code typically represents a “street side,” “block face,” or group of houses on a street, but does not represent any particular house on the block. The delivery point barcode is formed by adding 2 additional digits to the basic ZIP+4 barcode.

By adding the last two digits of the house-number to the existing 9-digit ZIP+4 code, a unique barcode can be derived that represents one exact house. Residential delivery point barcodes are derived using this simple concept. For some high rise buildings or an apartment complex, the delivery point code is derived from a more complex set of rules. For Post Office box addresses, the Postal Service generally uses the last two digits of the box number (e.g., BOX 34007 has delivery point digits of 0 and 7).

STRUCTURE OF A POSTNET BARCODE

A POSTNET delivery point barcode is made up of tall bars and short bars. The bars are arranged in sets of five to represent the digits in the ZIP+4 code and the delivery point. Each digit is represented by a different configuration of these five bars.

All ZIP Codes currently in use can be represented by placing five bar combinations, one after the other, in linear fashion (see illustration). The barcode can be printed in the lower right corner of a letter-size mailpiece or in the address block.

Each digit in the ZIP+4 code, and the delivery point numbers, is represented by five bars, as mentioned above, always in a combination of two tall bars and three short bars. By adding the positional values of the two tall bars and ignoring the positional values of the three short bars, the five-bar POSTNET barcode can represent any digit from 0 through 9.

Frame Bars

Every POSTNET barcode begins and ends with a tall frame bar. They serve no purpose other than as end markers for the barcode itself. They denote where the numeric ZIP+4 code information encoded in the barcode begins and ends.

Correction Character

The last number encoded in every barcode is a correction character. This is in addition to the ZIP+4 code information, and is appended at the end, just before the last frame bar. The correction character serves as an on-the-fly check digit for the barcode sorters and is used to confirm the accuracy of the barcode information as read by the machinery.

The correction character is derived by adding the sum of all the numbers encoded in the barcode and subtracting that number from the next whole integer of 10.

Ex:

ZIP+4 code = 11011-9000

$$1 + 1 + 0 + 1 + 1 + 9 + 0 + 0 + 0 = 13$$

Since the sum is 13, then the next whole integer of 10 is 20. (If the sum had been 23, then the next whole integer of 10 would have been 30. And so on....)

$$20 - 13 = 7$$

Therefore, for this example, the proper correction character for this POSTNET ZIP+4 barcode would be 7. The number would be encoded in the last set of five tall and short bars, just before the final tall frame bar.

POSTNET Delivery Point Barcode

A POSTNET Delivery Point Barcode encodes two additional characters following the ZIP+4 code information. This type of barcode is required for letter-size automation discounts, and optional for flat-sized.

The delivery point characters, combined with the ZIP+4 code information, uniquely identify the precise delivery point of a given mailpiece. This allows the Postal Service to sort the mail in delivery sequence using a barcode sorter (BCS.) The two delivery point characters are typically the last two digits of the primary street or box number of the delivery address.

The delivery point characters are added to the barcode at the end of the ZIP+4 code information, prior to the correction character, and are included in the sum used to derive the correction character.

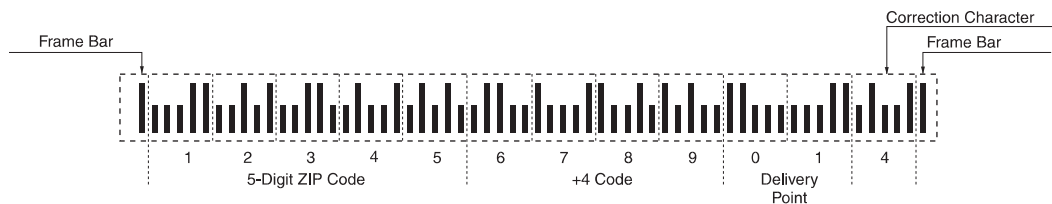
A proper delivery point barcode consists of 62 bars.

Zip+4 Code information	9 sets of 5 bars =	45
Delivery point	2 sets of 5 bars =	10
Correction character	1 set of 5 bars =	5
Frame bars	2 sets of 1 bar =	2
		total 62



Count the total number of bars for a "quick check." If they total 62, it's likely to be a qualifying delivery point barcode!

POSTNET DELIVERY POINT BARCODE



POSTNET BARCODE SYMBOLOGY

The POSTNET barcode is a 2 of 5 code using positional weights. Each numeral encoded in the barcode is represented by a set of 2 tall and 3 short bars. Each bar in this set of 5 has a numeric “weight” or “value” based on its position. The value of the position is turned on when the space is occupied by a tall bar.

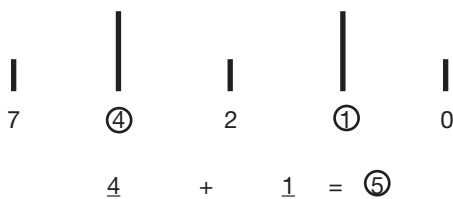
The positional weights are shown below. The first position or bar has a value of 7. The second position has a value of 4, the third position has a value of 2, the fourth position has a value of 1, and the fifth position has a value of 0.

The positional weights are a constant and never change. These values are only active or turned on when the position is occupied by a tall bar.



Only 2 positions or values are ever active in any set of 5 bars, hence the designation “2 of 5 code.” So, each number in a ZIP+4 code, as encoded in a POSTNET ZIP+4 barcode, is represented by a set of 2 tall and 3 short bars. The number itself is derived by adding the numeric value of the 2 active positions, or tall bars.

Ex.




In the preceding example, the two bars occupying the positions with a value of 4 and 1 are tall. Therefore, the numeric values of these positions are active. The number encoded by each set of 5 bars is derived by adding the numeric values of the active positions (indicated by the 2 tall bars). Therefore, the number encoded by the set of 2 tall and 3 short bars in the example is 5.

All single digit numerals from 0 to 9 can be represented by this process. The only numeral that does not decode logically by this method is 0. Since there is only one position with a value of 0, it cannot be added to itself. Therefore, 0 is derived by adding the positional values of 7 and 4, which derives no other useful single digit number.

POSTNET SYMBOLOGY



 *Item 04A*
the clear template
included in your
course materials
has several multiple
overlays that can
be used to divide a
barcode into
5 bar segments to
help you manually
decode the barcode.



All ZIP+4 codes currently in use can be represented by placing these 5 bar combinations, one after the other, in a linear fashion. Each set of 5 bars represents one of the numbers in the ZIP+4 code.

BARCODE ACCURACY

It is important that the POSTNET barcodes on your mail meet the barcode print specifications discussed later in this module. It is equally important that the barcode accurately represents the delivery address. An incorrect or improperly printed barcode can result in the mailpiece being missorted. These inaccuracies cause extra costs and processing steps for the Postal Service, as well as delays in the delivery of the mail.

CASS-Certified Software

The Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS) improves the accuracy of delivery points, ZIP+4 codes, 5-digit ZIP Codes, and carrier route codes on mailpieces. All mailings claimed at automation and carrier route rates must be produced from address lists properly matched and coded with CASS-certified address matching methods. Also included in this process is Delivery Point Validation (DPV) and Locatable Address Conversions System (LACS Link™).

For automation rate mailings, the CASS matching process must have taken place within six months of the date of mailing. With carrier route rate mailings, the CASS matching process must have taken place within three months of the date of mailing. This ensures the Postal Service that the barcodes and carrier route information from which the USPS derives its workshare savings are accurate and will not cause any additional handling.

Mailers/mailing agents are required to keep this CASS Certificate (Form 3553) for one year from the date of mailing. It must be made available to the USPS on a 24-hour notice.

A list of CASS certified vendors is available at <http://ribbs.usps.gov> by clicking on Vendor Information. Purchasing the software will allow you to perform the required matching process on your own computer. Alternatively, you may choose to use the services of a professional list broker or mailing house who will process your database for you.



EXERCISE 5 - 1

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. Every mailpiece in an automation rate mailing must bear a qualifying barcode.
 - a) true
 - b) false
2. If you prebarcode your mail, the mailpiece usually skips the initial OCR processing step and goes directly to the _____ sorter.
3. The first and last bars of the barcode are called _____ bars.
4. The sum of the 12 digits (the ZIP+4 code, the delivery point information, and the correction character) encoded in a delivery point barcode must always equal a multiple of _____ .
5. The correction character in a barcode that reads 20852-182915 is _____ .
6. Each set of 5 bars in a POSTNET barcode consists of 2 _____ bars and 3 _____ .
7. What does CASS-certified software do?
 - a) applies ZIP+4 code information to an address database
 - b) provides a ready made address database for barcode testing
 - c) Codes And Sends Samples of a product by mail
 - d) allows a database to be delivered in house-by-house sequence
- 8.a. Decode the following delivery point barcode.



POSTAL CUSTOMER
123 MAIN ST
ANYTOWN US 98765-4321

- 8.b. Does the barcode match the ZIP Code?

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 5 - 1

1. **a, true;** 100 percent of the pieces in a prebarcoded discount mailing must bear a qualifying barcode.
2. **barcode;** benefits of prebarcoding include faster and more efficient mail processing, reduction in postage costs, and more consistent delivery times with fewer misdeliveries.
3. **frame;** the frame bars denote the beginning and the end of the numeric information encoded in the POSTNET barcode.
4. **10;** the correction character is used on-the-fly by the barcode sorters to validate the information decoded from the barcode.
5. **7;** $2+0+8+5+2+1+8+2+9+1+5 = 43$. The next whole integer of 10 is 50. Therefore, the correction character must be 7 ($43+\underline{7}=50$).
6. **tall, short;** the numerals encoded in a POSTNET barcode are derived by adding the positional values of the 2 tall bars out of every set of 5 tall and short bars. Therefore, 2 tall and 3 short bars comprise each set of 5 bars.
7. **a, applies ZIP+4 code information to an address database;** the ZIP+4 and delivery point information derived by CASS-certified address matching software is required prior to printing POSTNET barcodes for USPS discounts.
- 8.a. **98765-4321** (delivery point is "23" and the correction character is "0").
- 8.b. **yes,** the barcode matches the ZIP Code.

BARCODE PRINTING REQUIREMENTS

In order to qualify for USPS prebarcoding discounts, your preprinted POSTNET barcodes (and the material they are printed upon) must meet the following technical requirements covered in this module. Your MDA can provide guidance with these requirements.

Print Reflectance Difference

USPS barcode sorters respond to the difference between the amount of light reflected by the ink used to print the barcode, versus the amount of light reflected from the background paper on which the barcode is printed. This difference is defined as print reflectance difference (PRD). A PRD of at least 30 percent in the red and green portions of the optical spectrum is necessary for the satisfactory reading of POSTNET barcodes.

The BCS responds best when the barcode is printed in black ink (which absorbs the maximum amount of light) on a white background (which *reflects* the maximum amount of light). Black ink on a white background creates the greatest PRD. Other color combinations may qualify and can be measured using a USPS-certified envelope reflectance meter. Contact your MDA for testing to ensure compliance with the 30 percent minimum PRD.

Background Reflectance

The background of the paper where the delivery point barcode is to be placed should be uniform in color and have a reflectance of at least 50 percent in the red and 45 percent in the green portions of the optical spectrum. White and pastel colors generally satisfy this requirement. Compliance with this requirement is also measured using an envelope reflectance meter.

Extraneous Background Matter

The background (envelope, card, insert, etc.) on which the delivery point barcode is printed must not contain dark fibers or background patterns with a print contrast ratio (PCR) of more than 15 percent (such backgrounds tend to be interpreted as bar patterns by the BCS).

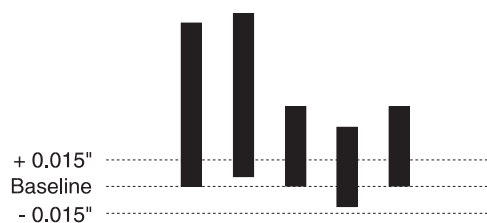
This requirement extends to envelope insert or security pattern show-through, within the clear area surrounding the barcode. Print contrast ratio (PCR) is measured by a USPS or USPS-licensed envelope reflectance meter.

Baseline Shift

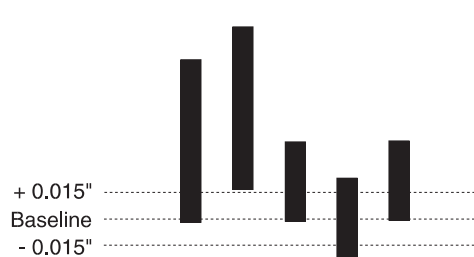
The vertical position of adjacent bars must not vary more than 0.015 inch from bar to bar when measured from the baseline (bottom) of the barcode.

BARCODE BASELINE SHIFT

- Acceptable Baseline Shift

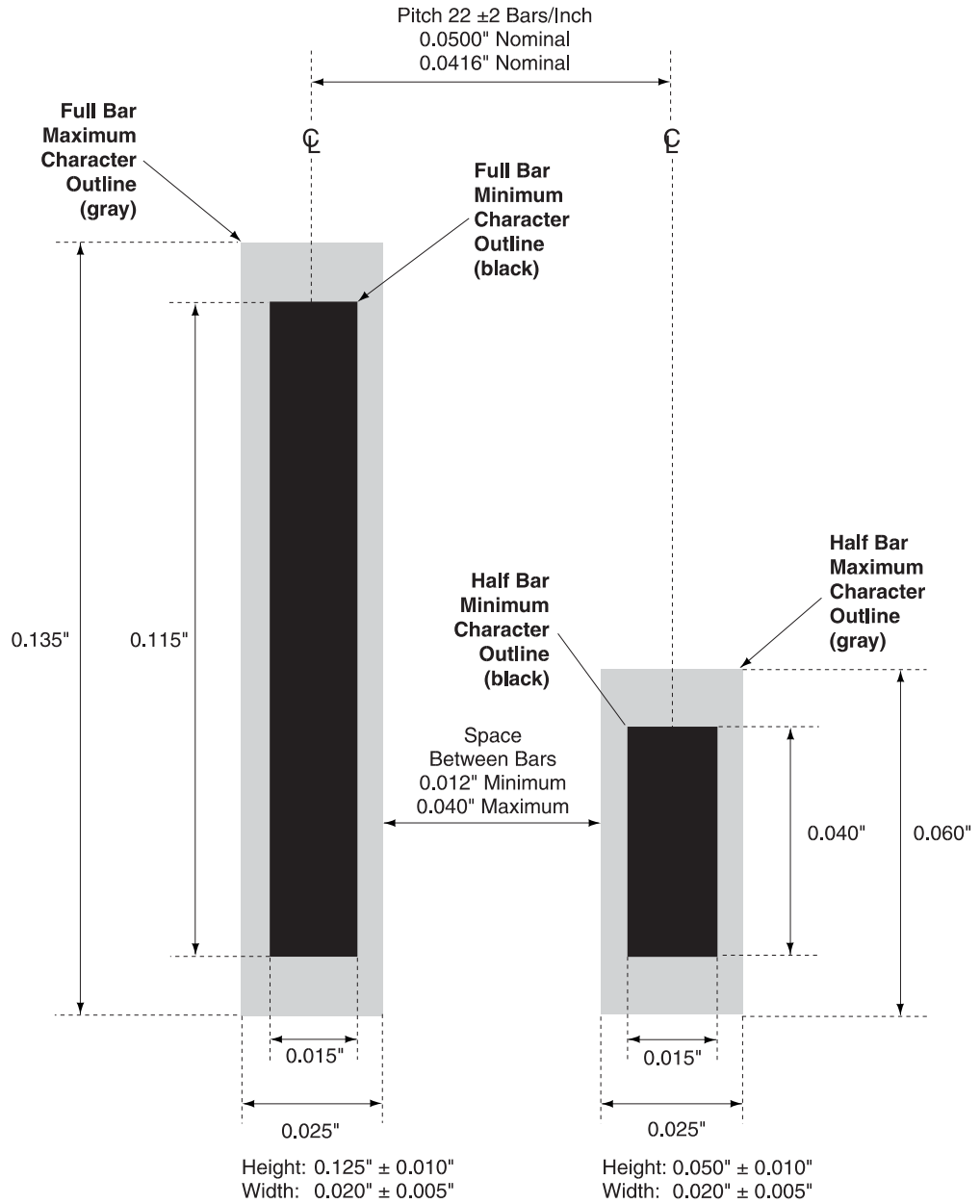


- Unacceptable Baseline Shift



The MDA uses a reticle to measure the individual bar tolerances in a barcode.

POSTNET BARCODE TOLERANCES



**POSTNET BARCODE
DIMENSIONAL**

Tolerances

Print the individual bars of the barcode within the dimensional tolerances listed in the following tables.

Tall Bar

		<u>Tolerance</u>
Height	0.125 inch	± 0.010 inch
Width	0.020 inch	± 0.005 inch

Short Bar

		<u>Tolerance</u>
Height	0.050 inch	± 0.010 inch
Width	0.020 inch	± 0.005 inch

Horizontal Spacing

22 ± 2 bars per inch.

Pitch (center to center)
 minimum 0.0416 inch
 maximum 0.050 inch

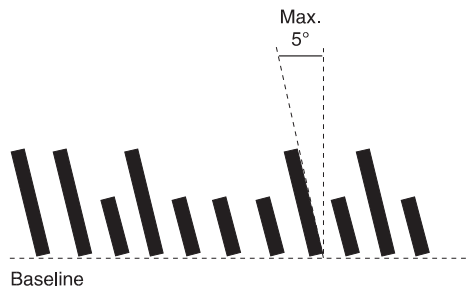
White Space (between bars)
 minimum 0.012 inch
 maximum 0.040 inch

When printing barcodes on your mailpieces, ensure that the bars meet the minimum standards but do not exceed the maximums.

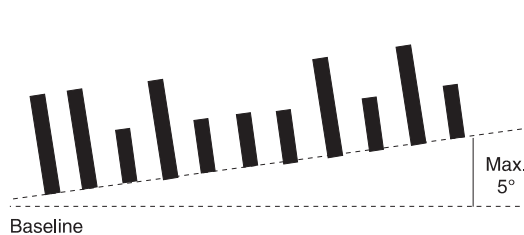
Bar Tilt

Two types of bar tilt can occur when printing barcodes on mailpieces. Pattern skew occurs when the entire barcode pattern is not precisely parallel to the bottom edge of the mailpiece. Bar rotation occurs when individual bars are tilted (not perpendicular) with respect to the baseline of the barcode pattern itself.

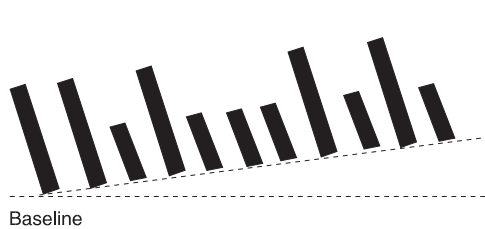
BAR ROTATION



PATTERN SKEW



COMBINED TILT




Bar Tilt on Letter-Size Mail

The combined pattern skew and bar rotation is to be limited to a maximum tilt of the bars (as they appear on the mailpiece) of ± 5 degrees.

Bar Tilt on Flat-Size Mail

On flat-size mail, the bar rotation must not exceed ± 10 degrees. Pattern skew is not a requirement for flat-size mail.

 *Notice 67; Automation Template, also includes lines for measuring skew; scribed at plus and minus 5 degrees.*

Printing Irregularities

Ensure that extraneous ink or ink voids do not cause any bar to fail to meet the dimension and spacing requirements.

Excess Ink

Excess ink can prevent a barcode sorter from successfully interpreting the barcode.

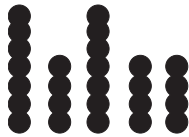
OVERINKING



Voids

Lack of proper ink coverage may cause a barcode to be less than the minimum required dimensions.

IDEAL



UNACCEPTABLE



USPS BMEU personnel use a piece of equipment called the Mail Evaluation Readability Lookup Instrument (MERLIN) to verify barcode quality for acceptance. Contact your local MDA for a demonstration.



EXERCISE 5 - 2

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. The difference between the amount of light reflected by the ink used to print a barcode and the amount of light reflected by the background paper is referred to as the _____ reflectance difference (PRD).
2. In order to qualify for USPS barcoded discounts, you must maintain a PRD, in the red and green spectrums, of at least:
 - a) 20 percent
 - b) 30 percent
 - c) 40 percent
 - d) 50 percent
3. Extraneous printing, background patterns, or “bleed through” in the area where the barcode is printed must not create a print contrast ratio (PCR), as measured by a USPS envelope reflectance meter, of more than:
 - a) 5 percent
 - b) 10 percent
 - c) 15 percent
 - d) 20 percent
4. The bottom edge of all bars in a barcode must rest on a common baseline, within a tolerance of plus or minus 0.015 inches above or below this baseline.
 - a) true
 - b) false
5. The horizontal spacing of the bars in a barcode must be a minimum of _____ bars per inch to a maximum of _____ bars per inch.
6. Your local mailpiece design analyst can measure the individual bar print tolerances required by the USPS using a:
 - a) magnifying glass
 - b) ruler
 - c) reticle
 - d) micrometer
7. Two types of bar tilt that can occur when printing barcodes on mailpieces are pattern _____ and bar _____.

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 5 - 2

1. **Print**; the greatest PRD is generated using black ink on a white background.
2. **b, 30 percent**; a 30 percent PRD, as measured by a USPS envelope reflectance meter is required for postal prebarcoding discounts.
3. **c, 15 percent**; extraneous printing with a PCR greater than 15 percent may interfere with the correct interpretation of a barcode by USPS barcode sorters.
4. **a, true**; barcodes comprised of individual bars printed outside this tolerance may not be recognized as barcodes by USPS barcode sorters.
5. **20, 24**; all bars in a qualifying POSTNET barcode must be printed with a spacing of 22 ± 2 bars per inch.
6. **c, a reticle**; the MDA uses a scribed, magnifying eyepiece called a reticle to measure the bar printing and spacing tolerances specified by USPS regulations.
7. **skew, rotation**; the tilt of the entire barcode's baseline to the edge of the mailpiece is called pattern skew. The tilt of individual bars to the barcode's baseline is called bar rotation.

WHAT IS THE INTELLIGENT MAIL® BARCODE?

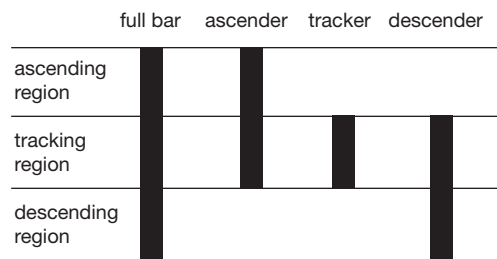
In 2003, the United States Postal Service (USPS) published the Intelligent Mail® Corporate Plan. This plan identified several key strategies including: Uniquely Identify Mail and Mail Aggregates; Develop and Deploy an Enabling Infrastructure; and Enhance Address Quality. This plan provided the following vision:

“To capitalize on the value of information about mail, the Postal Service and its customers will place an information-rich code on all mail, aggregates of mail, and business forms, enabling end-to-end visibility into the mail stream.”

In support of this OneCode Vision®, the Postal Service, in partnership with the mailing industry, developed the Intelligent Mail® barcode (formally known as the 4-state Customer Barcode). It is the next generation in the evolution of Postal Service barcode

technology. It offers a more effective alternative to our existing barcodes by increasing the amount of information that is present on letter and flat mailpieces, allowing for expanded tracking capability, and creating greater visibility into the mailstream.

The Intelligent Mail barcode is a height-modulated barcode that encodes a 31-digit string of mailpiece data into 65 vertical bars. These bars may be present in one of four possible states: full bar, ascender, tracker, and descender.



The following table compares the dimensions of the Intelligent Mail barcode to those of the POSTNET™ and PLANET Code® barcodes.

ATTRIBUTE	11-DIGIT POSTNET	13-DIGIT PLANET	INTELLIGENT MAIL BARCODE
Number of bars	62	72	65
Bar Width	0.020 ± 0.005 inch	0.020 ± 0.005 inch	0.020 ± 0.005 inch
Horizontal Pitch	22 ± 2 bars per inch	22 ± 2 bars per inch	22 ± 2 bars per inch
Height of Full Bar	0.125 ± 0.010 inch	0.125 ± 0.010 inch	0.145 ± 0.020 inch*

WHAT SERVICES DOES THE INTELLIGENT MAIL BARCODE SUPPORT?

The Postal Service offers a suite of services for letters and flats using the Intelligent Mail barcode. This suite of services is called the OneCode Solution™ suite. Since the initial launch of the Intelligent Mail barcode on September 1, 2006, mailers have had the option of using the Intelligent Mail barcode on letter mail for the Confirm® Service, referred to as OneCode Confirm™, and a version of Address Change Service™ (ACS™), called OneCode ACS™, for First-Class Mail®. The Intelligent Mail barcode can be used for automation-rate eligibility with or without these services requested.

Effective May 1, 2007, the Postal Service expanded use of the Intelligent Mail barcode by allowing mailers to use it on automation-rate First-Class Mail, Periodicals, Standard Mail®, and Bound Printed Matter flat-size mailpieces for rate eligibility in lieu of POSTNET barcodes. The Postal Service allows First-Class Mail, Periodicals, and Standard Mail flats with Intelligent Mail barcodes to participate in OneCode Confirm. The Postal Service allows First-Class Mail, Bound Printed Matter, and Periodical letters and flats with Intelligent Mail barcodes to participate in OneCode ACS.

At the present time, use of the Intelligent Mail barcode is optional; however, many customers have found that, because it offers significant advantages over POSTNET and PLANET Code barcodes (including using less mailpiece “real estate” and offering more overall data capacity), it makes good business sense to use this new format.

*Barcode height is based on Specification USPS-B-3200 Revision D. Earlier Specification USPS-B-3200 Revision C stipulated Intelligent Mail barcode height at 0.182 ± 0.048 inch.

Current plans are to require the Intelligent Mail barcode to qualify for automation discounts beginning in 2009. In the meantime, the Postal Service will continue to support the use of the POSTNET barcode for encoding the delivery point barcode, the PLANET Code barcode for encoding tracking information for Confirm, and alphanumeric characters for conveying participant code and Keyline information for ACS.

WHAT ARE THE FIELDS IN THE INTELLIGENT MAIL BARCODE?

The Intelligent Mail barcode carries a data payload of 31 digits comprised of the following elements.

TYPE	FIELD	FIELD LENGTH (in digits)
Tracking Code	Barcode Identifier	2 (2nd digit must be 0–4)
	Service Type Identifier	3
	Mailer Identifier	6 or 9
	Serial Number	9 (when used with 6 digit Mailer ID) 6 (when used with 9 digit Mailer ID)
Routing Code	Delivery Point ZIP Code™	0, 5, 9, or 11
Total Data Payload		31 (maximum)

NOTE: The 20-digit Tracking Code construct may change depending on selected services in order to allow expanded tracking capabilities.

Barcode Identifier

The Barcode Identifier field is a 2-digit field that is reserved to encode the presort identification that is currently printed in human readable form on the optional endorsement line (OEL) as well as for future Postal Service use. Generally, this field should be left as “00” by OneCode Confirm™ and OneCode ACS™ users. The exception is for automation-rate eligible flat mail with an optional endorsement line, where the Intelligent Mail barcode must contain OEL coding corresponding to the correct sortation level of each piece. The following table provides the OEL codes for use within the Intelligent Mail barcode.

BARCODE ID	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE OF CURRENTLY APPLIED OEL
10	Carrier Route (CR), Enhanced Carrier Route (ECR), and FIRM	***** FIRM 12345 ***** CAR-RT LOT**C-001 ***** CAR-RT WSH**C-001 ***** CAR-RT WSS**C-001 ***** CAR-RT SORT**C-001
20	5-Digit/Scheme	***** 5-DIGIT 12345 ***** SCH 5-DIGIT 12345
30	3-Digit/Scheme	***** 3-DIGIT 771 ***** SCH 3-DIGIT 006
40	Area Distribution Center (ADC)	***** ALL FOR ADC 105 ***** ALL FOR ADC 90197
50	Mixed Area Distribution Center (MADC), Origin Mixed ADC (OMX)	***** ORIGIN MIXED ADC 117 ***** MIXED ADC 640 ***** MIXED ADC 60821

Service Type Identifier

The Service Type Identifier field is a 3-digit field that indicates participation, or the lack of, in various Postal Service programs. Each 3-digit value will correspond to a particular mail class with a particular combination of service(s). Eventually the Postal Service anticipates supporting many combinations of class and service using this field; however, initially only a limited set of offerings will be available. The following table provides codes and corresponding service descriptions.

SERVICE TYPE ID	DESCRIPTION
040	First-Class Mail with Destination Confirm
042	Standard Mail with Destination Confirm
044	Periodicals with Destination Confirm
050	Origin Confirm
080	First-Class Mail with Address Service Requested
082	First-Class Mail with Change Service Requested
782	Periodicals with Address Service Requested
784	Periodicals with Change Service Requested
422	Bound Printed Mail with Address Service Requested
431	Bound Printed Mail with Change Service Requested
140	First-Class Mail with Destination Confirm and Address Service Requested
240	First-Class Mail with Destination Confirm and Change Service Requested
144	Periodicals with Destination Confirm and Address Service Requested
244	Periodicals with Destination Confirm and Change Service Requested

Beyond simply identifying when a mailpiece carries special services, the Intelligent Mail barcode will identify the mail class—even when no additional service is requested. The following table identifies the Service Type Identifier that should be used. If a mailer cannot use one of the defined mail class designations, they should call the National Customer Service Center (NCSC) Help Desk at (877) 640-0724 to request an exception.

SERVICE TYPE ID	MAIL CLASS DESCRIPTION
700	First-Class Mail with no additional services
702	Standard Mail with no additional services
704	Periodicals with no additional services
706	Bound Printed Matter with no additional services

Mailer Identifier & Serial Number

Mailer Identifier and the Serial Number are numeric fields designed to encode service and customer-specific information. The following table shows the payload layout for the Intelligent Mail barcode for use with OneCode Confirm. The corresponding fields from a PLANET Code barcode are also shown.

INTELLIGENT MAIL BARCODE		PLANET CODE DESTINATION CONFIRM		PLANET CODE ORIGIN CONFIRM	
FIELD NAME	LENGTH	FIELD NAME	LENGTH	FIELD NAME	LENGTH
Barcode ID	2				
Service Type ID	3	Service Type ID	2	Service Type ID	2
Mailer Identifier	6 or 9	Subscriber ID	5		
Serial Number	6 or 9 Depends on length of MID	Mailing ID	4 or 6	Customer ID	9 or 11
Routing ZIP	0, 5, 9, 11				

It is important to note that the table above provides a general overview of the fields contained within the Intelligent Mail barcode. In certain instances (depending on the service requested) the Mailer Identifier and Serial Number fields may be combined and reallocated to meet the data needs of the respective program. Further program-specific instructions are provided below.

The Mailer Identifier field is a 6-digit or 9-digit number that identifies a specific agent in the mail preparation process who has some responsibility for the ownership, content, make up, or preparation of the mail. The PostalOne!® Help Desk is responsible for issuing Mailer IDs to any customer that does not plan to subscribe to OneCode Confirm or OneCode ACS. These Mailers, without a previously-assigned Mailer ID, should contact the PostalOne! Help Desk at (800) 522-9085 for assistance.

Mail owners and mail preparers will be granted 6-digit or 9-digit Mailer IDs based upon their mail volume and criteria identified by the PostalOne! System. A mail owner or preparer who mails at least 40 million pieces per year will receive 6-digit Mailer IDs; all others will receive 9-digit Mailer IDs.

Current Destination Confirm subscribers should append a leading zero (0) to their previously-assigned 5-digit Subscriber ID to populate the MID field and contact the Help Desk for Confirm service to ensure their account is configured for the Intelligent Mail barcode. OneCode ACS subscribers will be assigned 6-digit Mailer IDs in place of their previously-assigned ACS 7-character participant code (which is used to uniquely identify the mailer for each particular mail class).

The Serial Number is a 6-digit or 9-digit field depending on the length of the Mailer ID. For Destination Confirm, this field will hold the existing Mailing ID field, which can be expanded to 9-digits if so desired. Otherwise, leading zeros should be used to fill the field completely. When using the Intelligent Mail barcode for Origin Confirm, subscribers may combine the Mailer Identifier field and the Serial Number field into a 15-digit field to hold the existing 9-digit or 11-digit Customer ID field plus additional digits. Subscribers can expand this field to 15-digits if so desired.

Otherwise, leading zeros should be used to fill the field completely. OneCode ACS users should use the Serial Number field to encode information they previously encoded within the Keyline field.

Routing Code

The Routing ZIP Code™ field is designed to be used to encode the destination ZIP code of the mailpiece. Mailers may opt to encode a 5, 9 or 11-digit ZIP Code within this field. Unlike POSTNET barcode, the Routing ZIP Code within the Intelligent Mail barcode does not require a check digit. In certain situations the mailer may opt not to provide a Routing Code; however, mailers should adhere to the following program-specific guidance.

OneCode Confirm requires either a 9 or 11-digit Routing ZIP to serve as the “Subscriber ID” for Origin Confirm users. When used as a Subscriber ID, the Routing ZIP Code used must be registered within the subscriber’s Confirm account.

When using OneCode Confirm for “seeding” within an automation discount mailing, a non-seeded mailpiece may use the Intelligent Mail barcode with a proper routing ZIP Code to meet the automation discount criteria. Such an Intelligent Mail barcode should use one of the Service Type IDs defined for use as a Mail Class Designator (those codes without services) to indicate that the piece is not intended to generate Confirm information. The Mailer Identifier field should contain the appropriate Subscriber ID.

Additional details pertaining to the use of the Intelligent Mail barcode as part of OneCode ACS is available in a new OneCode ACS document supplementing Publication 8b-Address Change Service. Additional details about the use of the Intelligent Mail barcode as part of the OneCode Confirm program is available in Publication 197 - Confirm® Service User Guide. These documents can be downloaded from the Rapid Information Bulletin Board System (RIBBS) website at: <http://ribbs.usps.gov/OneCodeSolution/>

How is the Intelligent Mail Barcode printed?

Encoding data into a POSTNET or PLANET Code is very straightforward: each digit in the payload is represented by a predefined pattern of 5 bars. Encoding data into an Intelligent Mail barcode is more complex. The encoding algorithm that translates the 31 digits in the payload into 65 bars is defined in the USPS publication, Specification USPS-B-3200, which is available for download from the same RIBBS web site.

To facilitate the adoption of the Intelligent Mail barcode, the USPS has developed, and is making available at no charge, a web-based, interactive encoder-decoder tool, and an extensive library of encoding software and fonts suitable for encoding and printing the Intelligent Mail barcode in mail production environments using selected operating systems and printing architectures. These resources are available from the same RIBBS web site.

To download the library of encoding software and fonts from the RIBBS website, you must first request a user ID and password by calling the NCSC Help Desk at (877) 640-0724. You must log in using your assigned user ID and password before you can download from the library.

Once logged in, you will be able to download the encoding software package for any particular operating system of interest. Each package contains all the files needed to use the encoder software under that operating system in any of the languages or applications that are supported. The USPS currently provides software for a total of 20 combinations of operating systems, languages, and application environments:

From the same RIBBS website, registered and logged in users will be able to download the font package for any operating system of interest. Each package contains all the files needed to install and use the font for that operating system.

Where can the Intelligent Mail Barcode be printed?

The placement configurations of the Intelligent Mail barcode on a letter-size and flat-size mail are defined in the *Domestic Mail Manual (DMM™)*. This section presents the following commonly used placement configurations. For additional details concerning barcode placement, please refer to 202.5, 302.4.2 and 503.13.3 of the *DMM*.

In describing code placement, the terms “above” and “below the address” are used here to mean the following, as defined in 202.5 of the *DMM*. The term “above the address” here means either:

- Above the address line containing the recipient’s name, or
- Above or below the Keyline information, or
- Above or below the optional endorsement line.

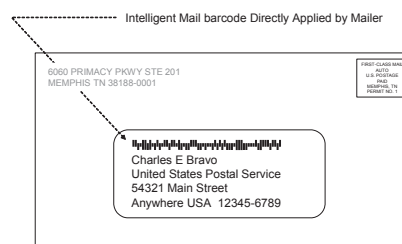
The term “below the address” means:

- Below the city, state, and ZIP Code line.

The mail piece images used to illustrate these configurations are not meant to be exact or exhaustive.

CONFIGURATION 1

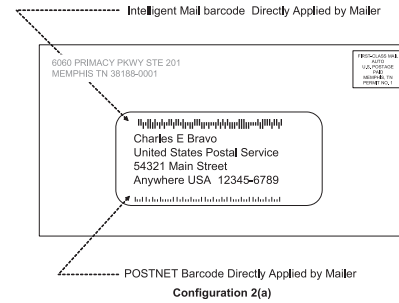
- Mailer applies the Intelligent Mail barcode above or below the address within the address block.
- Mailer encodes the delivery point code in the Intelligent Mail barcode along with the tracking code.



Configuration 1 (with Intelligent Mail barcode above address)

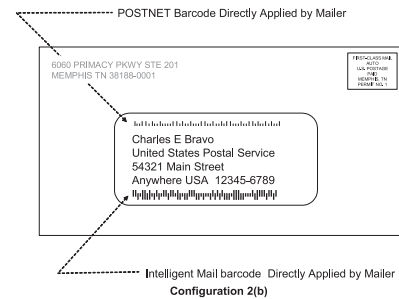
CONFIGURATION 2(A)

- Mailer applies the Intelligent Mail barcode above the address within the address block.
- Mailer encodes the delivery point code in a POSTNET barcode below the address in the address block.



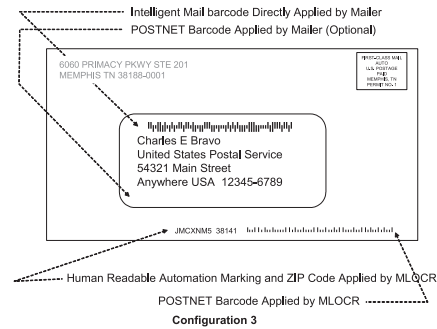
CONFIGURATION 2(B)

- Mailer applies the Intelligent Mail barcode below the address within the address block.
- Mailer encodes the delivery point code in a POSTNET barcode above the address in the address block.



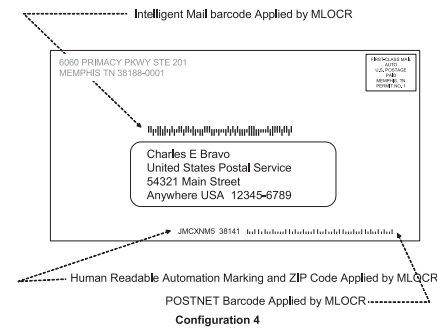
CONFIGURATION 3

- Mailer applies the Intelligent Mail barcode with or without POSTNET barcode within the address block as in Configuration 1, 2(a), or 2(b).
- MLOCR applies POSTNET barcode in the barcode clear zone, along with the human readable automation marking and ZIP Code to the left.



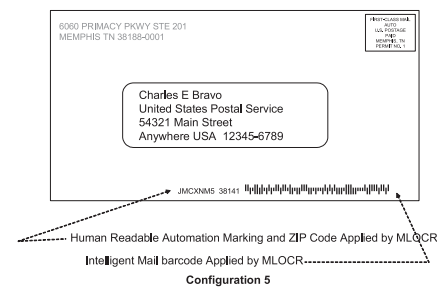
CONFIGURATION 4

- Mailer does not apply POSTNET barcode or the Intelligent Mail barcode directly in the address block.
- MLOCR applies the POSTNET barcode in the barcode clear zone, along with the human readable automation marking and ZIP Code to the left.
- In addition, MLOCR applies the Intelligent Mail barcode containing the tracking code above the address block.



CONFIGURATION 5

- Mailer does not apply POSTNET barcode or the Intelligent Mail barcode directly in the address block.
- MLOCR applies the Intelligent Mail barcode containing the routing code and tracking code in the barcode clear zone, along with the human readable automation marking and ZIP Code to the left.



Any yellow forwarding label applied by the Computerized Forwarding System (CFS) and Postal Automated Redirection System (PARS) will not interfere with the Intelligent Mail barcode applied by the mailer or the MLOCR when the Intelligent Mail barcode is placed above the address. The tracking information in the Intelligent Mail barcode will continue to be available.

Any forwarding label applied may obscure the Intelligent Mail barcode if it is located below the address within the address block or in the barcode clear zone, and the tracking information may no longer be available. To preserve the tracking information, it would be necessary to add a new capability to combine the new routing code with the tracking code in the original Intelligent Mail barcode into a new Intelligent Mail barcode that is then printed on the forwarding label. Changes to enable PARS to print a new Intelligent Mail barcode on the forwarding label are being evaluated.

In some of the above code placement configurations, the mail piece may end up with more than one routing code in either the POSTNET barcode or the Intelligent Mail barcode. Mail processing equipment uses the following precedence rules to select the routing code to use for sorting:

If a valid routing code is present in the barcode at the lower right barcode clear zone, it has the highest precedence for routing regardless of whether it is an Intelligent Mail barcode or a POSTNET barcode.

Otherwise, if there is more than one POSTNET barcode and/or Intelligent Mail barcode elsewhere on the mailpiece, precedence, from the highest to the lowest, is as follows:

- POSTNET barcode with delivery point code
- POSTNET barcode with ZIP+4 code
- POSTNET barcode with 5-digit ZIP code
- Any Intelligent Mail barcode

How reliable is the Intelligent Mail Barcode?

The Intelligent Mail barcode decoding software has undergone rigorous testing on various pieces of mail processing equipment in both controlled and live production environments. Virtually all Delivery Bar Code Sorters (DBCS), Carrier Sequence Bar Code Sorters (CSBCS), and Automated Flats Sorting Machines (AFSM) have been upgraded and successfully tested. Several mailers helped expand the test scenarios to include live mail testing at diverse mail processing locations. Additionally, the Postal Service's National Customer Service Center that applies the Intelligent Mail barcode for Confirm service on Move Validation Letters (MVL) participated in these tests. Scan records captured by the mail processing equipment were carefully analyzed to ensure that the equipment performed as expected.

Want More Information?

For general information, or to download specifications, addenda to publications for various services, and the library of encoding software and fonts, please visit the RIBBS web site at: <http://ribbs.usps.gov/OneCodeSolution/>.

If you want to obtain user ID and password to download the library of encoding software and font, or if you need technical assistance in using the online tool or the library of encoding software and font, please contact the NCSC Help Desk at (877) 640-0724.

The Help Desk for Confirm service can be reached at (800) 238-3150.

The Help Desk for ACS can be reached at (800) 331-5746.

The Help Desk for PostalOne! can be reached at (800) 522-9085.

**EXERCISE 5 - 3**

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions.

Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. How many bars in an IMB?
 - a) 62
 - b) 65
 - c) 52
 - d) 32

2. The IMB can be used for:
 - a) Onecode Confirm
 - b) Onecode ACS
 - c) Automation discounts
 - d) All of the above

3. The IMB carries a "Data Payload" of up to _____ Digits, and is comprised of two main components, the _____ code and the _____ code.

4. The Intelligent Mail® barcode on a letter size envelope can be placed in four locations.
 - a) True
 - b) False

5. The bars in an IMB are Tracker, Ascender, Descender and Short
 - a) True
 - b) False

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 5 - 3

1. **b, 65;** IMB is a height modulated barcode consisting of 65 vertical bars.
2. **d, All of the above;** IMB can be used with CONFIRM Service, Address Change Service and Automation letter and flat mail discounts
3. **31, tracking, routing;** The IMB carries a “Data Payload” of up to 31 digits
4. **false;** The Intelligent Mail barcode on a letter-size envelope can be placed in five locations.
 - Above the address line containing the recipient’s name,
 - Above the Keyline information,
 - Below the Keyline information,
 - Below the city, state, and ZIP Code line,
 - Barcode clear zone
5. **false;** The bars in an IMB are Tracker, Ascender, Descender and Full

PARCEL BARCODES

Parcel Barcode Elements

The UCC/EAN Code 128 barcode must accurately represent the correct ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code of the delivery address to claim the parcel barcode discount.

Dimensions

The preferred range of widths of narrow bars and spaces is 0.015 inch, to 0.017 inch. The width of the narrow bars or spaces must be at least 0.013 inch, but no more than 0.021 inch. All bars must be at least 0.75 inch high.

Clear Zone

The barcode must be located as specified in DMM 402.2. No printing may appear in an area 1/8 inch above and below the barcode. A minimum clear (quiet) zone equal to 10 times the average measured narrow element (bars or space) width must be maintained to the left and right of the barcode.

Reflectance

When measured in the red spectral range between 630 nanometers and 675 nanometers, the minimum white bar (space) reflectance (R_s) must be greater than 50%, and the maximum bar reflectance (R_b) must be less than 25%. The minimum print reflectance difference ($R_s - R_b$) is 40%. Reflectance must be measured with a USPS-specified reflectance meter or barcode verifier.

Quality

All barcodes in each mailing must measure American National Standards Institute (ANSI) grade C or above. ANSI grade barcodes D or F are unacceptable. It is strongly recommended that all printing processes be tested to ensure that they meet specification requirements. For the technical specifications of the encoding logic for the UCC/EAN code, contact the Uniform Code Council, Inc. at:

UNIFORM CODE COUNCIL, INC
7887 WASHINGTON VILLAGE DR STE300
DAYTON OH 45459-3988
(937) 435-3870
www.uc-council.org

Substrate Material

Barcodes must be printed on substrate material that preserves the optical specification as described in the AIM-USA Uniform Symbology Specification documents. Typically, white label stock commonly used for barcode generation is suitable, providing it is not glossy (causing mirror-like, specular reflection) or prone to smearing or smudging.

The basic elements of the postal routing UCC/EAN Code 128 barcode are:

- **Barcode Type.** UCC/EAN Code 128 is the only acceptable barcode symbology (for parcels and Not Flat Machinables weighing 6 ounces or more) and must be printed within Subset C.
- **Start Code.** Postal routing barcodes must start with a Symbol Start Code, which is not shown in the human readable text.
- **Function One (FNC1).** The FNC1 numeric character for UCC/EAN Code 128 follows the symbol start character, is part of the symbology overhead, and is not shown in the human-readable text.
- **Application Identifier (AI).** The AI for a postal routing barcode is 420 for domestic mail and is not shown in the human-readable text.
- **ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code.** Postal routing barcodes must include the 5-digit ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code of the address. Only the 5-digit ZIP Code appears in the human-readable text.

- **Check Digit.** A check digit must be added at the end of the sequence of numbers to validate the authenticity of the number. UCC/EAN Code 128 postal routing barcodes must utilize a MOD 103 check digit, which is not shown in the human-readable text.
- **Stop Code.** The UCC/EAN Code 128 postal routing barcode must end with a Symbol Stop Code, which is not shown in the human-readable text.

If the postal routing barcode is printed on a separate label, the human-readable equivalent of the ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code preceded by the word "ZIP" must be printed between 1/8" and 1/2" below the barcode. Alternatively, the word "ZIP" may be placed no less than 10 times the average narrow bar or space element width and no more than 1/2" to the left of the barcode. "ZIP" must be printed in at least 10-point bold sans-serif type. While not recommended, if the postal routing barcode is printed on the delivery address label and is in close proximity of the delivery address, the human-readable equivalent of the ZIP Code and the word "ZIP" may be omitted.

Postal Routing UCC/EAN Code 128 Barcode Format

Example 1



ZIP 22021

Example 2

ZIP



22021

UCC/EAN Code 128 Format

Start	FNC1	4	2	0	2	2	0	2	1	Mod 103	Stop
-------	------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---------	------

More in depth information on the following options can be found in Publication 91, Confirmation Services Technical Guide found in <http://pe.usps.gov/> through the Additional Publications link. Eligible machinable parcels may qualify for the parcel barcode discount and bear a Delivery Confirmation or Signature Confirmation barcode using one of the following options:

Single Concatenated Barcode

A single concatenated barcode that combines the postal routing information and the Delivery or Signature Confirmation information may be used on parcels eligible for the barcode discount. Single concatenated barcodes must be prepared in accordance with the technical specifications and requirements in DMM 708.5 for Delivery Confirmation and for Signature

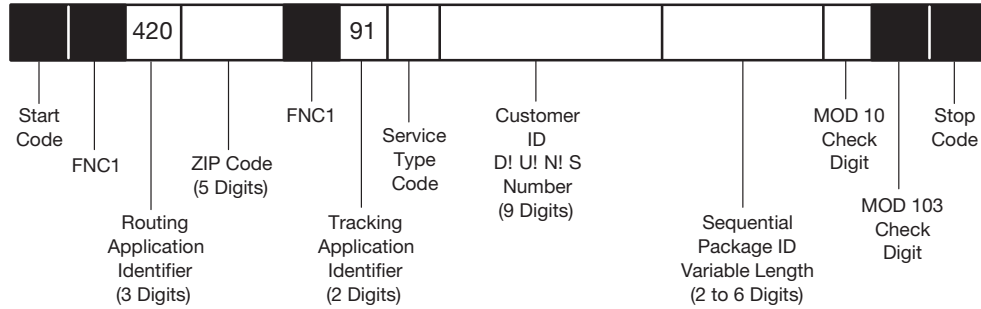
Confirmation along with Publication 91, Confirmation Services Technical Guide. If a parcel bears a single concatenated barcode, no other barcode that contains the postal routing code can be affixed to the package.

The human-readable information for the concatenated or concatenated/integrated barcode (explained below) must include as text the Application Identifiers (AI) 420 and 91 and the full tracking identification number. When the AI 420 and ZIP Code information is used, it must be parsed separately from the main body of the test. The first group will contain the 420 AI, space, 5-digit ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code, space, with the remaining human-readable text parsed in groups of four with the remaining digits grouped at the end as shown in the example below.

Confirmation Services Concatenated UCC/EAN Code 128 Barcode Format



420 22021 9122 1234 5678 9123 4567 83



Mailers may also place both a postal routing barcode and either a Delivery Confirmation barcode or a Signature Confirmation barcode on the same parcel as shown in the example below.

We now have separate price categories for machinable parcels. To facilitate more efficient handling, a 5-Digit UCC/EAN 128 barcode or POSTNET barcode as appropriate is required. If not, unless prepared in a 5-Digit scheme or 5-Digit sacks or pallets, pieces will be subject to an additional surcharge. A barcode discount may be applicable for a qualifying package service product.

SUMMARY

The USPS offers barcode discounts for letter size, flat-size mailpieces and specific machinable parcels. Prebarcoding by mailers allows the Postal Service to process and deliver the mail more accurately and efficiently. The gain in efficiency allows the Postal Service to return workshare savings to the mailer in the form of postage discounts. To obtain these discounts for you and your clients, ensure that your mailpieces meet the design requirements as stated in the *Domestic Mail Manual* and outlined in this guide. The next module covers the actual mailpiece design parameters and barcode positioning requirements for automated mailings.

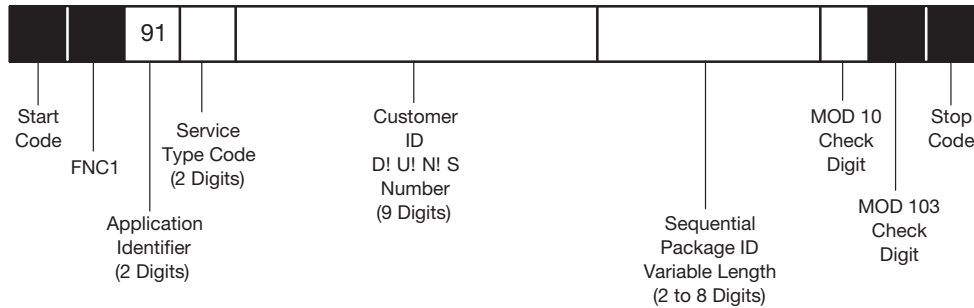
Confirmation Services UCC/EAN Code 128 Barcode Format Using a Separate Postal Routing Barcode



9122 1234 5678 9123 4567 83



ZIP 22021



**EXERCISE 5 - 4**

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. To avoid the surcharge on non-barcoded parcels they must be prepared in _____ scheme or _____ sacks or pallets.
2. At a minimum, for the delivery address on the mailpiece, each qualifying parcel barcode must encode the correct:
 - a) 5-digit ZIP Code
 - b) Delivery Point Code
 - c) Carrier Route Code
 - d) Carrier Route Walk Sequence Number
3. The PRD for a qualifying parcel barcode must be at least:
 - a) 30 percent
 - b) 40 percent
 - c) 50 percent
 - d) 60 percent
4. If a qualifying parcel barcode is printed on a label separate from that of the delivery address, the mailer must also print, in human-readable characters:
 - a) the verifier character
 - b) the 5-digit ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code preceded by the word "ZIP"
 - c) the identifier code
 - d) all of the above

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 5 - 4

1. **5-digit, 5-digit;** 5-digit scheme or 5-digit sacks are required to avoid the non-barcode surcharge.
2. **a, 5-digit ZIP Code; or ZIP+4 code;** All of the approved symbologies require at least the ZIP or ZIP+4 code to be encoded in the barcode. The different symbologies also require the encoding of additional information, either an identifier code or a correction character.
3. **b, 40 percent;** a PRD (the print reflectance difference between the light reflected by the printed bars versus the light reflected by the white spaces) of 40 percent is required to qualify for discount. The measurement is made by a USPS or USPS-licensed envelope reflectance meter.
4. **b, the 5-digit ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code preceded by the word “ZIP”;** in this case, the mailer must print only the ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code for the delivery address preceded by the word “ZIP”. Any additional information encoded in the barcode should be omitted.

To qualify for Postal Service automation discounts, the appropriate barcode from the previous module must be correctly applied to a mailpiece that meets the physical requirements for processing on the Postal Service’s automated equipment. Automated processing introduces additional standards to those of the basic processing categories covered in module three. This is due to the capabilities and limitations of the equipment on which this type of mail is processed.

In this module you will learn the design and layout features required for qualification for USPS automation discounts for each processing category, including:

- Letters and cards.
- Flats.
- Not Flat Machinables.

All the requirements outlined in this module must be met in order for your mailpieces to qualify for USPS automation discounts.



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT AUTOMATION REQUIREMENTS FOR LETTER-SIZE MAILPIECES

Upon completion of this portion of the module, you should be able to do the following:

- List the weight maximums for qualifying, barcoded, letter-size mailpieces.
- Describe the construction requirements for letter-size mailpieces submitted for automation discounts.
- Define the term “self-mailer” and describe the acceptable tabbing combinations.
- Describe the placement, positioning, and applicable clearances of POSTNET barcodes on letter-size mail.
- Demonstrate the usage of USPS positioning templates as design aids.

AUTOMATION RATES FOR LETTER-SIZE MAIL

USPS automation discounts now apply only to mailpieces that are prebarcoded by the mailer. Automation rate discounts for letter-size mail require a qualifying delivery point barcode. In addition, the mailpiece itself must meet the physical requirements for automated letter sortation. This applies equally to all letter-size mailpieces, regardless of class.

Letter mail barcode sorters (BCSs) can scan and locate a barcode across a generous portion of the face of a mailpiece.

LETTER-SIZE MAILPIECE DIMENSIONS

All letter-size mailpieces submitted for automation discounts must fall within the size standards for letter mail as previously discussed in module three, Processing Categories.

	Minimum	Maximum
Height	3 1/2 inches	6 1/8 inches
Length*	5 inches	11 1/2 inches
Thickness	0.007 inch	1/4 inch

*Length is the dimension parallel to the address as read. Height is the dimension perpendicular to the length.

Letter-size mail which is more than 4 1/4 inches high or more than 6 inches long (card size maximums) must be at least 0.009 inch thick.

Cards

Qualifying postcards must meet all the basic size and construction requirements for card rates as outlined in module three. Pieces formed from a single piece of cardstock that exceeds the postcard-size maximum dimensions of 4 1/4 inches by 6 inches will qualify for letter-size automation rates.

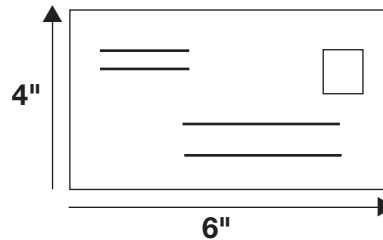
	Minimum	Maximum
Height	3-1/2 inches	4-1/4 inches
Length*	5 inches	6 inches
Thickness	0.007 inch	0.016 inch

*Pieces exceeding either the height or length maximums for postcards must be at least 0.009 inch thick to continue to qualify for letter-size (not card) automation rates.

Aspect ratio

For a letter-size automation-compatible mailpiece, meeting the aspect ratio of 1.3 to 2.5 (as measured by the length of a piece divided by its height) is required. Pieces not meeting the aspect ratio requirement tend to jam USPS high-speed automated sorting equipment. If the aspect ratio of a letter-size mailpiece is not between 1.3 to 2.5, the piece is not eligible for automation discounts.

QUALIFYING ASPECT RATIO



$$6 \div 4 = 1.5 \text{ Aspect Ratio}$$

This applies to cards as well, since the transport mechanism is the same. While still mailable, pieces not meeting the required aspect ratio are not eligible for automation rates.

MAXIMUM WEIGHT FOR BARCODED LETTER-SIZE MAIL

The weight per piece must not be more than 3.5 ounces for automation letter mail.

Heavy Letter Mail

The Postal Service permits heavy letter mail (barcoded letter-size mail weighing more than 3 ounces) if the mail is prepared in envelopes, bears a delivery point barcode in the address block, and meets the physical standards in DMM 201.3.14.4. Heavy letter mail may not include stiff enclosures nor be prepared as a folded self-mailer or booklet.

LETTER-SIZE MAILPIECE CONSTRUCTION

General Prohibitions

The kind of high-speed sorting equipment used by the Postal Service prohibits the use of polywrap or shrinkwrap for letter-size mailpieces. Staples or saddle stitching may be used only on the bound edge (spine) of booklet-style mailpieces. Due to flexibility requirements, enclosing rigid items such as pens, pencils, or bottle caps is prohibited in letter-size automation rate mailings. The Postal Service also prohibits any protrusions that may damage mail processing equipment.

ENVELOPES

Requirements for paper and card stock refer to minimum basis weight of the materials. Basis weight is defined as the weight (in pounds) of a ream (500 sheets) cut to a standard size for that grade.

Envelopes must be constructed of paper weighing at least 16 pounds (minimum basis weight). The specific grade of 16-pound paper required for envelopes is defined as the weight of 500 sheets measuring 17 inches by 22 inches.

To avoid the possibility of damage during processing or bleed through of printed information, 20-to-24 pound paper is recommended for envelopes.

CARDS

Automation requirements for cards (mailed at the First-Class Mail postcard rate) and mailpieces constructed of cardstock (not mailed at card rate) are generally the same as those for letter-size mailpieces. The primary difference is the minimum thickness requirement. For all mailpieces, up to and including the maximum size for cards (4 1/4 inches high by 6 inches long), the minimum thickness is 0.007 inch. However, if a mailpiece exceeds either 4 1/4 inches in height or 6 inches in length, it must be at least 0.009 inch thick to qualify for automation rates.

Cards mailed at the card rate must be printed on paper stock with a minimum basis weight of 75 pounds (25 inches by 38 inches sheet size for 500 sheets). Maximum thickness for cards mailed at card rate is 0.016 inch. Further details on automation-compatible stamped cards, postcards, and other types of cards are in DMM 201.3.0.

REPOSITIONABLE NOTES

Currently, an experiment exists for a product called Repositionable Notes. Repositionable Notes are small notes, approximately 3" X 3", affixed by a machine and adhered by a glue strip to the outside envelope or paper cover of First-Class Mail, Standard Mail or Periodicals rate mailpieces to call attention to a product or service. They must be obtained from an approved Repositionable Notes vendor listed in www.usps.com. The complete standards for Repositional Notes experiment can be found in DMM 709.6. These notes can contain messages for your customers to use as reminders by repositioning them to computers, telephones, calendars, refrigerators, desks, etc.

FOLDED SELF-MAILERS & BOOKLETS

Envelopes and other mailpieces securely sealed on all four edges provide the best assurance for successful automated processing. However, an open or folded mailpiece also qualifies for automation rates when it has been properly tabbed or sealed.

Folded self-mailers and booklets must be tabbed to prevent the open edges from fanning out and jamming during high speed processing. The standards for these types of mailpieces are generally based on the basis weight of the paper stock and the location of the folded or bound edge.

Paper Weights and Tabbing

The minimum basis weights indicated below are mandatory for automation discounts.

Designing folded self-mailers so that the final folded edge is at the bottom and the opening is at the top gives you greater flexibility regarding the number of tabs that are required. If you design your folded self-mailer with the fold at the top, you are always required to tab twice on the bottom (one inch in from the right edge and one inch in from the left edge) regardless of the basis weight of the paper (20 pound minimum). If you design your folded self-mailer so that the fold is on the bottom, you may be required to tab only once on the top, depending on the basis weight of the paper. Paper weights are based on 500 sheets cut from different dimensions. Below are the minimum required weights that require only one tab to close the top of the folded self-mailer.

- Single folded sheet – Must be prepared from paper with a minimum basis weight of 28 pounds (measured weight for 500 17" X 22" sheets) or 70 pounds (measured weight for 500 25" X 38" sheets) and measure at least .009" in thickness once folded.
- Multiple folded sheets – Must be prepared from paper with a minimum basis weight of 24 pounds (measured weight for 500 17" X 22" sheets) or 60 pounds (measured weight for 500 25" X 38" sheets).

In specifically identified formats, a self-mailer may have the final fold on the right side (leading edge) of the piece. The left edge and other open edges must be secured with at least one tab or glue line. Additional tabs, seals or glue spots or glue lines may be used.

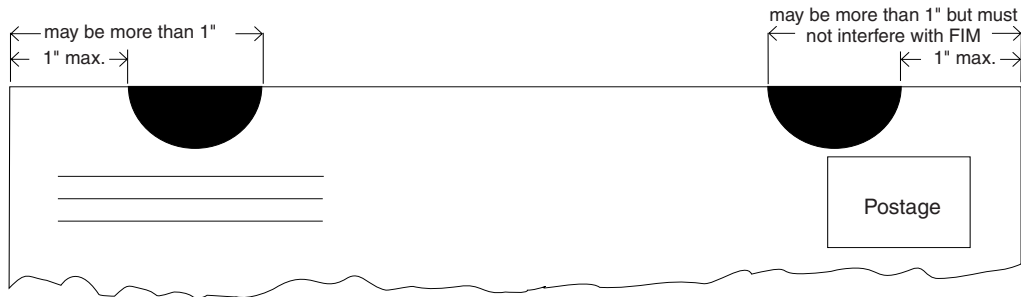
Booklet-Type Pieces

- Must have covers prepared from a minimum basis weight of 20 pounds (measured weight for 500 17" X 22") sheets.
- With bound edge on the bottom, must be secured with at least two tabs or wafer seals placed one inch from the left edge and one inch from the right edge or one inch from the top left side (trailing edge) and one inch from the top right side (leading edge of the piece). Note: alternative sealing in DMM 201.3.13.2c.
- Bound edge (spine) may be on the right side of the piece, prepared from a minimum basis weight of 24-pound bond paper. The left edge must be secured with at least two tabs or wafer seals.
- Bound edge (spine) may be on the right side (leading edge) of the piece if prepared from a minimum basis weight of 20-pound bond paper or equivalent with the following restrictions:
 - If piece is no more than 4 1/4" X 6", the unbound left edge must be secured with at least one tab or wafer seal placed at the vertical center of the piece
 - If piece is more than 4 1/4" X 6", the unbound left edge must be secured with two tabs or wafer seals placed within 1" from the top and bottom edges.

Tabs

Tabs, wafer seals, cellophane tape, or permanent glue (continuous or spot) may be used as sealing devices on folded self-mailers. Sealing materials cannot interfere with the recognition of the barcode, rate markings, postage information, or delivery or return addresses. Use of cellophane tape is prohibited within the barcode clear zone. Tabs placed in the barcode clear zone must be a material that contains a paper face meeting the standards for background reflectance (DMM 709.4.1) and acceptance of water-based ink. Tabs must have a peel adhesion value strong enough to stay intact during mail processing (DMM 201.3.10). All tabs and wafer seals must be applied flush to the edge of the mailpiece. Tabs that protrude or extend beyond the trimmed edge of the mailpiece are considered improperly sealed. These seals have been found to slide off the edges of the pieces or cause increased incidence of opened edges on automated equipment. Clasps, strings, buttons and wax are prohibited sealing methods.

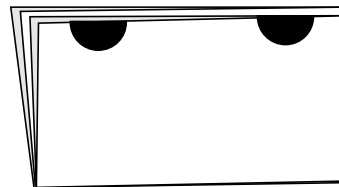
PLACEMENT OF TABS AND WAFER SEALS



EXAMPLES OF FOLDED SELF-MAILERS

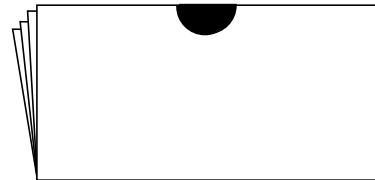
Folded Self-Mailer

Tabs 2 (start \leq 1 inch from edges)
 Fold Top or Bottom
 Sheets Single
 Basis Weight 20 lb.



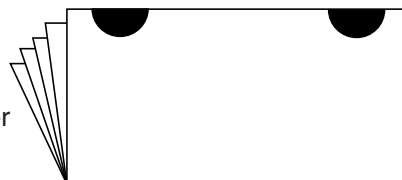
Folded Self-Mailer

Tabs 1 (middle)
 Fold Bottom
 Sheets Multiple
 Basis Weight 24 lb.



Booklet

Tabs 2 (start \leq 1 inch from edges)
 Spine Bottom
 Sheets Multiple with Cover
 Basis Weight 20 lb. (Cover)



AUTOMATION REQUIREMENTS – LETTERS

() = OTHER TERMS	BOND 17" x 22"	BOOK 25" x 38"	COVER 20" x 26"	BRISTOL 22.5" x 28.5"	INDEX 25.5" x 30.5"	TAG 24" x 36"
BOND	20	51	28	34	42	46
(Mimeo)	24	61	33	41	50	56
(Writing)	28	71	39	48	58	64
(Duplicator)	32	81	45	55	67	74
(Ledger)	36	91	50	62	75	83
	40	102	56	69	83	93
	44	112	61	75	92	102
BOOK	20	50	27	34	41	45
(Offset)	24	60	33	40	49	55
(Text)	28	70	38	47	57	64
	31	80	44	54	65	73
	35	90	49	60	74	82
	39	100	55	67	82	91
	47	120	66	80	98	109
COVER	29	73	40	49	60	66
	36	91	50	62	75	82
	43	110	60	74	90	100
	47	119	65	80	97	108
	58	146	80	99	120	134
	65	164	90	111	135	149
	72	183	100	124	150	166
	94	238	130	160	194	216
VELLUM	33	84	46	57	69	77
BRISTOL	39	100	54	67	81	91
	47	120	65	80	98	109
	58	148	81	100	121	135
	70	176	97	120	146	162
INDEX	43	110	60	74	90	100
	53	135	74	91	110	122
	67	170	93	115	140	156
	82	208	114	140	170	189
	105	267	146	185	220	244
TAG	43	110	60	74	90	100
	54	137	75	93	113	125
	65	165	90	111	135	150
	76	192	105	130	158	175
	87	220	120	148	180	200
	109	275	151	186	225	250
	130	330	181	222	270	300

Instructions for use: Use this table by locating the paper basis weight you are planning to use. Example: Locate a 40-pound Cover indicated by the gray shading under Cover. Follow that to the Bond column. A 40-pound Cover equates to 29-pound Bond.

Perforated Tabs

Perforated tabs and plastic wafer seals that have become brittle and do not maintain their sealing strength are unacceptable for automation rate mailpieces. For the same reasons, perforated tabs are not recommended closures at the bottom of the mailpiece.

When using perforated tabs, the tabs should not contain more than a 50 to 60 percent perforation (eight perforations to an inch). Tabs with 12 perforations to an inch are not allowed on self-mailers claiming automated rates.

Other Tabbing Options

For a representative sampling of allowable self-mailer formats for tabbed or glue-sealed self-mailers, refer to Publication 95, Quick Service Guide, QSG 201b.



Pub 95, QSG 201b

Local MDAs can review and approve other proposed formats. Samples of mailpieces constructed of newsprint, and prepared with the final fold on the right or left edges (as opposed to top or bottom) must be submitted to the MDA for approval before full production.

Preparation of self-mailers and other tabbed pieces in these formats does not guarantee acceptance at automation letter rates. Any piece that does not meet postal machinability standards and cannot be processed on postal automated equipment may require changes in the sealing methods in order to qualify for automated discounts.

MAILPIECE FLEXIBILITY

In addition to size, shape, and material used to create letter mail, flexibility and rigidity of the mailpiece are important. The contents of mail must be reasonably flexible to ensure proper transport through postal processing equipment.

At the same time, if your mail is too flimsy, it might catch in the metal joints of the processing equipment. Extremely flimsy or thin mailpieces also tend to stick together or adhere to other pieces easily, causing missorts and possible delays in delivery of the mail.

Pens, pencils, keys, large coins, and other rigid items can damage mail and mail processing equipment; they are prohibited in letter-size mail submitted for automation rates.

Items such as credit cards and small coins firmly attached to the contents of the mailpiece are usually acceptable if the mailpiece and its contents can bend easily around an 11-inch diameter steel drum (11-inch diameter drums are used in the USPS's automated machinery's belt transport system). CD/DVDs must be pre-tested and pre-approved by the Mailpiece Design Analyst for automation discounts.

**EXERCISE 6 - 1**

Directions: Circle the best response to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. In order to qualify for automated rates, letter-size mailpieces that are more than 4 1/4 inches high or 6 inches long must be at least:
 - a) 0.007 inch thick
 - b) 0.011 inch thick
 - c) 0.009 inch thick
 - d) 0.25 inch thick

2. If the aspect ratio of a letter-size mailpiece is not between 1.3 to 2.5, it may still qualify for barcoded discounts.
 - a) true
 - b) false

3. Mailpieces designed as envelopes sealed on all sides, and submitted for automated rates, must be constructed of paper with a minimum basis weight of:
 - a) 14 pounds
 - b) 16 pounds
 - c) 18 pounds
 - d) 20 pounds

4. Letter-size mailpieces submitted for barcoded discounts may contain rigid items such as pens or bottle caps.
 - a) true
 - b) false

5. A folded self-mailer must be tabbed in order for the mailpiece to be eligible for barcoded rates.
 - a) true
 - b) false

6. Folded self-mailers eligible for barcoded discounts may be sealed with:
 - a) string
 - b) spot glue
 - c) staples
 - d) buttons

7. The following methods are acceptable means of closure on folded self-mailers:
 - a) wafer seals
 - b) cellophane tape (if not placed in the barcode clear zone)
 - c) tabs
 - d) all of the above

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 6 - 1

1. **c, 0.009 inch thick;** letter-size mailpieces larger than the postcard maximums must be at least 0.009 inch thick in order to maintain the necessary rigidity required for high-speed transport on USPS automated sorting equipment.
2. **b, false;** letter-size mailpieces with an aspect ratio outside this range do not qualify for automated discounts.
3. **b, 16 pounds;** as measured by a ream of 500 17-by 22-inch sheets.
4. **b, false;** rigid items in letter-size envelopes tend to jam USPS automated equipment, resulting in lost productivity and damaged mail.
5. **a, true;** tabbing of folded self mailers is fully defined in DMM 201.3.13.
6. **b, spot glue;** in addition to spot glue, other acceptable methods of sealing include self-adhesive tabs, wafer seals, glue strips, and cellophane tape (with certain restrictions).
7. **d. all of the above;** Tabs, wafer seals, cellophane tape (if not placed in the barcode clear zone), or permanent glue (continuous or spot) may be used as sealing devices on folded self-mailers.

BARCODE PLACEMENT

The enhanced capabilities of current USPS barcode readers allow for the placement of barcodes in either of two possible locations on the face of a letter-size mailpiece. The barcode must appear either in the lower right corner of the mailpiece in the barcode clear zone, or if printed as part of the address, in the address block barcode read area.

So long as you meet the reflectance requirements described in module five, USPS Barcodes, you can print the barcode either on a label, an insert, or directly on the mailpiece itself.

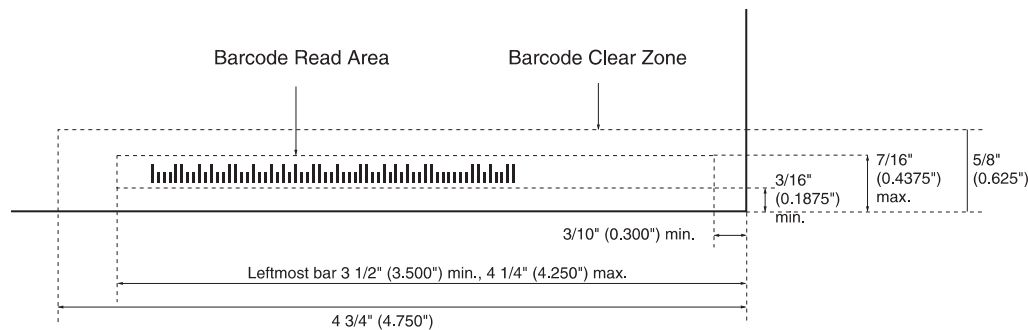
Barcode Clear Zone

The barcode clear zone is an imaginary rectangle in the lower right corner of a letter-size mailpiece. The bottom and right sides of the mailpiece form the bottom and right edges of this rectangle. The left side of the rectangle is at least 4 3/4 inches in from the right edge of the mailpiece and the top of the rectangle is 5/8 inch up from the bottom of the piece.

LOWER RIGHT CORNER BARCODE

If the barcode is printed in the barcode clear zone, the first (leftmost) bar must be positioned between 3 1/2 inches to 4 1/4 inches from the right edge of the mailpiece. The baseline of the barcode (the bottom of each bar) must be at least 1/4 inch as measured up from the bottom of the mailpiece, with a tolerance of plus or minus 1/16 inch. The barcode and all the bars that comprise it must be within 3/16 inch and 7/16 inch as measured from the bottom edge of the mailpiece.

Only delivery point barcodes may appear in the lower right corner of letter-size pieces submitted for automation discounted rates. POSTNET barcodes consisting of only ZIP+4 or 5-digit ZIP Code information are prohibited from appearing in the barcode clear zone on letter-size mailpieces submitted for automation discounts.



The barcode clear zone must be kept clear of any extraneous printing that might confuse the barcode readers. The Postal Service will disqualify a mailpiece barcoded in the lower right if any print or bleed-through appearing in the barcode clear zone has a print contrast ratio (PCR) of more than 15 percent (see previous module).

You can determine correct lower right barcode placement and clear zone location using the clear plastic overlays; ITEM 07 and NOTICE 67, both part of the course's optional resource kit.



Item 07, Automation Gauge



Not. 67, Automation Template

Item 04A



Lower Right Corner Barcode Window

For particular applications, mailers will sometimes elect to print the barcode on an insert that will show through a window in the lower right corner of the mailpiece. The barcode window must be covered and conform to the following specifications:

- Left: at least 4 3/4 inch from the right edge.
- Right: at least 1/4 inch from the right edge.
- Top: at least 5/8 inch from the bottom.

The bottom edge of the barcode window must wrap around and form the bottom edge of the mailpiece. The window material must be clear and allow the barcode to meet the reflectance requirements outlined in module five.

In addition, throughout the full motion of the insert, the entire barcode must remain in the barcode clear zone and maintain the following clearances:

- At least 1/8 inch between the barcode and the left and right edges of the window.
- At least 1/25 inch between the barcode and the top edge of the window.
- At least 3/16 inch between the barcode and the bottom edge of the mailpiece.



EXERCISE 6 - 2

Directions: Take out Item 07. It is the small clear plastic overlay included with the resource kit. Hold the template at arm’s length against a neutral background.

You will see a number of positioning marks and inscribed gauges. For now, look for the lower right alignment mark on the template. You should see a corner marking in the lower right, with the text: “ALIGN WITH RIGHT BOTTOM CORNER OF MAILPIECE.”

Align this corner marking with the lower right corner of the samples below. Using the areas in the lower right of the overlay marked “BARCODE FULLY WITHIN THIS AREA,” and “FIRST BAR MUST BE WITHIN SHADED AREA,” determine the answers for each sample question. Circle the letter of the correct answer.

1. Is the barcode correctly positioned?
 a) yes b) no



2. Is the barcode correctly positioned?
 a) yes b) no



Recheck your answers using the ruler inscribed on the top edge of the template:
 Is the barcode baseline at least 1/4 inch from the bottom edge? Is the first (leftmost) bar between 3 1/2 inches to 4 1/4 inches from the right edge?

3. If located in the barcode read area of the barcode clear zone on a letter-size mailpiece, the leftmost (first) bar of the barcode must be positioned no further than:
 - a) 4 1/4 inches in from the right edge
 - b) 4 1/4 inches in from the left edge
 - c) 4 3/4 inches in from the left edge
 - d) 4 3/4 inches in from the right edge

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 6 - 2

1. **yes**; both the first bar and the baseline of the barcode are correctly positioned.
2. **no**; the first (leftmost) bar is more than 4 1/4 inches from the right edge.
3. **a, 4 1/4 inches in from the right edge**; when printing a barcode in the barcode clear zone, the first bar must be located between 3 1/2 inches to 4 1/4 inches in from the right edge of a letter-size mailpiece.

ADDRESS BLOCK BARCODING

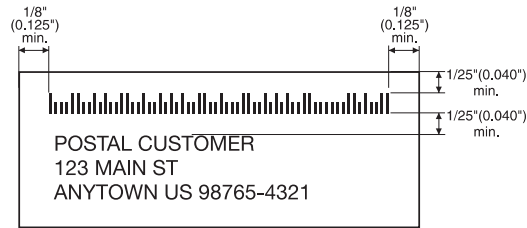
With this method, the barcode is not subject to the strict positioning requirements of the barcode clear zone. The address block barcoding option is the most desirable method of choice. If you desire printing the POSTNET barcode as part of the address block, you must locate the barcode in one of the following positions in the address. The delivery point barcode is prohibited between the delivery address and the city, state, ZIP lines. If an address block barcode is used, the bottom line of the address block, including the barcode, must be at least 5/8" from the bottom of the mailpiece.

BARCODE CLEARANCES

An address block barcode requires certain clearances relative to any printing and the edges of the window or address label. This allows the barcode sorter to successfully locate the barcode. As shown in the diagram below, a clear space of 1/25" is required above and below the barcode and 1/8" is required to the left and the right of the barcode.

To the right are examples of the acceptable barcode placement in address blocks.

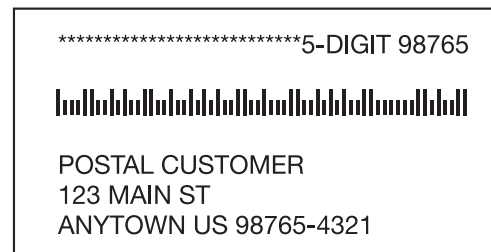
ABOVE ADDRESS



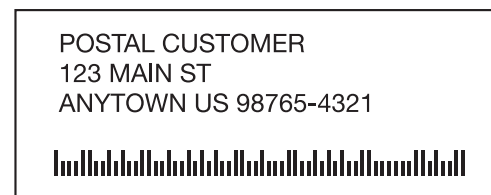
ABOVE OPTIONAL ENDORSEMENT LINE AND/OR ACS PARTICIPANT/ KEYLINE INFORMATION



BELOW OPTIONAL ENDORSEMENT LINE AND/OR KEYLINE INFORMATION



BELOW THE ADDRESS



Placement

When you print a barcode in the address block, the automation capabilities of the Postal Service's barcode readers allow greater latitude in placement. The positioning requirements are as follows:

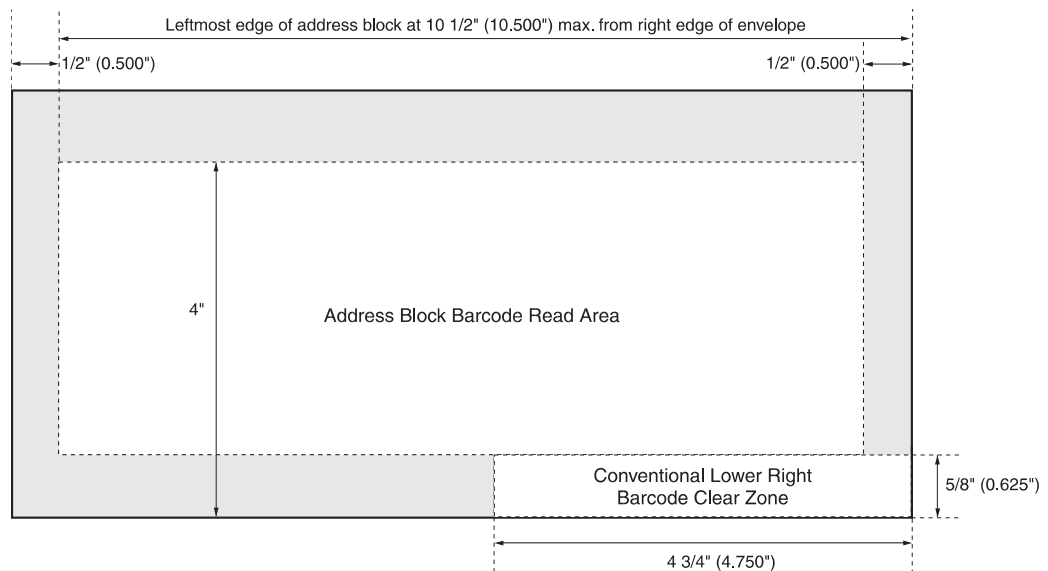
- The rightmost (last) bar in the barcode must be at least 1/2 inch from the right edge of the mailpiece.
- The leftmost (first) bar must be less than 10 1/2 inches from the right edge of the mailpiece, but no closer than 1/2 inch to the left edge.
- The top of each bar in the barcode must be no higher than 4 inches from the bottom of the mailpiece.
- The minimum clearance between the barcode and any information line above

or below it within the address block must be at least 1/25 inch, and the separation between the barcode and top line or bottom line of the address block must not exceed 5/8 inch. The clearance between the leftmost and rightmost bars and any adjacent printing must be at least 1/8 inch.

- The bottom line of the address block, including the barcode, must be at least 5/8 inches from the bottom of the mailpiece.

You can visualize the address block barcode placement requirements, along with the barcode clear zone, as another imaginary rectangle on the face of the mailpiece. To qualify for automation discounts for letter-size mail, the address block barcode must be completely within this rectangle.

BARCODE PLACEMENT AREAS



Window Envelopes

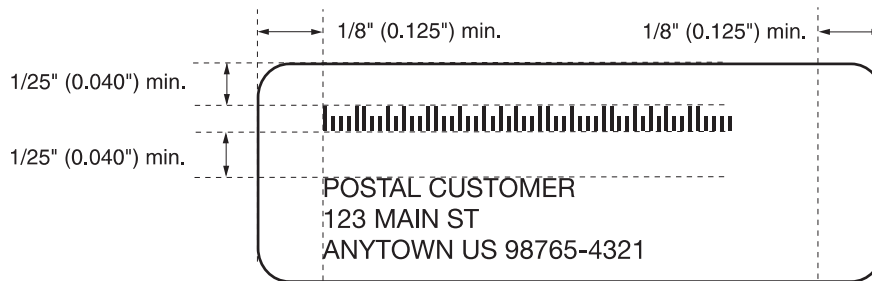
Printing an address block barcode on inserts that show through an address window is also a very popular option. This allows the mailer to gain additional efficiencies by eliminating the need to apply address labels. It also makes the enclosed information more personal.

You must locate the address window so that the barcode, as visible through the window, will meet the positioning requirements for address block barcoding. The Postal Service prefers window coverings, but does not require them except for the previously described heavy letter mail.

Window coverings, if used, must be sufficiently transparent to allow the barcode and its background to meet the reflectance requirements for POSTNET barcodes covered in module five, USPS Barcodes. The Postal Service makes this determination by measuring the barcode through the window material using a USPS envelope reflectance meter.

The 1/8 inch and 1/25 inch clearance requirements to label edges, for address block barcodes, also apply to address window edges or die cuts. These requirements are summarized in the following graphic:


BARCODE / WINDOW CLEARANCE



Note: Not drawn to scale

You must maintain these clearances throughout the full range of insert motion. If you use the same envelope for multiple inserts, be sure these requirements are met for every combination.

Mailings prepared in window envelopes and claimed at automation rates must pass a tap test during acceptance. Envelopes are tapped to the left, right, and bottom. The pieces must meet the required clearances after being tapped in each of these three directions.

 *USPS acceptance personnel will conduct the "tap test" to check insert motion. The piece is tapped on the left, right and bottom.*

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The background reflectance minimums and *print reflectance difference* (PRD) contrast requirements for POSTNET barcodes described in module five; USPS Barcodes, must be met by both the barcode and the surface on which it is printed. This ensures that the barcode can be successfully read and interpreted on postal sorting equipment.

Dark Fibers and Background Patterns

Dark fibers or background patterns (e.g., checks) in the address block or the barcode clear zone that produce a print contrast ratio of more than 15% when measured in the red and green portions of the optical spectrum are prohibited for automation rates. Mailpiece Design Analysts have an envelope reflectance meter to measure the print contrast ratio.

Outside Labels and Stickers

Permanent labels and stickers designed to not be removed or relocated must be affixed directly to the outside of the mailpiece with permanent adhesive with a peel adhesion to stainless steel of 8 ounces/inch. Placing the label straight on the mailpiece is very important. Labels skewed or tilted more than 5-degrees cannot be read by the automated equipment.

Markings

In addition to the basic rate marking, if the barcode has been applied in the lower right corner, the marking “AUTO” is also required. The “AUTO” marking may be printed or produced as part of, or directly below or to the left of, the postage. It may also be placed in the line directly above or two lines above the address or to the left of the barcode clear zone. If the barcode is placed in the address block, the word “AUTO” is not required. Please refer to DMM 202.3.4.c for markings when barcode is applied by an MLOCR.

**EXERCISE 6 - 3**

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. The barcode clear zone extends 5/8 inch up from the bottom edge of a letter-size mailpiece and:
 - a) 4 1/4 inches in from the right edge
 - b) 4 1/4 inches in from the left edge
 - c) 4 3/4 inches in from the left edge
 - d) 4 3/4 inches in from the right edge

2. When printing a barcode in the barcode read area of the barcode clear zone on a letter-size mailpiece, the barcode clear zone must not contain any printing with a PCR of greater than 15 percent.
 - a) true
 - b) false

3. Which of the following is not an acceptable position for a barcode printed as part of the address block:
 - a) above the address
 - b) below the optional endorsement line and above the recipient's name
 - c) between the delivery address line and the city and state information
 - d) above the optional endorsement line and/or keyline information

4. When printed as part of the address block on a letter-size mailpiece, the entire POSTNET barcode or IMB must be located no higher than _____ inches up from the bottom edge of the mailpiece.

5. An address block barcode requires a clearance above and below the barcode to any printing, window, or label edge of at least:
 - a) 1/15 inch
 - b) 1/25 inch
 - c) 1/4 inch
 - d) 1/8 inch

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 6 - 3

1. **d, 4 3/4 inches in from the right edge;** these measurements define the barcode clear zone in the lower right corner of a letter-size mailpiece.
2. **a, true;** extraneous printing in the barcode clear zone with a PCR (print contrast ratio) of greater than 15 percent (as measured by a USPS envelope reflectance meter) can confuse USPS barcode sorters and prevent them from successfully interpreting the ZIP+4 code and delivery point information encoded in the barcode.
3. **c, between the delivery address line and the city and state information;** placing an address block barcode anywhere between the recipient's name and the city, state, and ZIP Code information would unacceptably separate and break up address information critical to the proper and efficient delivery of the mailpiece.
4. **4;** USPS barcode sorters will scan for POSTNET barcodes on the face of a letter-size mailpiece no higher than 4 inches up from the bottom.
5. **b, 1/25;** a properly positioned address block barcode maintains a clearance of 1/25 inch above and below, and 1/8 inch to the left and right, between the barcode and any other printing, markings, and window die cuts or label edges. These clearances must be maintained throughout the full range of motion of an insert showing through a window in a window envelope.

The Postal Service offers an automation discount for flat-size barcoded mailpieces. Current flat sorting machines (FSMs) are designed with barcode readers that can locate and scan a barcode almost anywhere on the address side of a flat-size mailpiece. In this section, we cover the standards for barcoding flats.

Qualifying flat-size mailpieces must meet the size and construction requirements for processing on USPS automated flat sorters. While automated letters are limited to the definition of the basic processing category, flat-size standards actually expand upon the flat-size category discussed in module three. The structure and dimensional tolerances of the POSTNET barcode used for flat-size mail is the same as previously discussed for letter-size mail.



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT AUTOMATION REQUIREMENTS FOR FLAT-SIZE MAILPIECES

Upon completion of this portion of the module, you should be able to do the following:

- Describe the differences in the determination of length and height for automated flats.
- Describe the construction requirements for flat-size mailpieces submitted for automation discounts.
- Describe the placement, positioning, and applicable clearances of POSTNET barcodes and IMB on flat-size mail.

AUTOMATION RATES FOR FLAT-SIZE MAIL

USPS automation discounts apply to flat-size mailpieces that are barcoded by the mailer. Automation rate discounts for flat-size mail allow for either a ZIP+4 code or a delivery point barcode. In addition, the mailpiece itself must meet the physical requirements for automated flat sortation. This applies equally to all flat-size mailpieces, regardless of class.

The POSTNET barcode print quality, tolerances, clearance, reflectance, and accuracy requirements discussed in module five, USPS Barcodes, apply equally to flat-size mailpieces. Mailpieces that do not meet these requirements are not eligible for the automation discount.

The following classes of mail include discounted rate options for barcoded mailings of flat-size mailpieces:

- First-Class Mail.
- Periodicals Mail.
- Standard Mail.
- Package Services.
 - Bound Printed Matter.

Barcode

The USPS Flat Sorting Machines can currently read delivery point or ZIP+4 barcodes. The barcode may be read virtually anywhere on the address side of a flat-size mailpiece as long as it is at least 1/8" away from any edge.

A clear space of 1/25" is required above and below the barcode and 1/8" is required to the left and the right of the barcode.

Window Envelopes

If window envelopes are used for barcoded flat-size mail, the address on the insert showing through the window must remain in view when the insert moves the full range within the envelope.

When a window envelope is used, the clearance between the leftmost and rightmost bars and any printing or window edge must be at least 1/8", and the clearance between the barcode and the top and bottom window edges must be at least 1/25". These clearances must be maintained during the insert's full range of movement in the envelope.



Uniformity and Exterior Format

Flat-size mailpieces must be uniformly thick so that any bumps, protrusions, or other irregularities do not cause more than $\frac{1}{8}$ inch variance in thickness. Exclude the outside edges of a mailpiece (1 inch from the edge) when determining variance in thickness. Mailers must secure contents to prevent shifting of more than 2 inches within the mailpiece. A flat-size mailpiece must have a smooth and regular shape and be free of creases, folds, tears, or other irregularities not compatible with automation equipment. The exterior surface must not have protuberances caused by prohibited closures; attachments (except as provided below); irregularly shaped or distributed contents; or untrimmed excess material from the envelope, wrapper, or sleeve.

Aspect Ratio

Unlike letter-size mail, there is no aspect ratio requirement for automation-compatible flat-size mailpieces. Flats must be rectangular or square in shape.

Tabs, Wafer Seals, Tape, and Glue

Permanently adhesive sealing devices may be used as long as they don't interfere with the recognition of the barcode, rate marking, postage information and delivery and return address on the piece. Sealing devices, however, are not required to qualify for automation rates.

Prohibitions

Clasps, strings, buttons, or similar materials or other protrusions that impede or damage mail processing equipment are not allowed. Staples used as tabs or wafer seals are not permitted. Staples may be used as a binding method, placed in the fold or spine of a magazine or booklet-type or similar mailpiece if parallel with the bound edge. The staples must be tightly and securely inserted, and not protruding to damage or interfere with mail processing equipment.

Short Covers

Flats may be prepared with a cover page or protective cover that is more than $\frac{3}{4}$ " from each edge if the cover page is secured with at least two tabs, wafer seals, or glue spots placed 1" of the top and bottom edges of the cover page or protective cover.

Outside Stickers

Labels and stickers must be affixed to the outside of the piece with a permanent adhesive that cannot be removed or relocated once affixed.

Determining Length and Height

The length and height of an automation-compatible flat-size mailpiece is not determined by the orientation of the address, but by the preparation of the piece:

- For a piece prepared as a single sheet or in an envelope, full-length wrapper, or full-length sleeve, the length is the longest dimension. The height is the dimension perpendicular to the length.
- For a piece prepared with a bound, folded or closed edge (e.g., a catalog, a newspaper or tabloid, a folded envelope), the length is the dimension parallel to the bound, folded or closed edge. The height is the dimension perpendicular to the length. If the piece is folded more than once or is bound and then folded, the length is the dimension parallel to the final fold.

A flat-size piece with a final fold must be designed so that the address is in view when the final folded edge is at the bottom of the piece and any intermediate bound or folded edge is to the right.

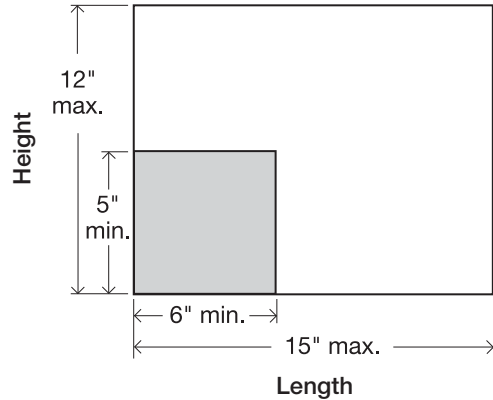
The piece must meet the DMM standards in 301.3.3.4 for turning ability and deflection.

Markings

First-Class Mail and Standard Mail flats do not require an “AUTO” marking. First-Class Mail flats not marked “AUTO” must bear both the “Presorted” or “PRSRT” and “First-Class” markings. Standard Mail flats not marked “AUTO” must bear the appropriate basic marking, “PRESORT STANDARD,” PRSRT STD,” “NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION” or “NONPROFIT ORG.”

CRITERIA

Dimensions



	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM
HEIGHT	5"	12"
LENGTH	6"	15"
THICKNESS	0.009"	3/4"

Maximum Weight

The maximum weight for qualified piece by class:

- First-Class Mail 13 ounces
 - Periodicals¹ 20 ounces
 - Standard Mail less than 16 ounces
 - Bound Printed Matter 20 ounces
- ¹For pieces prepared under DMM 301.3.

FLEXIBILITY AND DEFLECTION

Minimum Flexibility for Flat-Size Pieces

Flat-size pieces must be flexible. Boxes—with or without hinges, gaps, or breaks that allow the piece to bend—are not flats. Tight envelopes or wrappers that are filled with one or more boxes are not flats. Test flats as follows:

A. All flats (see Exhibit 1.3a):

1. Place the piece with the length parallel to the edge of a flat surface and extend the piece halfway off the surface.
2. Press down on the piece at a point 1 inch from the outer edge, in the center of the piece's length, exerting steady pressure.
3. The piece is not flexible if it cannot bend at least 1 inch vertically without being damaged.
4. The piece is flexible if it can bend at least 1 inch vertically without being damaged and it does not contain a rigid insert. No further testing is necessary.
5. Test the piece according to 1.3b. or 1.3c. below if it can bend at least 1 inch vertically without being damaged and it contains a rigid insert.

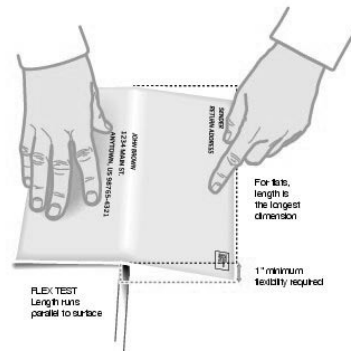


Exhibit 1.3a

B. Flats 10 inches or longer that pass the test in 1.3a and contain a rigid insert (see Exhibit 1.3b):

1. Place the piece with the length perpendicular to the edge of a flat surface and extend the piece 5 inches off the surface.
2. Press down on the piece at a point 1 inch from the outer edge, in the center of the piece's width, exerting steady pressure.
3. Turn the piece around and repeat steps 1 and 2. The piece is flexible if both ends can bend at least 2 inches vertically without being damaged.

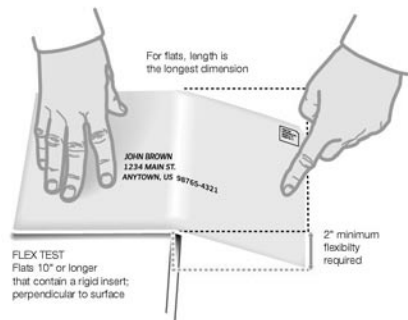


Exhibit 1.3b

C. Flats less than 10 inches long that pass the test in 1.3a and contain a rigid insert (see Exhibit 1.3c):

1. Place the piece with the length perpendicular to the edge of a flat surface and extend the piece one-half of its length off the surface.
2. Press down on the piece at a point 1 inch from the outer edge, in the center of the piece's width, exerting steady pressure.
3. Turn the piece around and repeat steps 1 and 2. The piece is flexible if both ends can bend at least 1 inch vertically without being damaged.

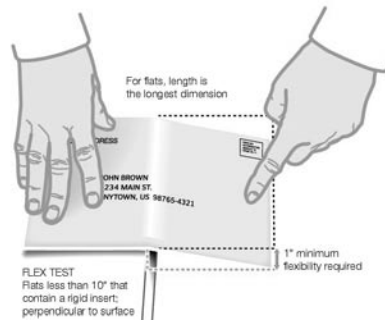
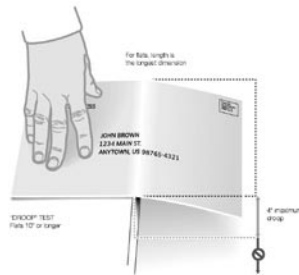


Exhibit 1.3c

Maximum Deflection for Automation Flat-Size Pieces

An automation flat-size mailpiece must be flexible (see 1.3) and must meet maximum deflection standards. Test deflection as follows:

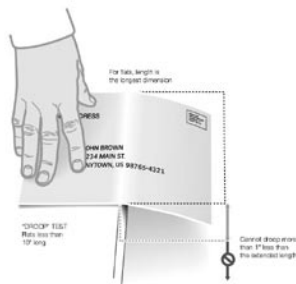
- A. For pieces 10 inches or longer** (see *Exhibit 3.2.3a*):
1. Place the piece with the length perpendicular to the edge of a flat surface and extend the piece 5 inches off the surface. Turn the piece around and repeat the process.
 2. The piece is automation-compatible if it does not droop more than 4 inches vertically.



Deflection Test—Pieces 10 inches or longer

Exhibit 3.2.3a

- B. For pieces less than 10 inches long** (see *Exhibit 3.2.3b*):
1. Place the piece with the length perpendicular to the edge of a flat surface and extend the piece one-half of its length off the surface. Turn the piece around and repeat the process.
 2. The piece is automation-compatible if it does not droop more than 1 inch less than the extended length. For example, a piece 8 inches long would extend 4 inches off a flat surface. It must not droop more than 3 inches vertically.



Deflection Test—Pieces Less Than 10 inches long

Exhibit 3.2.3b

- C. For pieces with bound or folded edges,** perform the test in 3.2.3a or 3.2.3b above by placing the bound or final folded edge perpendicular to the edge of the flat surface.

Polywrap Seam Placement

The polywrap must completely cover the flat. The wrap direction must be around the longer axis of the mailpiece. The seam must be parallel to the longest dimension. The seam placement is preferred on the nonaddressed side of the mailpiece. If seam is placed on the addressed side, it must not cover any part of the address and barcode areas.

Overhang Around Edges

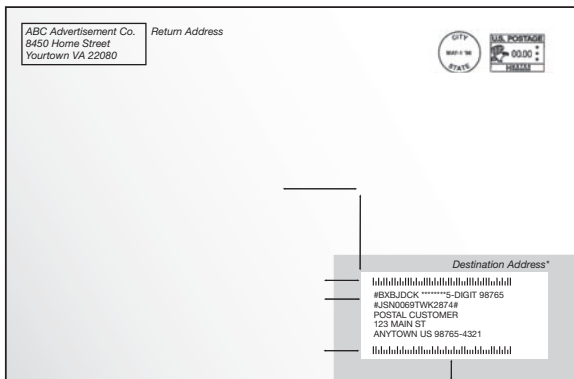
Strictly for the purposes of determining the polywrap standards for overhang (selvage), the top and bottom are always the two longest edges of the mailpiece regardless of the address orientation. Any polywrap overhang (selvage) around the four edges of the mailpiece (top, bottom, and left and right sides) must meet these standards:

1. When the mailpiece contents are totally positioned at the bottom of the polywrap, the overhang must not be more than 0.5 inch at the top of the mailpiece.
2. When the mailpiece contents are totally positioned to the left or to the right side of the polywrap, the overhang must not be more than 1.5 inches on the opposite side.
3. The polywrap covering must not be so tight that it bends the mailpiece.

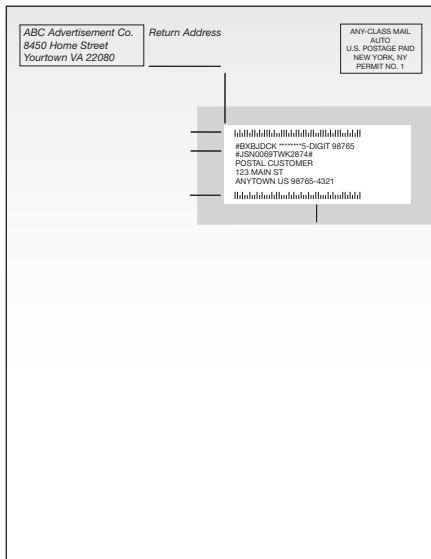
Final Fold

A flat-size piece with a final fold must be designed so that the address is in view when the final folded edge is at the bottom of the piece and any intermediate bound or folded edge is to the right.

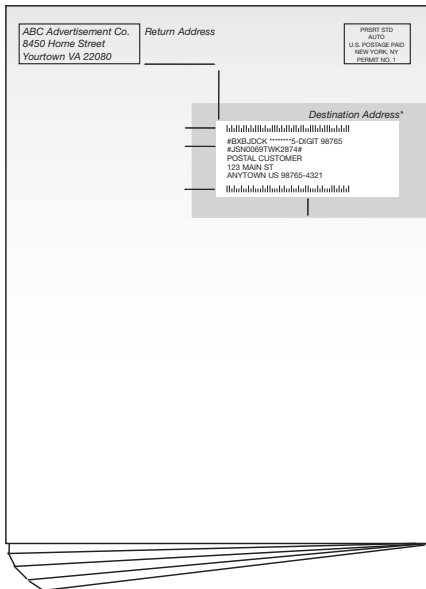
Preferred Address Placement
Flat Envelope—Any Class



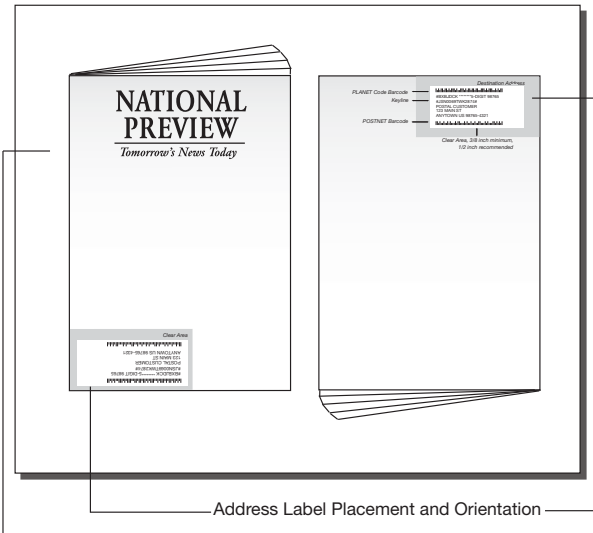
Preferred Address Placement
Flat Envelope—Any Class



Preferred Address Placement
Standard Mail With Bound Edge



Preferred Address Placement
Periodicals



The following diagrams depict the suggested/preferred address placements on flats:

Suggested Barcode Application

- Place barcode below the delivery address
- Left justify barcode to delivery address
- 1/8" clear space between barcode and address
- 1/8" clear space on left and right of barcode
- Use a delivery point barcode to ensure the highest accuracy
- Do not place barcode in return address

**EXERCISE 6 - 4**

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. What is the maximum thickness for an automation flat size mailpiece?
 - a) _ inch
 - b) _ inch
 - c) 1 inch
 - d) 1 1/4 inches

2. For a flat-size, automation rate mailpiece, the dimension parallel to the bound or folded edge is the:
 - a) length
 - b) height
 - c) thickness

3. There is no aspect ratio requirement for prebarcoded flats.
 - a) true
 - b) false

4. The material used to polywrap a barcoded flat-sized mailpiece must be an approved product listed on the RIBBS web site.
 - a) true
 - b) false

5. If a polywrap flat measures 9 inches by 12 inches, what dimension is the top for the purposes of determining overhang?
 - a.) 9 inches
 - b.) 12 inches

6. A qualifying POSTNET barcode must be placed at least _____ inch from the edge of any flat-size mailpiece.

7. To qualify for automated flat rates, the mailpiece must be tabbed.
 - a) true
 - b) false

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 6 - 4

1. **b, _ inch;** _ inch is the maximum thickness, flat must be uniform in thickness
2. **a, length;** due to the transport method, the length is determined by the final fold or binding. The height is the dimension perpendicular to the bound or folded edge.
3. **a, true;** only letter-size pieces submitted at automation rates must meet the aspect ratio requirement. However, flat size mailpieces must be rectangular in shape.
4. **a, true;** in order to be processed successfully on the flat sorting machines the polywrap used must meet 6 specific properties. Manufacturers who have passed a stringent test process are listed on the RIBBS Web site.
5. **b. 12 inches;** the longest edge is considered the top
6. **1/8 inch;** a minimum clearance of 1/8 inch to the edge of a flat-size mailpiece is required to allow the flat sorters to successfully locate and decode the barcode.
7. **b, false;** There are no tabbing requirements for automated flat rates except for short covers.

The USPS offers discounts for Package Services machinable parcels bearing a correct parcel barcode (covered in module five, USPS Barcodes). Any qualifying Package Services machinable parcels routinely processed at a bulk mail center (BMC) or auxiliary service facility (ASF) with parcel sorters qualify for this discount.

However, eligibility for this discount is dependent on the proper application of a correct, readable, 5-digit parcel barcode. The required barcode format was covered in module five, USPS Barcodes. The definition of the requirements for machinable parcels is in module three, Processing Categories.

The final portion of this module deals with the application and positioning of the 5-digit barcode on a qualifying machinable mailpiece.



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT AUTOMATION REQUIREMENTS FOR PARCELS

Upon completion of this portion of the module, you should be able to do the following:

- Describe the proper placement and location of parcel barcodes.
- Describe the clearance requirements for parcel barcodes.
- List the requirements for use of address windows.

BARCODED DISCOUNT STANDARDS FOR MACHINABLE PARCELS

Barcoded parcel discounts apply to single-piece mailings of 50 or more machinable parcels for the following subclasses:

- Parcel Post
- Bound Printed Matter
- Library Mail
- Media Mail

Barcoded parcel discounts also apply to presorted mailings of 300 or more machinable parcels for the following subclasses:

- Bound Printed Matter
- Library Mail
- Media Mail

For a full description of parcel barcode discounts, consult the individual subclass requirements in DMM 708.5.0 or contact your local postmaster or business mail entry personnel.

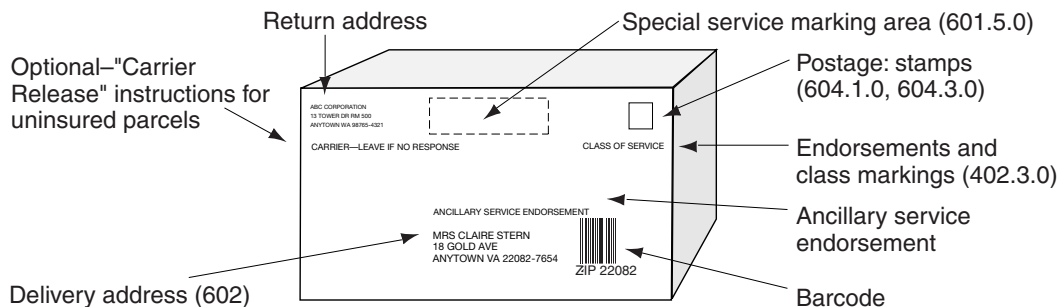
Criteria

Only Package Services mailpieces adhering to the standards for machinable parcels (covered in module three, Processing Categories) are eligible to receive the barcoded parcel discount. The Postal Service's automated parcel sorters can only process pieces that meet these criteria. These parcels must also meet the general mailability standards as outlined in module one, Classes of Mail and DMM 601.1.0, General Mailability Standards.

Barcode Location

The address and barcode must be placed on the side of the mailpiece with the largest surface area. The address and barcode must be placed on the top surface of the parcel if its shape requires a particular orientation for stability during processing. The barcode should be placed immediately adjacent to the address and at least 1-inch from the edge of the mailpiece. The delivery address or barcode may be printed as an insert providing it meets the reflectance requirements in DMM 402.4.2. No printing may appear in an area 1/8" above and below the barcode regardless of location. In addition to this, a minimum clear zone equal to 10 times the average measured narrow element (bars or space) width must be maintained to the left and right of the barcode.

PHYSICAL STANDARDS FOR AUTOMATED PARCELS



**EXERCISE 6 - 5**

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. Barcoded parcel discounts apply to single-piece mailings of _____ or more pieces for each subclass of Package Services parcels.
2. Barcoded parcel discounts are available for all Package Services subclasses.
 - a) true
 - b) false
3. Package Services barcoded parcel discounts are available only for:
 - a) machinable parcels
 - b) outside parcels
 - c) irregular parcels
 - d) all of the above
4. In general, the delivery address and parcel barcode must be placed on the face of the parcel with the:
 - a) smallest surface area
 - b) average surface area of all sides
 - c) largest surface area
 - d) the most stable surface
5. How far away from the mailpiece edge should the barcode be placed?
 - a) 1/8 inch
 - b) 1/4 inch
 - c) 1/2 inch
 - d) 1 inch
6. Printing may appear either above or below a parcel barcode, but no closer than:
 - a) 1/8 inch
 - b) 1/4 inch
 - c) 1/2 inch
 - d) 1 inch

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 6 - 5

1. **50**; you must have at least 50 pieces for each single-piece Package Services mailing per subclass to claim a barcoded parcel discount.
2. **a, true**; The barcoded parcel discounts are available for Parcel Post, Media Mail, Library Mail, and Bound Printed Matter.
3. **a, machinable parcels**; only parcels that are machinable on USPS parcel sorters fitted with parcel barcode readers are eligible for the barcode discount.
4. **c, largest surface area**; the address and barcode must be placed on the face of the parcel with the largest surface area.
5. **d, 1 inch**; parcel barcodes must be placed no closer than 1 inch to the edge of the parcel.
6. **a, 1/8 inch**; this clearance is required to ensure that the barcode readers can successfully locate and decode the barcode.

The table below lists processing categories by class and the pertinent QSG reference for each automation preparation option.

QUICK SERVICE GUIDE REFERENCES

	First-Class	Periodicals	Standard	Package Services
Letters	QSG 230d	QSG 707f	QSG 240c	N/A
Cards	QSG 230d	N/A	N/A	N/A
Flats	QSG 330b	QSG 707g	QSG 340b	QSG 360
Machinable Parcels	N/A	N/A	QSG 440a	QSG 401a

Sometimes, it is simply not possible to design a mailpiece that qualifies for postal automation discounts. For a variety of reasons, you may be unable to meet the specifications outlined in the previous modules. Your client's needs or desires for a unique message or medium may override the potential benefits and savings of automation-compatible mailpieces. The Postal Service does not require that all mailings be automation-compatible, only that they be properly prepared to qualify for the class and rate for which they are submitted.

The USPS continues to offer a range of options for nonautomation-compatible mailpieces of all classes, albeit at somewhat higher postage rates. While it is beyond the scope of this course to cover preparation requirements in depth, we will direct you to where more information is available, based on the class and size of your mailpiece.

We will also cover how to design your mailpieces to be compatible with the Postal Service's optical character readers, which can add barcodes to pieces not originally bearing them. If you do not prebarcode your mailpieces, it is likely that the Postal Service will attempt to do so itself.



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT REQUIREMENTS FOR NONAUTOMATION MAILPIECES

Upon completion of this module, you should be able to do the following:

- Describe the difference between machinable and nonmachinable mail.
- Describe when the nonmachinable surcharge would apply.
- Describe, in general, the preparation options available to mailers who are unable to barcode their mailpieces.
- Identify ideal type styles for OCR readability.
- Describe the print characteristics and print quality necessary for OCR readability.
- Demonstrate the use of USPS positioning templates for proper placement of delivery address and nonaddress information on letter-size mailpieces.
- Identify characteristics to ensure production of FSM-friendly flats.

NONAUTOMATION RATES

Workshare discounts include nonautomation presort options for mailings that are NOT barcoded. These nonautomation rate mailings consist of either machinable mail or non-machinable mail. The design you choose determines whether or not the piece is machinable or nonmachinable. It also determines whether or not the piece is subject to a nonmachinable surcharge.

MACHINABLE MAIL

Letters

First-Class Mail and Standard Mail letters that are not barcoded, but are designed in a manner that will allow the USPS to process them on high speed automation equipment are referred to as “machinable”. The term “machinable” is also used to describe a presort preparation method for this type of mailpiece that does not require mailers to package their mailings into bundles as defined in QSG 240a. The only bundles required in machinable mailings are mail for the origin SCF, less than full trays and postcard-size pieces. Machinable letters must:

- Contain a complete delivery address
- Weigh no more than 3.3 ounces—Standard Mail
- Weigh no more than 3.3 ounces—First-Class Mail
- Not meet the nonmachinable criteria explained in this module.

Flats

The term “machinable” is not typically used for flats. There is no “machinable” presorting option for First-Class Mail or Standard Mail flats. However, Standard Mail letters and flats may be considered Not Flat-Machinable if they do not meet certain physical requirements. First-Class Mail flats may be considered a parcel if they do not meet certain physical requirements.

Parcels

First-Class Mail parcels (single-piece or presorted) weighing two ounce or less are subject to a surcharge.

The term “machinable”, when used in conjunction with parcels, refers to parcels that meet the BMC machinable parcel criteria described in Module 3 and DMM 101.0 and DMM 401.1.

NONMACHINABLE MAIL

Nonmachinable mail is mail that is not able to be sorted on mail processing equipment because of its size, shape, content, or address orientation. Nonmachinable letter-size mailpieces (of any class) are ineligible for USPS letter-size automation rates.

NONMACHINABLE SURCHARGE

The DMM defines a nonmachinable surcharge as ‘A surcharge on some First-Class Mail, Standard Mail, and Parcel Post pieces that have physical characteristics that prevent the pieces from being processed on automated equipment’. Some mailpieces that are nonmachinable, that must be excluded from automated processing and handled manually, are charged a nonmachinable surcharge.

SURCHARGE

Other types of mailpieces such as parcels and Not Flat-Machinables (NFM) may get surcharges if they are lightweight (First-Class Mail parcels under 2 ounces) or not properly barcoded. We will discuss more about NFMs later in this module.

NONMACHINABLE RATE

Standard Mail nonmachinable letters have a separate rate chart rather than a surcharge.

Postcard Rate

First-Class Mail postcard postage rates are not subject to the nonmachinable surcharge as defined in DMM 201.2.

Letters

First-Class Mail letters that meet one or more of the nonmachinable characteristics as outlined below in DMM 201.2.

- Aspect ratio (length divided by height) of less than 1.3 or more than 2.5.
- Polybagged, polywrapped or enclosed in any plastic material.
- Clasps, strings, buttons or similar devices.
- Contains items such as pens, pencils or loose keys or coins that cause the thickness of the mailpiece to be uneven (DMM 601.11.18).
- Is too rigid (does not bend easily).
- For pieces more than 4-1/4" high or more than 6" long, less than 0.009" thick.
- Delivery address parallel to the shorter dimension of the mailpiece.
- Self-mailers with a folded edge perpendicular to the address if the piece is not folded and secured according to 201.3.14.
- For booklet-type pieces with the bound edge (spine) along the shorter dimension of the piece or at the top, unless sealed according to the booklet automation requirements in DMM 201.3.13.

First-Class Mail Parcels

First-Class Mail parcels are assessed a surcharge for:

- Parcels that weigh less than two ounces.
- Parcels that do not bear a ECC/EAN code 128 or POSTNET barcode, under 708.0 for the ZIP Code of the delivery address.
- Parcels that are irregularly shaped, such as rolls, tubes, and triangles.

The Nonmachinable Surcharge Does Not Apply to:

- Standard Mail—The Standard Mail rate structure factors in extra costs for handling.
- First-Class Mail card rate mailpieces.
- First-Class Mail automation letters.
- Letters qualifying as machinable.
- The Periodicals nonbarcoded letter rates apply to letter-sized pieces with one or more of the nonmachinable characteristics.

Letter-size Dimensions

	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM
HEIGHT	3 1/2"	6 1/8"
LENGTH	5"	11 1/2"
THICKNESS	0.007"	1/4"

Letter-size pieces which are more than 4 1/4" high or more than 6" long (maximum postcard size) are required to be at least .009" thick to be automation compatible.

Letter-size pieces must also meet an aspect ratio (length divided by height) of between 1.3 and 2.5. The maximum letter weight that can be processed through the OCR is 3.3 ounces.

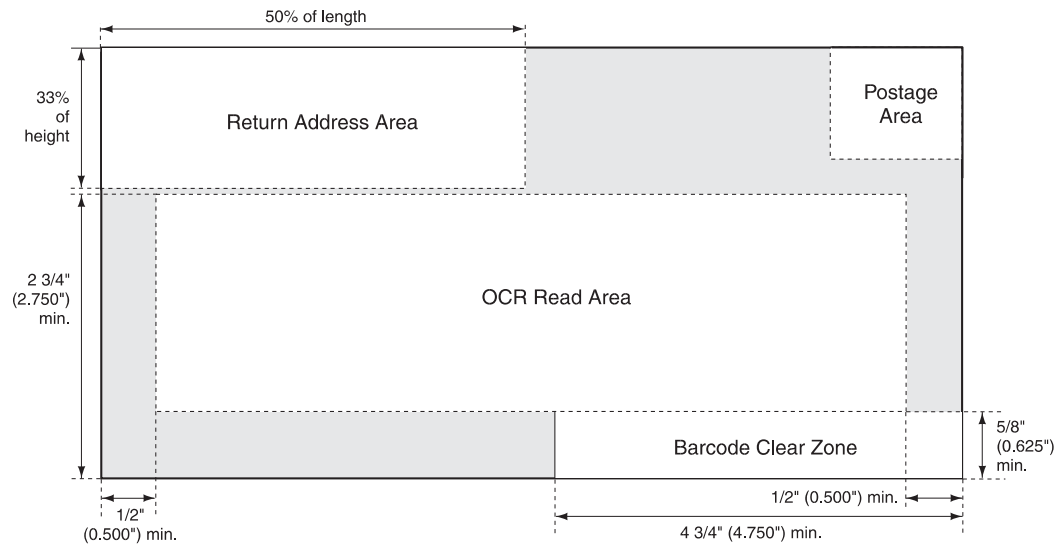
Address Block Location for Letter-size Mail

The OCR barcodes your letter-size mail and sorts it to its proper destination by looking for the delivery address within an imaginary

rectangle on the address side of the mailpiece. The entire delivery address should appear in this area. This imaginary rectangle is called the OCR Read Area.

As depicted by the diagram below, the OCR Read Area begins 5/8" from the bottom of the mailpiece and extends 2 3/4" from the bottom of the mailpiece. The side parameters are 1/2" margins on both the left and right edges. Special care should be taken so that no part of the return address falls inside this area. The possibility exists that the OCR could read your return address. If it does, it could apply a barcode for your return address and you would get your mailpieces sent back to you.

It is best to place nonaddress printing such as logos and teaser copy above the delivery address line and as far away from the address block as possible. Always keep the barcode clear zone (5/8" from the bottom of the mailpiece and 4 3/4" from the right side of envelope to the left) clear of any printing.

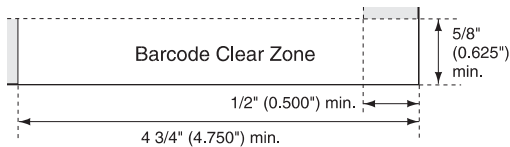


Barcode Clear Zone

The barcode clear zone is a rectangular area in the lower right corner of the address side of the postcard or letter-size mailpiece.

It extends from the bottom edge of the mailpiece up 5/8" and from the right edge of the mailpiece, it extends to the left 4 3/4".

This is the area where the OCR will apply a barcode. Please keep this area clear of any print.



MAILPIECE CONSTRUCTION

Mailpieces qualifying for automated discounts and pieces submitted as machinable are eventually sorted by the Postal Service on the same pieces of equipment, the barcode sorters. Therefore, the physical construction for machinable mailpieces is exactly the same as pieces submitted for barcoded mailings (see previous module). This includes the sealing, folding, and tabbing requirements for self-mailers.

PAPER STOCK

Paper stock for letter-size mail must be of a light color (white or pastel), and the address print must be black (or very dark) to provide adequate contrast for automated processing.

The address bearing surface, whether on an envelope, card, label, or insert, must have the ability to reflect sufficient light. White backgrounds are preferred, but light pastels are acceptable if they meet the reflectance guidelines. The background reflectance should be at least 50 percent in the red portion and 45 percent in the green portion of the optical spectrum to be successfully processed through the automation equipment.

Paper Types

Certain materials are incompatible with postal automation because they cannot be transported at high speeds through mail processing equipment or they do not allow quality printing of a barcode on the mailpiece for optimal scanning.

These materials include polywrap, shrinkwrap, spun-bonded olefin, and other plastic-like coverings. Certain types of coated papers should also be avoided if the coating is so glossy that it prevents the water-based ink used to print a postal-applied barcode from drying within one second.

Avoid using textured paper (paper with other than a smooth surface) if the texture adversely affects print quality (that is, causes broken characters or smudged spaces). Because fluorescent paper can confuse the postage detector on the postal facer-canceller machines, you should also avoid using such paper. Translucent style envelopes can cause readability and machinability problems. Check with our Mailpiece Design Analyst.

Consult the mailpiece design analyst about paper stock before you produce your mailpiece.

Dark Fibers and Patterns

Envelope paper and paper material on other letter-size mailpieces, such as folded self-mailers, should have sufficient opacity (density) to prevent any printing on the inside of the mailpiece from showing through in the OCR read area or in the barcode clear zone.

Some ink patterns used to make security envelopes (designs placed on the inner walls of an envelope) can permeate the envelope material and show (bleed) through. To ensure that nonaddress printing does not interfere with the OCR, the print contrast ratio (PCR) of any print bleed through must be less than 15 percent, as measured on the outside of the envelope, in both the red and green portions of the optical spectrum.

Paper containing dark fibers or background patterns is not recommended. These can cause interference during OCR and BCS processing. The dark patterns can be mistaken for part of the address or barcode information, causing missorts and delays.

If you use such paper, make sure that the print contrast ratio (PCR) between the fibers (or pattern) and the background does not exceed 15 percent in the red and the green portions of the optical spectrum. The mailpiece design analyst can test the print contrast ratio for you.

Halftone Screens

Background colors printed in halftone screens (colors and images formed from patterns of dots) that are less than 200 lines per inch or less than 20% screen cannot be detected by the OCR and should not be used. The OCR can actually image the individual dots when the screens are less dense.

Closures

Protruding closures can cause damage to postal equipment and your mailpieces during processing. If you use clasps, strings, buttons, or similar closure devices, a nonmachinable surcharge may be applied.

Window Envelopes

Often mailers will design letter-size mailpieces using window envelopes. If using window envelopes for more than one style or size of insert, be sure that the window is positioned properly to accommodate address placement for each insert. The address should be completely visible as the insert shifts within the envelope. Ensure that the window is positioned within the OCR read area. For optimal OCR readability, a minimum of 1/8" clearance should be maintained between the address block and the top, bottom and side edges of the window when the insert is moved to its full limits in each direction within the envelope. The bottom edge of the address window must not extend more than 1/8" into the barcode clear zone. An envelope that contains a window that intrudes into the barcode clear zone is not eligible for automated rates.

Window cover material, if used over the address window, should be made of a non-tinted clear or transparent material (e.g., cellophane, glassine, or polystyrene) and should permit the address, as viewed through the window material, to meet the print contrast ratio standards in DMM 601.6.3. Glassine may be used for window cover material providing all edges are glued securely to the envelope. Recycled window cover material should be avoided. Any material used should be free of creases, wrinkles, streaks, fogging or any other condition that may obscure the address. Mailpiece Design Analysts are able to test the print contrast ratio, print reflectance difference and background reflectance using the envelope reflectance meter.

Flexibility

As with automation rate pieces, your nonautomation letter-size mailpiece and its contents should be reasonable flexible to be able to pass around revolving wheels and belts in automated processing equipment.

Labels and Stickers

Address labels and stickers should be applied using permanent glue designed to stay adhered to the mailpiece throughout the entire mailstream.



EXERCISE 7 - 1

Directions: Remove this page from the binder. Take out the Notice 67. It is the large clear plastic overlay included with the resource kit. Hold the template at arm's length against a neutral background. You will see a number of positioning marks and inscribed gauges.

For now, look for the lower right alignment mark on the template. You should see a bold corner marking in the lower right, with the text: "ALIGN WITH RIGHT BOTTOM CORNER OF MAILPIECE TO CHECK BARCODE AND ADDRESS BLOCK LOCATIONS."

Align the corner marking on Notice 67 with the lower right corner of the samples. Using the shaded area in the center of the overlay marked "OCR READ AREA," determine the answers for each sample question. Circle the letter of the correct answer.

SAMPLE A

JANE DOE
1 ANY LANE
ANYWHERE US 98765-4321

1. Is the address in sample A correctly positioned for automation processing?

- a) yes
- b) no



EXERCISE 7 - 1

SAMPLE B

JANE DOE
1 ANY LANE
ANYWHERE US 98765-4321

Don't Delay!

Buy Now! Save Later!

2. Is the address in sample B correctly positioned for automation processing?
 - a) yes
 - b) no

3. Is sample B a good candidate for automated processing?
 - a) yes
 - b) no

**EXERCISE 7 - 1**

Hold the Notice 67 again at arm's length. At the left edge, in the center of the template, you should see a shaded form in the shape of a capital "C" marked "ADDRESS / WINDOW CLEARANCE".

Remove this page from the binder. Use the gauge to verify whether or not the samples below meet the 1/8-inch clearance requirement of address printing to label or window edge or diecut.

Circle the correct answer to each question. Replace all pages, and check your answers against the answer key on the following page.

SAMPLE C

JANE DOE
1 ANY LANE
ANYWHERE US 98765-4321

4. Is the address in sample C correctly positioned?
- a) yes
 - b) no

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 7 - 1

1. **no**; it is not at least 5/8 inch above the bottom edge of the mailpiece.
2. **yes**; the address is completely contained within the OCR read area.
3. **no**; there is printing (teaser copy) in the barcode clear zone, and there is nonaddress printing (teaser copy) in the OCR read area that is below the delivery address line (1 ANY LANE).
4. **no**; there is not at least 1/8 inch clearance between the left edge of the address printing and the label or window edge.

ADDRESS “READABILITY”

A machinable letter-size mailpiece requires accurate, complete, readable addresses that can be successfully scanned and interpreted by an OCR.

TYPOGRAPHY

Typography is the typesetting of letters and characters to form words that can be printed and read. The two most important factors in typesetting are legibility and readability. Legibility measures whether type face characters can be perceived and distinguished from one another. Readability measures how easily and quickly typeset words can be read.

Type Styles

Type styles that are pleasant to the human eye are not necessarily easily readable by the OCR. Simple sans serif (nonserifed) type styles with uniform stroke width are best for OCR processing.

Avoid type styles described as bold, script, extended, condensed, italicized, and highly stylized; these styles are not OCR-readable.

Character Height (80 mils to 200 mils)

Type sizes between 8 and 18 points (a printer’s unit of measurement) are suitable for automated processing; however, 10- or 12-point type size is preferred. Character height will vary from one type style to another. In fact, some 8-point type might be too small for the OCR to read.

If either 8- or 18-point type is used, character height and width should be checked carefully to ensure that they meet requirements. When 8-point type is used, the address should be printed in all uppercase characters to achieve the minimum 80 mil (0.080 inch) character height.

DIFFERENT POINT SIZE EXAMPLES:

12-, 14-, and 16-point “Arial”

Aa Bb Cc

Use the CHARACTER HEIGHT gauge, inscribed in the upper left of Notice 67, Automation Template, to measure whether the above type style meets the minimum and maximum character height requirements for all illustrated point sizes.

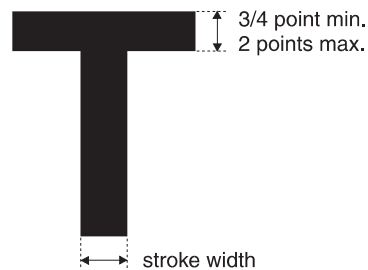


Notice 67, Automation Template

Character Stroke Width


Generally, the stroke width depends on the character size. The width of address character strokes should be uniform and between 3/4 point and 2 points. Light or bold type styles do not meet this requirement and are not compatible with OCR processing.

CHARACTER STROKE WIDTH



Character Height to Width Ratio

The height of the address characters divided by their width should be between 1.1 and 1.7. Most normal type styles (fonts) fall within this range; however, many extended fonts include characters that do not meet this requirement.

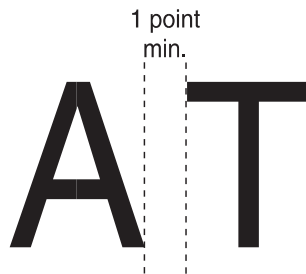
 Notice 67, *Automation Template* has lines inscribed in the upper left corner of the template in 1/2-point increments that can be used to measure these spacing requirements.

Character Spacing

Character spacing is one of the most important parameters for OCR readability. A clear vertical column of 3/4 point to 3 points should be maintained between characters; 1 point character spacing is preferred. The OCR requires this clear space in order to successfully image and read the individual characters.

Kerning, the overlapping or nesting of characters (used in some font styles for easier reading), is not compatible with OCR processing. When kerning is used, the OCR may force the segmentation of some of the characters. This results in split characters that are difficult to read.

CHARACTER SPACING



Character Pitch

The center-to-center spacing between two adjacent characters in a word is known as character pitch. When the pitch of the characters is equal, each character uses the same amount of space regardless of the letter. This style of type presentation is referred to as monospacing and results in an equal number of characters per inch. The use of 10 to 12 characters per inch is recommended for OCR readability.

Word Spacing

A clear vertical space of 1 to 5 “em” (width of a full “M” character) spaces should be maintained between words of the address. This includes spacing between the state abbreviation and the ZIP+4 code. The recommended spacing between words is one to two “em” spaces.

WORD SPACING



Line Spacing

A clear space is required between each line of the address to allow the OCR to properly interpret the address information. Line spacing is measured from the lowest hanging character in the upper line to the highest standing character in the line below. Characters in one line of the address should not touch characters in another line. Spacing should be uniform and not less than 2 points or more than 29 points; the preferred line spacing is 4 points.

LINE SPACING



Left Justified

All lines of text contained in the address block should be left justified. Address block content and format was covered in module four; Addressing.

Uppercase vs. Lowercase

Due to improved character recognition, the USPS prefers that you print all delivery address information in capital letters.

Punctuation

To reduce the amount of data necessary for the OCR to interpret, the USPS prefers that you omit all punctuation in delivery addresses.

PRINT QUALITY

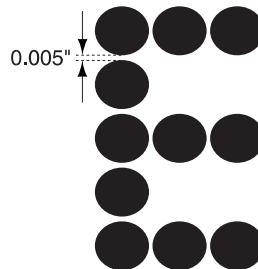
The performance of the optical character reader (OCR) depends upon the print quality of addresses. Successful OCR interpretation is best accomplished when you use the following guidelines:

- Printed characters should present the highest contrast possible relative to the background they are printed on. The OCR works best when the address is printed or typed in black ink on a white background. Other color combinations may be used if a print contrast ratio (PCR) of at least 40 percent is maintained in both the red and green portions of the optical spectrum. Print contrast ratio is a measurement of the contrast between the ink used in the address and the background material on which it appears.
- Print contrast should be uniform throughout each character to prevent the appearance of broken characters.

- Type should be clean, dark, and sharp. Smudges, voids within character strokes, and extraneous ink outside character boundaries adversely affect OCR processing.
- Dot matrix characters can be read by the OCR if the dots that form each character touch one another or are not separated by more than 5/1000 inch (0.005 inch). As ribbons on dot matrix printers become used, characters become faint and are difficult to read. Printing equipment should be carefully maintained and adjusted to achieve the best possible print quality. Change ribbons and add toner frequently to maintain constant ink supplies.
- Reverse printing is not acceptable.

DOT MATRIX CHARACTERS

Maximum Spacing



Ink Characteristics

The ink used to print the address must contain at least one part carbon black ink in order to ensure the required print contrast ratio (PCR) between paper and ink. Two parts black is preferred. Fluorescent and phosphorescent inks are not suitable for automated processing.

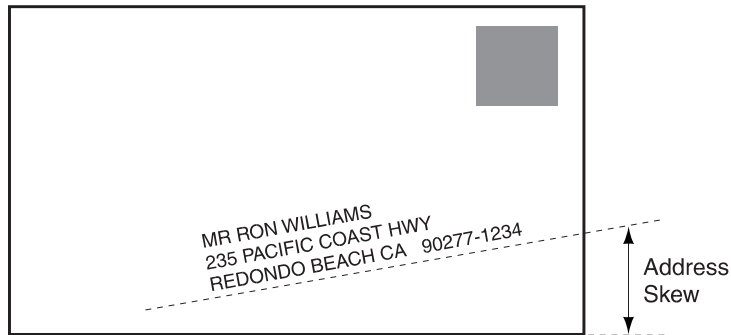
Address Block Skew

The address block should not be slanted or skewed (tilted) by more than 5 degrees relative to the bottom edge of the mailpiece. This standard is especially important for the proper application of address labels.

INTERFERING PRINT

You should avoid using forms, labels, or envelope inserts containing preprinted lines, outline boxes, or prompting words such as "TO:" or "FROM:" in the delivery address area. These nonaddress elements can interfere with successful OCR recognition and interpretation of the delivery address information.

ADDRESS BLOCK SKEW





EXERCISE 7 - 2

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. OCRs read addresses on letter-size mail and print a barcode in the barcode _____ zone in the lower right corner of the mailpiece.
2. Mailpieces prepared as part of a machinable mailing never need to be presorted into packages.
 - a) true
 - b) false
3. You should place the delivery address on a letter-size mailpiece entirely within the OCR _____ area.
4. The delivery address on a letter-size mailpiece should be placed no closer than 5/8 inch to the bottom edge of the mailpiece and no higher than:
 - a) 2 1/4 inches
 - b) 2 1/2 inches
 - c) 2 3/4 inches
 - d) 4 inches
5. Which of the following best describes a characteristic of an OCR-readable type style?
 - a) italicized
 - b) sans serif
 - c) condensed
 - d) script
6. An OCR-readable mailpiece should include a delivery address printed with ink containing at least _____ part carbon black ink.
7. Reverse printing (characters printed as white knock-outs on black paper or dark background) is OCR-readable.
 - a) true
 - b) false

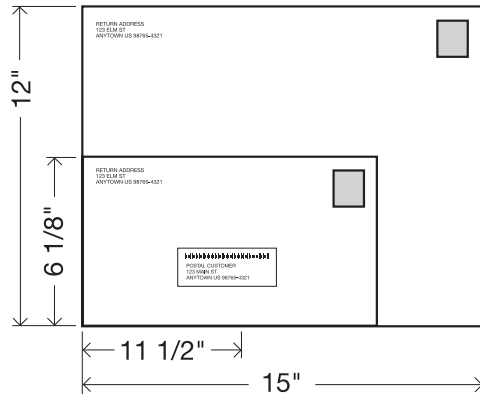
ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 7 - 2

1. **clear**; the barcode clear zone extends 5/8 inch up from the bottom and 4 3/4 inches in from the right edge of a letter-size mailpiece. No discernible printing of any kind should appear in this clear area (other than a properly formatted POSTNET barcode).
2. **b, false**; Machinable mailings will be packaged in less-than-full trays, origin SCF trays, and postcard-size mailings.
3. **read**; the OCR “looks” for the delivery address within this imaginary rectangle.
4. **c, 2 3/4 inches**; the delivery address on an OCR-compatible mailpiece should be entirely within the “OCR read area” as defined by these boundaries:
Left: 1/2 inch from the left edge of the mailpiece.
Right: 1/2 inch from the right edge of the mailpiece.
Top: 2 3/4 inches from the bottom edge of the piece.
Bottom: 5/8 inch from the bottom edge of the piece.
5. **b, sans serif**; a simple, monospaced, sans serif type style is preferred for OCR recognition.
6. **one**; ink colors consisting of two parts carbon black are recommended.
7. **b, false**; the OCR is incapable of properly interpreting reverse printing.

FLAT NONAUTOMATION MAILINGS

Nonautomation flats are flats not bearing POSTNET barcodes. Mailers who meet the following voluntary guidelines ensure that their flat size-mailings receive the most expeditious postal processing possible.

Nonautomation Flat Dimensions



For automation rates, see standards in DMM 301.3.

Dimension	Minimum	Maximum
Height	6 1/8"*	12"
Length	11 1/2"*	15"
Thickness	0.250" (1/4")*	3/4"

* Must exceed at least one of these letter-size maximums.

Pens, pencils, keys, large coins, and/or rigid items are not recommended for inclusion in flats because they can damage the mailpiece and the flat mail processing equipment. Items such as credit cards, which are attached to the contents of the mail, are machinable. The contents should be uniformly and securely enclosed to avoid shifting. Shifting can jam the flat sorting machine because of the erratic movement as the flat moves towards its designated bin. Flats containing rigid contents or are not uniform in thickness or rectangular in shape may be subject to the Not Flat-Machinable (NFM) postage rates or parcel rates.

Preferred Address Block Location

The delivery address should be at least 1" lower and 1" to the right of the return address. Both the delivery address and return address should be printed in the same direction. In a landscape flat design, the return address and delivery address should be separated as much as possible from each other and the delivery address should appear in the lower right hand quadrant. A clear space of 1/2" is recommended in each direction around the address block. Keep the address tilt less than 5 degrees off the horizontal or vertical axis. In a portrait flat design the preferred delivery address block location is the upper right hand quadrant of the mailpiece adjacent to the bound edge.

Readability/Machinability Suggestions

- Delivery address should be 3 or 4 lines, excluding the Optional Endorsement Line and/or the Address Change Service participant code.
- Print city, state and ZIP Code on the same line.
- Print the attention line above the company name.
- Left justify the address block information.
- Print black ink against a light background.
- Address block should be clear of graphics and extraneous information
- Label and envelope material should be opaque so that text or graphics inside the mailpiece cannot show through the address and be detected by the Optical Character Reader.
- Use printers that do not leave voids within characters (dot matrix, dirty printer heads, etc.).
- Apply address labels to the outside of plastic material.
- Use Postal-approved polywrap.
- Clear, wrinkle-free polywrap if the delivery address appears inside the polywrap.
- Use only one return address.
- Recommend not printing business location addresses on the same side as the delivery address.
- Avoid excess glue on labels
- Three stitches in spine as opposed to two.
- Use uniform font size and spacing throughout.
- Address characters should not touch.
- Use 10- to 12- point OCR readable font. Avoid script and narrow fonts.

The following fonts read very well:

ARIAL BLACK
COPPERPLATE
 COURIER
 COURIER NEW
 HELVETICA
 LUCIDA FAX

LUCIDA SANS
 OCR-A
 OCR-B MT
SF SANS SERIF
 TAHOMA

DETACHED ADDRESS LABELS (DALs) FOR FLATS

Saturation mailings of unaddressed Periodicals flats, Standard Mail flats or merchandise samples or Bound Printed Matter mailpieces under DMM 602.4.0 may (at the mailer's option) be mailed using detached address labels (DALs). A saturation mailing is defined as a mailing sent to at least 75% of the total addresses within each carrier route or 90% of the residential addresses within the carrier route, whichever is less. Deliveries need not be made to every carrier route of a delivery unit.

Prior Notification

Each delivery office to receive a DAL mailing must be notified in writing at least 10 days before the requested delivery period.

DALs

Each DAL must be made of paper or cardboard stock that is not folded, perforated, or creased, and that meets these measurements:

- Between 3-1/2 and 5 inches high (perpendicular to the address label).
- Between 5 and 9 inches long (parallel to the address label).
- At least 0.007 inch thick.

The address for each item must be placed on a DAL, parallel to the longest dimension of the DAL, and may not appear on the item it accompanies. The DAL must contain the recipient's delivery address and the mailer's return address. A ZIP+4 code or 5-digit ZIP Code is required unless a simplified address format is used. The delivery address may include the correct delivery point barcode.

Excess Material

The prior notification letter must either request that the delivery office contact the mailer (or representative) about excess DALs or items, or provide instructions for their treatment. (If the mailer does not provide information about excess DALs or items, the leftover material is disposed of as waste by the USPS.) The mailer must choose one of the following options for each DAL mailing and the items:

- Disposal of any excess material as waste.
- Return of the excess material to the mailer, postage due at the applicable single-piece rate.
- Holding of the excess material for pickup by the mailer (or representative). If pickup is not made within 15 calendar days of the notice to the mailer, the material is returned to the mailer postage due.
- Holding of the excess material while additional DALs or items are supplied (as applicable). If additional material is not supplied within 15 days of the notice to the mailer, the excess material is returned to the mailer postage due. Additional material must be sent prepaid to the delivery Post Office as First-Class Mail, Priority Mail, or Express Mail.

Postage

Postage is based on the total number of DALs mailed. Postage for Periodical flats must be prepaid. Postage for Standard Mail flats and merchandise samples and Bound Printed Matter pieces must be paid by permit imprint, which must appear on each DAL. DALs used with Standard Mail incur an additional postage surcharge.

NOT FLAT-MACHINABLE (NFM)

Certain flat-size pieces may be subject to Not Flat-Machinable rates or parcel rates.

Categorize Standard Mail with the following characteristics as Not Flat-Machinable pieces:

- Not Flat-Machinable pieces are rigid, with the following dimensions:
 1. At least 4 inches high, but not more than 12 inches high.
 2. At least 4 inches long, but not more than 15-3/4 inches long.
 3. At least 0.009 thick, but not more than 1-1/4 inches thick. (Pieces less than 5 inches long must be over 1/4 inch thick.)
- Flexible pieces that are at least 4 inches high, but not more than 12 inches high, with either of the following dimensions:
 1. Over 15 inches long, but not more than 15-3/4 inches long.
 2. Over 3/4 inches thick, but not more than 1-1/4 inches thick.
- Nonmachinable letter-size pieces weighing more than 3.3 ounces, unless they qualify to be mailed at automation flat-size rates. Unless prepared in carrier route or 5-digit/scheme containers, Standard Mail parcels and Not Flat-Machinable pieces are subject to a surcharge if:
 - a. The machinable or irregular parcels do not bear a UCC/EAN Code 128 barcode (see 708.5.0).
 - b. The Not Flat-Machinable pieces weigh 6 ounces or more and do not bear a UCC/EAN Code 128 barcode (see 708.5.0).
 - c. The Not Flat-Machinable pieces weigh less than 6 ounces and do not bear a UCC/EAN Code 128 barcode (see 708.5.0) or POSTNET barcode (see 708.4.0).

PARCELS

By definition, only those parcels adhering to the parameters given for machinable parcels (module three, Processing Categories) are compatible with USPS mechanized parcel sorting equipment.

Poorly written or poorly placed addresses slow down parcel sorting operations. This is a major cause of parcels being sent to the wrong destination. Parcels are sorted primarily by their destination ZIP Code until they reach the Post Office of delivery. The identification and readability of the address is critical to the sorting process.

Even if you are not barcoding, you can help ensure the efficient handling of your parcels if you follow the proper address format covered in module four, Addressing, and ensure that the:

- ZIP Code is clearly legible; the initial sortation of the parcel is based primarily on the 5-digit ZIP Code information.
- Address is parallel to the longest edge of the parcel.
- Lines of the address are left justified.
- Address is legible.
- Delivery address and return address are on the same side of the parcel and not repeated on any other side. Always keep the delivery address well separated from the return address.
- Return address is placed in the upper left corner of the address area above the delivery address.
- Delivery address, return address, and endorsements all read in the same direction.

NONAUTOMATION MAIL SUMMARY

The USPS continues to offer a wide array of preparation options for mailpieces that are not, or cannot be, submitted for automation discounts. Each class of mail, and each processing category, offers nonautomation preparation options for the mailer.

However, by continuing to adhere to as many of the automation construction, positioning, and printing requirements as possible, you can help ensure that your mailings are handled in the most efficient manner possible: by USPS automated equipment.

These requirements, as well as the automation requirements from the previous module, are summarized in Publication 25, *Designing Letter and Reply Mail*. Publication 25 is an important reference for anyone involved in the design and production of letter-size mailpieces.



Pub 25, *Designing Letter and Reply Mail*

Your local mailpiece design analyst (MDA) can guide you in every phase of the design process, ensuring that your mailpieces qualify for the discount and preparation option you have chosen. This, combined with an effective internal quality control process, will guarantee you a smooth and uneventful mailing experience.



EXERCISE 7 - 3

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. A clear space of 1/2" is recommended in each direction around the address block.
 - a) true
 - b) false
2. 12" x 15 3/4" is the maximum dimension for a nonautomated flat.
 - a) true
 - b) false
3. Flat-size mailpieces can also benefit from improved service and handling by following the OCR addressing requirements.
 - a) true
 - b) false
4. Which of the following is a characteristic of a good, readable, delivery address:
 - a) good contrast between the address printing and the background
 - b) all lines left justified
 - c) a clear zone around the entire delivery address
 - d) all of the above
5. The mailer must notify the local delivery Post Offices, in writing, 10 days prior to submitting a Detached Address Label (DAL) mailing.
 - a) true
 - b) false
6. The delivery address should be in the same direction as the return address.
 - a) true
 - b) false
7. When addressing a parcel, ensure that the _____ address, the _____ address and any endorsements all read in the same direction.
8. What is the maximum length for a rigid NFM mailpiece?
 - a) 15"
 - b) 12"
 - c) 15 _"
9. A NFM mailpiece weighing less than 6 ounces which doesn't contain a barcode and is not prepared in a carrier route or 5-digit scheme incur a surcharge?
 - a) true
 - b) false

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 7 - 3

1. **a, true.**
2. **b, false;** the maximum dimension of a nonautomated flat is 12" high x 15" long x 3/4" thick.
3. **a, true;** even if not processed on sorting machinery equipped with optical character recognition capability, following these requirements also helps to ensure human readability.
4. **d, all of the above;** these are all attributes of a good, readable, delivery address.
5. **a, true;** the local delivery office needs notification in order to be properly prepared to handle this type of mailing.
6. **a, true;** the delivery and return addresses must be printed in the same direction.
7. **delivery, return;** this helps to ensure efficient postal handling.
8. **c; 15 _"**
9. **a; true;** There would be a 5 cent surcharge.

All mailpieces delivered by the Postal Service must bear an indication of postage payment. In addition to providing payment for delivery, the Postal Service uses this indication to verify that postage was paid, and at what rate. Without this proof of payment, the Postal Service will return the mailpiece to the sender.

Mailers presenting presorted or other discounted mailings may choose from one of three basic options for postage payment: *precanceled stamps*, *meter stamps*, and *permit imprints*. The first two options require the mailer to physically affix postage to the mailpiece. Permit imprints, however, are typically printed as part of the envelope manufacturing process. You may not normally combine any of these methods within a single mailing unless specifically authorized in writing by the USPS.


This module will cover the basic requirements of each payment option, along with the associated fees and basic rate markings.



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT POSTAGE PAYMENT METHODS

Upon completion of this module, you should be able to do the following:

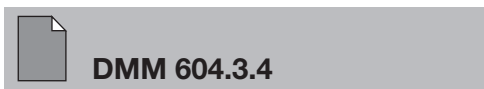
- Define the three basic postage payment options: [Precanceled Stamps](#), [Meter Stamps](#), and [Permit Imprint](#).
- Discuss the fees and applications necessary for each.
- Be able to define the features of each option.
- Identify the proper content of and format for permit imprints.
- Explain how to enter discounted mailings into the mailstream.

 Not only are precanceled stamps the least expensive postage payment option, they also provide the most “personalized” appearance.

PRECANCELED STAMPS

The Postal Service cancels postage stamps to prevent reuse after it renders service. A precanceled stamp is a postage stamp like any other, with a definable cost and value. Mailers may purchase and affix these stamps prior to mailing. Unlike regular postage stamps however, the USPS does not manually cancel a precanceled stamp with the date of deposit. Either the mailer provides the cancellation, or it appears as the rate marking on the face of the stamp.

The most common precanceled stamps are those that the USPS preprints with a rate marking. With the proper authorization, you may purchase these at a Postal Service retail counter and affix them to your presorted mailings. In addition, a mailer may obtain authorization for their own cancellation markings. For further information on this topic see DMM 604.3.4.



This course will cover the use of precanceled stamps from the Postal Service with the rate category as the cancellation. This method is commonly used by many presort mailers.

Authorization And Fees

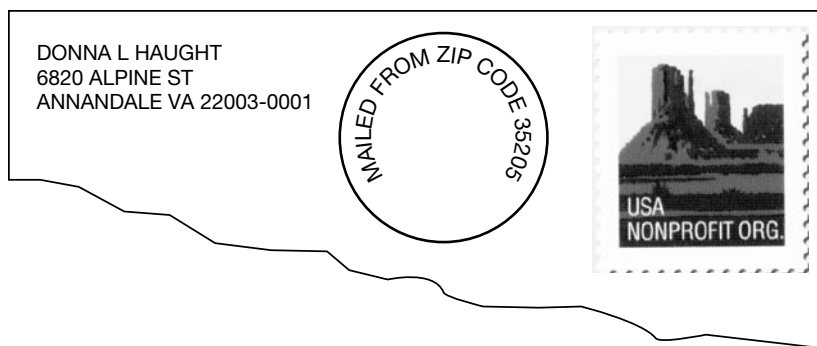
Mailers complete Form 3615, *Mailing Permit Application and Customer Profile*, to obtain authorization to use stamps precanceled by the Postal Service. Present this form to the Post Office where you will deposit your precanceled mailings. There is no fee for this authorization.

Your authorization is limited to this Post Office. To mail with precanceled stamps at another Post Office, you must also file an application there.

You may use precanceled stamps as a postage payment method for presorted First-Class Mail and Standard Mail mailings. Pay only the required annual fees for the classes you intend to mail. You do not need to pay an annual fee if you are using a vendor to prepare and submit your precanceled stamp mailings and the vendor has already paid the proper fee.

Placement

You must affix precanceled stamps to the upper right corner of the envelope, address label, or address area.



Return Address

Mailpieces with precanceled stamps must have a complete, domestic, return address. Once the piece enters the mailstream, the return address is the only way to determine the sender. If the return address is outside the delivery area of the Post Office where the mailer holds his precanceled authorization, the mailer must either:

- Put a cancellation endorsement to the left of the postage showing: city, state abbreviation, and ZIP Code of the office of mailing.

OR

- Provide a cancellation using the verbiage: "Mailed From ZIP Code," followed by the 5-Digit ZIP Code of the mailing office.

OR

- Submit, with their mailing, a copy of the postage statement and a sample mailpiece in a stamped envelope addressed to the postmaster of the office in the return address.

These measures allow the Postal Service to locate the sender if there are any future questions about the mailing.

Rate Markings

See the illustration on the previous page for an example of the basic rate marking as the cancellation method. Whether the mailer or the USPS precancels the stamps, each mailpiece with precanceled postage must bear markings and endorsements required for the rate claimed or services rendered.

Deposit and Acceptance

Mail with precanceled stamps as postage payment must be deposited at the Post Office where the permit is held. The mailing must be presented to a Postal representative for acceptance. Mail bearing precanceled postage, and all presorted, discounted mailings in general, must not be dropped in collection boxes.

Precanceled stamps are usually nondenominated. That is, they do not bear on their face a numeric postage amount. Mailers using them must pay the difference between the postage amount represented by the stamp and the rate charged for each piece when the mailing is presented for acceptance.

Restrictions

Mailers may not use precanceled postage stamps on boxes, cases, bags, or other potentially reusable mailing containers. This restriction helps to protect postal revenues by preventing reuse of postage.

POSTAGE METERS AND PC POSTAGE PRODUCTS (“POSTAGE EVIDENCING SYSTEMS”) (DMM 604.4)

Postage meters and PC Postage products are collectively identified as “postage evidencing systems.” A postage evidencing system is a device or system of components a customer uses to print evidence that postage required for mailing has been paid. Postage evidencing systems print indicia, such as meter imprints or information-based indicia (IBI), to indicate postage payment. Mailers print indicia directly on a mailpiece or on a label that is affixed to a mailpiece.

Authorization

Customers enter into an agreement with the USPS (e.g., via electronic click-through or contract signature) in conjunction with executing a separate agreement with the provider for rental, lease, or use of a postage evidencing system. Actual implementation of the agreement with the USPS varies by product category and provider and is typically facilitated by the provider on behalf of the USPS. Postage evidencing systems are rented or leased; they may not be purchased, sold, or resold.

Mailers may use postage evidencing systems to affix or imprint indicia on any class of mail except Periodicals.

Placement of Postage

Mailers must print or apply indicia in the upper-right corner of the envelope or address label.

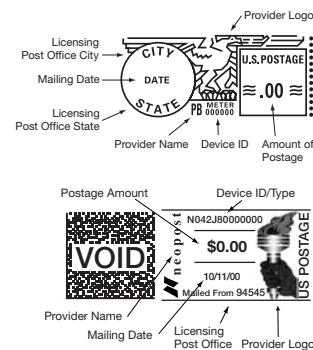
- Position indicia at least 1/4 inch from the right edge of the mailpiece and 1/4 inch from the top edge of the mailpiece.
- Orient indicia with the longest dimension parallel to the address.
- When a FIM is printed with the indicia, position the FIM according to standards.
- Do not allow the indicia to infringe on the areas reserved for the FIM, POSTNET barcode, or optical character reader (OCR) clear zone.

Content of Metered Postage

Indicia are comprised of human-readable information. Information-based indicia (IBI) also contain machine-readable information that identifies the postage evidencing system,

postage payment information, and mail service requested. There are particular data sets associated with different types of indicia, depending on the product and the type of mailing. Indicia may include postal markings related to the class of mail and presort level and an ancillary service endorsement.

Examples:



Mailing Date Format

Mailers must use a complete date for the following:

- All First-Class Mail, Priority Mail and Express Mail pieces.
- All mailpieces with Insured Mail, COD or Special Handling service.
- All mailpieces prepared with the indicia printed on nonadhesive paper (e.g., computer printer paper) and affixed to the mailpiece or used as a part of an insert in a window.

Mailings presented with a complete date must be deposited or presented on the date in the indicia. Presort mailings presented after midnight may bear the previous day’s date. Otherwise, the mailer must print a date correction or apply an additional indicia with the correct date directly on the mailpiece as defined in DMM 604.4.4.

Mailers may use a complete date or a mailing date consisting solely of the month and year in the indicia only for Standard Mail and Package Service pieces. Mailpieces bearing only the month and year must be deposited or presented for mailing on any day during the month shown in the indicia and through the third day of the following month.

Mailers must use an indicia with NO mailing date for prepaid metered reply postage. As an option, mailers may use indicia with no mailing date for Standard Mail and Package Services pieces. Mail with no date may be deposited on any date.

PC Postage®

PC Postage® products and services allow customers to purchase and print postage using a personal computer, Internet and printer. Commercial PC Postage products available from authorized vendors allow customers to set up and manage postage accounts via a secure host site, purchasing postage via credit card or ACH account. PC Postage products print IBI indicating postage payment and may print directly onto mail pieces, shipping labels or customized labels for all mail classes (except Periodicals).

PC Postage technology is also integrated into web sites such as eBay and Click-N-Ship™ at www.usps.com which allows customers to purchase and print postage for particular services using a credit card.

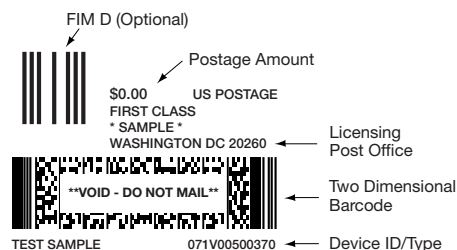
Information Based Indicia (IBI)

Information Based Indicia (IBI) is the postage mark or “stamp” printed by PC Postage products and some postage meters. IBI include a two-dimensional barcode that is machine readable, along with human-readable information. They are called information based because of the information carrying nature of the barcode that contains mail-processing and security related data.

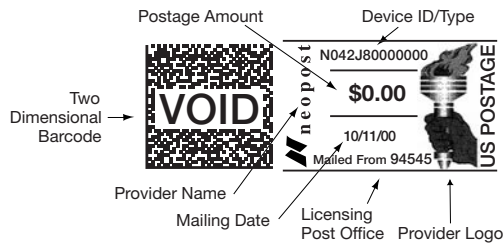
- Human readable information contains readable information, as traditional postage meter indicia – postage amount, mail class, date of mailing, device identification number and town or licensing post office.
- Two dimensional barcode – encode security and mail processing information about the mailpiece. It also includes a ‘digital signature’ that is unique to each mail piece, which helps the USPS to detect fraud.

Like other forms of postage such as stamps and meter impressions, IBI are printed on an envelope in the upper right hand corner, or on a label, to indicate postage payment.

Information-Based Indicia with FIM (without fluorescent ink)



Information-Based Indicia without FIM (with fluorescent ink)



Markings (DMM 604.4 and 202.3)

There are particular data sets associated with different types of indicia, depending on the product and type of mailing. Indicia may include postal markings related to the class of mail and presort level and ancillary service endorsement. The basic required marking that indicates the class or subclass—“First-Class,” “Presorted Standard” or “PRSRT STD,” or “Nonprofit Organization” (or “Nonprofit Org.” or “Nonprofit”)—must be printed or produced as part of, or directly below or to the left of, the permit imprint indicia, meter stamp or impression, or adhesive or precanceled stamp.

Legibility of Postage (DMM 604.4)

Postage indicia must be legible (readable by USPS personnel and mail processing equipment). Illegible or unreadable (unscannable) indicia are not acceptable as payment of postage. Reflectance measurements of the indicia and the background material must meet the standards in DMM 708.4.0.

Deposit and Acceptance

Mailers must deposit or enter mailpieces with metered or PC Postage indicia according to the following conditions:

- a. Mailers may deposit Express Mail, Priority Mail, single-piece rate First-Class Mail, single-piece rate Media Mail, and single-piece rate Library Mail items with metered or PC Postage indicia at any postal facility, preferably within the area of the customer’s local post office.
- b. Mailers must deposit all mail as follows:
 - At a postal facility within the ZIP Code shown in the indicia.
 - For Presort rate mail, at the authorized mailing office if not at a facility within the ZIP Code shown in the indicia.
- c. Mailers also may dropship metered mail according to standards in DMM 705.17.0.

The mailer is responsible for correcting mailings with incorrect or “stale” meter dates. You must “re-meter” the piece with the correct date before acceptance!

PERMIT IMPRINT

The use of a permit imprint allows you to mail without affixing postage to each piece. The mailer obtains a permit, or authorization, to mail with a preprinted imprint (also called an indicia) indicating the postage payment on their pieces.

The Postal Service establishes an advance deposit permit imprint account in the mailer's name. This account is similar to a checking account. The mailer deposits the amount necessary to pay the postage prior to mailing. The postage statement that accompanies the mailing prompts a deduction from the account, similar to writing a check.

Authorization And Fees

Mailers must submit Form 3615, *Mailing Permit Application and Customer Profile*, to the Post Office where they intend to mail, accompanied by a nonrefundable application fee. The Postal Service assigns the mailer a permit number and establishes an advance deposit account for the mailer using this number.

Mailers who wish to present discounted mailings must also pay the applicable annual mailing fee.

Placement

The actual permit imprint indicia, often called the permit imprint, replaces the postage stamp. You may print your permit imprint directly on mailpieces or on labels permanently affixed to mailpieces. Mailers may also print it on mailpiece wrappers, envelopes, and containers.

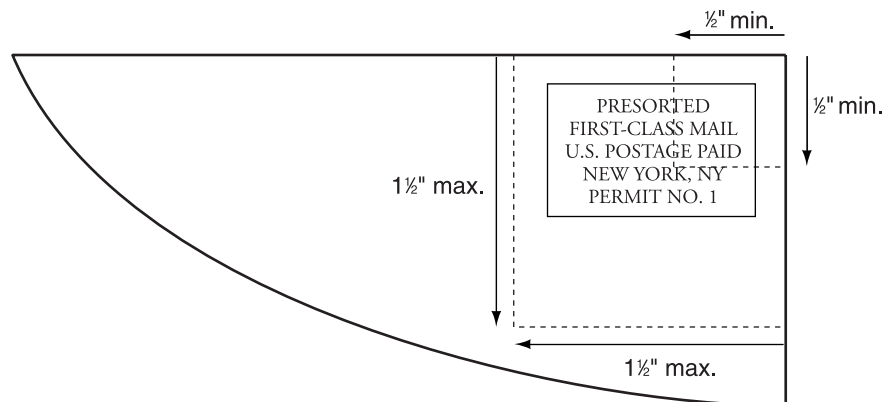
Mailers must place the permit imprint parallel to the address of the mailpiece, in the upper right corner of the address side, address area, or the address label. You may vary the position only to allow data processing equipment to simultaneously print the address, the imprint, and other required postal information.

Clear Space

You must print the indicia wholly within a clear space no smaller than 1/2 inch by 1/2 inch. The entire area occupied by the indicia must be no larger than 1 1/2 inch below or to the left of the upper right corner of the mailpiece or the address area. Except as required to enclose the permit information, no printing may appear either above or to the right of the permit information. The rule that forms a box around the indicia may be omitted.

The requirements are less strict when printing the indicia on an address label; simply ensure that the indicia is rectangular, is sufficiently large and separated from the other information on the label to be legible and is located parallel to the address in the upper right corner of the address area on the label.

PERMIT IMPRINT PLACEMENT AND CLEAR AREA



CONTENT AND FORMAT

You must produce permit imprints using a printing press, rubber stamp, mimeograph, or some other method of copying or reproduction. A permit imprint cannot be individually hand-drawn or typewritten onto each piece.

Content

The content of the permit imprint indicia consists of a printed statement that indicates the mailer has paid the appropriate postage for the mailpiece. The text of the indicia also indicates the Post Office where the mailer holds the permit, along with the permit number.

There are several variations to the indicia formats shown on the next few pages. Additional samples are in DMM 604.6.0.

The text of the permit imprint always includes these common elements:

- The class of mail.
- The statement: U.S. Postage Paid.
- City and state of the Post Office where the permit is held (and where the mail must be entered).
- The correct permit number.

First-Class Mail

In addition to the common elements, permit imprints for First-Class Mail and Priority Mail must also include either First-Class Mail or Priority Mail, as applicable.

FIRST-CLASS MAIL INDICIA

FIRST-CLASS MAIL
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 NEW YORK, NY
 PERMIT NO. 1

An indicia for First-Class Mail may also include the following *optional* elements:

- The ZIP Code of the permit holder.
- The mailing date.
- The amount of postage paid, or the number of ounces.
- Additional required rate markings.

You may substitute the wording “Mailed from ZIP Code,” followed by the 5-digit ZIP Code of the mailing office for the city and state information.

For First-Class Mail discounted mailings, the indicia includes the basic “Presorted” rate marking.

**FIRST-CLASS MAIL INDICIA
PRESORTED**

FIRST-CLASS MAIL
 PRESORTED
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 NEW YORK, NY
 PERMIT NO. 1


**FIRST-CLASS MAIL PRESORTED
INDICIA WITH OPTIONAL
5-DIGIT ZIP CODE**

FIRST-CLASS MAIL
 PRESORTED
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID
 MAILED FROM ZIP CODE 10001
 PERMIT NO. 1

**FIRST-CLASS MAIL PRESORTED
INDICIA WITH OPTIONAL 5-DIGIT
ZIP CODE AND PIECE WEIGHT**

FIRST-CLASS MAIL
 PRESORTED
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID 1 OZ.
 MAILED FROM ZIP CODE 10001
 PERMIT NO. 1

! *Since the decision of what to include in the indicia is made in the design phase, you should determine the class of mail and discount category prior to this step.*

 *Correct class and rate markings are an important acceptance issue. If you are unsure, check with your local postal personnel prior to printing!*

Standard Mail

As with First-Class Mail, indicia for Standard Mail must include the required common elements. The rate marking must be either in the permit imprint or adjacent to it.

A Standard Mail indicia may also include the following elements:

- The ZIP Code of the permit holder.
- The amount of postage paid, or the number of ounces.
- Additional required rate markings.
- You may substitute the wording “Mailed from ZIP Code,” followed by the 5-digit ZIP Code of the mailing office for the city and state information.

A permit imprint indicia for Standard Mail must not include a mailing date.

STANDARD MAIL INDICIA

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
NEW YORK, NY
PERMIT NO. 1

You may abbreviate “Presorted Standard” as PRSRT STD:

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
NEW YORK, NY
PERMIT NO. 1

**NONPROFIT RATE
STANDARD MAIL INDICIA**

NONPROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
NEW YORK, NY
PERMIT NO. 1

Package Services

The basic required marking indicating the appropriate subclass (e.g., “Bound Printed Matter”) may appear on the mailpiece as part of the indicia. Alternatively, mailers may print these markings directly below or to the left of the postage payment indication.

PACKAGE SERVICES INDICIAS

LIBRARY MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
NEW YORK, NY
PERMIT NO. 1

PARCEL POST
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
NEW YORK, NY
PERMIT NO. 1

Other Required Markings

You may include other required postal markings as part of the permit imprint indicia. Alternatively, you may print these additional markings directly below or to the left of the indicia.

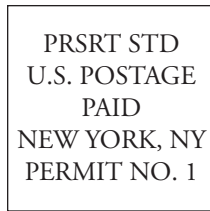
**INDICIAS WITH OTHER
REQUIRED MARKINGS**

PRSRT STD
ECRWSS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
NEW YORK, NY
PERMIT NO. 1

FIRST-CLASS MAIL
AUTOOCR
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
NEW YORK, NY
PERMIT NO. 1

**RATE MARKING PRINTED
TO THE LEFT OF THE INDICIA**

ECRWSS



Format

In addition to the appropriate contents, you must also adhere to these requirements when designing and printing permit imprint indicias:

- No extraneous printing may appear in the indicia.
- The text contained in the indicia must be at least 4 point type.
- When printing the indicia directly on the mailpiece, or in the address area, no printing may appear above or to the right of the permit information except as required to enclose the indicia.
- When printing the indicia on an address label, no printing may appear above or to the right of the permit information except as required to enclose the indicia.
- The indicia on an address label must be legible.

COMPANY PERMIT IMPRINTS

Mailers may choose to replace the city, state, and permit number in an indicia with the exact name of the company holding the permit. This is called a company permit imprint.

When using a company permit imprint, the mailpiece must bear a complete domestic return address. The return address must be either:

- The physical location where the mailer keeps his records and files pertaining to this mailing.
- OR
- A point of contact from which the physical location of the records and files can be readily determined.

For each mailing made using a company permit imprint, the mailer must retain the following records:

- Complete sample mailpiece for each version.
- Postage statement indicating:
 - The weight of a single piece.
 - Total number of pieces mailed.
 - Total postage.
 - Dates of mailing.
 - Postage payment method.
 - Post Office of mailing.

If the return address used on the mailpiece is not the actual physical location at which the USPS can review the mailer's records, or it is not a point of contact from which such a location can be readily determined, then the mailer must:

1. Include in the indicia the 5-digit ZIP Code of the physical location where the records are kept or can be made available.
2. Provide the postmaster of that office with a complete sample of the mailpiece, the dates and Post Offices of mailing, and the name and local address of the party who has the required mailing records.



A company permit imprint allows the mailer to enhance corporate recognition. It also allows mailers with a regional or national presence to mail from multiple field offices (with different permit numbers at different Post Offices) using the same envelope stock.



The Postal Service verifies the total pieces in a permit imprint mailing by dividing the total net weight by the piece weight, hence the requirement that all pieces be identical in weight.

COMPANY PERMIT IMPRINT

PRSRT STD U.S. POSTAGE PAID ABC TRUCKING

DECORATIVE DESIGNS

Mailers may use an optional indicia format. It allows for the use of decorative designs according to DMM 604.5.0. These designs must appear below or to the left of the permit information in an area extending no farther than 4-½ inches to the left of the right edge, and 1-½ inches below the top edge of the mailpiece, address area, or address label, as applicable. The decorative design cannot resemble or imitate a postage meter imprint, postage stamp or other postage payment method. Mailpiece Design Analysts can review your design to ensure they meet the requirements in the DMM.

REFERENCES TO EXPEDITED HANDLING

Except for postcard-size mail and permit imprint indicia placed on address labels, indicia on Standard Mail pieces bearing reference to expedited handling or delivery (e.g., “Priority,” “Express,” “Overnight”) must:

- Show the words “Presorted Standard” or “Nonprofit Organization” more prominently than other words in the indicia.
- Include a clear space of at least 3/8 inch around the entire indicia.

Return Address

A return address is required for permit imprint mailings using a company permit imprint or mailpieces using an ancillary service endorsement.

Deposit And Acceptance

Permit imprint mailings must consist of at least 200 pieces or 50 pounds of mail. Certain classes of mail and discounted rates may require higher minimums. Consult the Quick Service Guides or your local Post Office for more information.

All pieces in a permit imprint mailing must be identical in weight. Mailers preparing discounted mailings must pay the appropriate annual fee. You must prepare these mailings according to the standards for the class of mail and the rate claimed.

Mailers must deposit permit imprint mailings at the Post Office where they hold their permit, at a time and place designated by the postmaster. All permit imprint mailings must be tendered to postal acceptance personnel accompanied by the appropriate postage statement. You must never deposit permit imprint mailings in collection boxes, under any circumstances.

MANIFEST MAILING SYSTEM

There are many mailers who would like to enjoy the benefits of using permit imprints, but have mailpieces that are nonidentical in weight. For these mailers the Postal Service created the Manifest Mailing System (MMS).

Manifesting allows the mailer to submit nonidentical weight pieces for acceptance, using permit imprints as the postage payment method. Postal verification is possible using unique identification numbers, combined with a printout listing weight and postage for each piece in the mailing. For more information, contact your postal representative and ask for Publication 401, *Guide to the Manifest Mailing System*.

OPTIONAL PROCEDURE

An Optional Procedure Mailing System is a method of verifying and accepting First-Class Mail, Standard Mail and Package Services paid by permit imprint. Mailings may consist of identical or non-identical weight pieces. This system reviews a mailer's financial, production and other business records in lieu of standard weight verification procedures. USPS postage verification is normally completed by an audit of business records kept by the mailer to determine underpayment of postage.

RESTRICTIONS

Do not intentionally design permit imprints to resemble postage stamps, meter impressions, or any other type of postage payment method. In addition, restrict the printing of permit imprints only to items that you intend to mail. Permit imprints must not appear on items that have not had postage paid with the USPS.

Payment must be on deposit for each mailing prior to its acceptance. Deposit these funds into your permit imprint account as directed by the USPS. The Postal Service does not allow credit for postage.

To maintain your authorization, you must use your permit imprint account for mailing at least once every 2 years. If you do not, the Postal Service must cancel your account. The Postal Service may also revoke a permit imprint for use in an unlawful scheme, or for failure to comply with relevant standards.

The complete regulations pertaining to the use of permit imprints as postage payment are contained in DMM 604.6.0.



DMM 604.7.0

POSTAGE PAYMENT SUMMARY

The following chart summarizes the postage payment options available to each class of mail.

POSTAGE PAYMENT OPTIONS BY CLASS OF MAIL

POSTAGE PAYMENT METHODS	CLASS OF MAIL				
	EXPRESS MAIL	PRIORITY MAIL	FIRST-CLASS MAIL	STANDARD MAIL	PERIODICALS
METER STAMPS	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
PRE-CANCELED STAMPS	YES*	YES*	YES*	YES*	NO
PERMIT IMPRINT	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO
EXPRESS MAIL CORP. ACCOUNT	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
ID STATEMENT	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES

* Precanceled Stamps may not be used on boxes, cases, bags, or other reusable containers. Single-piece mail with precanceled stamps must be endorsed with a correct rate marking and presented to a postal window employee.

ELECTRONIC OPTIONS

The Postal Service is constantly developing new products to meet its customers' needs. Postage payment methods are no exception.

The Postal Service has various types of electronic postage. These include USPS Net-Post™ Services:

- NetPost™ Mailing Online
- NetPost™ CardStore
- NetPost™ Certified Mail
- NetPost™ Premium Postcard

Visit the USPS's web site at www.usps.com/netpost.

**EXERCISE 8 - 1**

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. To use a postage meter, you must first purchase one from the USPS.
 - a) true
 - b) false

2. Meter stamps printed on adhesive meter strips must include, at a minimum:
 - a) the day, month, and year
 - b) the year
 - c) the day and month
 - d) the month and year

3. A permit imprint must be placed in the upper _____ corner of the address side or area, _____ to the delivery address.

4. Which of the following devices is unacceptable for reproducing a permit imprint indicia on a mailpiece?
 - a) a rubber stamp
 - b) a typewriter
 - c) a mimeograph
 - d) a printing press

5. Except when printed on an address label, the text contained in a permit imprint indicia must be printed in at least _____ point type.
 - a) 12
 - b) 8
 - c) 4

6. Which of the following postage payment methods always requires a return address on the mailpiece?
 - a) permit imprint
 - b) precanceled stamps
 - c) meter stamps

7. Except when using an approved Manifest Mailing System (MMS), all pieces in a permit imprint mailing must be:
 - a) identical in weight
 - b) either flat- or letter-sized
 - c) a circular or flyer

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 8 - 1

1. **b, false**; postage meters are not purchased from the USPS, they are leased from an authorized vendor. The USPS sets or fills the meter with postage.
2. **a, the day, month and year**; this prevents the removal and later reuse of the meter strip.
3. **right, parallel**; this is the general standard for placement of a permit imprint.
4. **b, a typewriter**; permit imprints may not be typewritten or handwritten. A handwritten or typewritten design, however, can be reproduced by an authorized method.
5. **c, 4**; this standard ensures a minimum level of legibility of the permit imprint information, such as class of mail.
6. **b, precanceled stamps**; this is the only postage payment option that does not normally provide an alternative method of determining the sender.
7. **a, identical in weight**; this is due to the fact that, without an on-piece postage payment (such as a stamp), the USPS must verify a total piece count by weight prior to acceptance.

As a mailer, you want to provide current and potential customers with an easy and inexpensive way to do business with you by mail. Reply mail service enables you to enclose convenient, preprinted reply pieces in outgoing mail to customers for return by domestic mail.

Reply mail, whether it is prepaid with stamps or whether postage is collected as it is delivered to you, is a cost-effective and convenient feedback system to market products and services or to obtain payment for them. There are three basic types of reply mail:

- Business Reply Mail (BRM).
- Courtesy Reply Mail (CRM).
- Meter Reply Mail (MRM).

When designing your BRM and CRM pieces, you want to ensure that the addresses, the overall formats, the physical characteristics, and the facing identification marks (FIMs) are compatible with postal automated processing equipment. Producing reply pieces that meet postal automation standards ensures that you get the most efficient processing possible for your reply pieces and prompt, accurate delivery.



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT REPLY AND RETURN MAIL

Upon completion of this module, you should be able to do the following:

- Define [business reply mail \(BRM\)](#) and [courtesy reply mail \(CRM\)](#) and describe the methods of preparing First-Class Mail reply pieces for return by customers.
- Describe the format and design requirements for [BRM](#) and [CRM](#) pieces, including dimensions, print size, addressing, facing identification marks (FIMs), and clear zones.
- [Describe the format and design requirements for reply pieces to qualify for qualified business reply mail \(QBRM\) discounts.](#)
- [Define meter reply mail \(MRM\).](#)
- [Define and describe merchandise return service \(MRS\).](#)



DMM 507.8.0

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

Business reply mail (BRM) is a service that allows a mailer to distribute preprinted First-Class Mail reply pieces to customers. The mailer pays the return postage only on the pieces that customers send back.

The Postal Service collects single-piece First-Class Mail postage, plus a per piece charge, from the BRM permit holder (or authorized representative). A lower First-Class Mail postage rate and per piece charge applies to qualified business reply mail (QBRM) pieces. A BRM permit holder has these three options for paying postage and fees on returned pieces:

1. Cash (or check) payment upon delivery.
2. Automatic deduction from a postage due account prior to delivery.
3. Automatic deduction from an advance deposit account.

Authorized BRM permit holders may distribute BRM cards, envelopes, self-mailers, or cartons. Permit holders may also distribute business reply mail labels. Customers can affix these labels to items being returned.

AUTHORIZATION AND FEES

The Postal Service requires an annual fee to set up and maintain a business reply mail permit. To apply, mailers must submit Form 3615, Mailing Permit Application and Customer Profile, to the issuing Post Office. Establishing a business reply mail advance deposit account requires payment of an additional fee.

Paying an annual accounting fee reduces the per piece charge. An annual accounting fee provides a separate accounting for BRM charges.

The BRM permit holder guarantees to pay postage and fees upon delivery of all returned BRM pieces. Mailers must pay the appropriate charges for pieces returned to them. Refusal to accept and pay the required charges is grounds for revocation of a permit holder's BRM permit.

POSTAL GUIDANCE

Contact your local mailing requirements office, postmaster, or postal representative for more information. They will help you analyze your options and can provide additional information, such as how to receive BRM at multiple Post Offices using the same permit.

You should consult your local mailpiece design analyst for guidance in designing BRM pieces and for publications about business reply mail.

BRM FORMAT

All forms of printing are acceptable if sufficiently legible. You may not use handwriting to prepare the address side of BRM. Typewriting and hand-stamping are acceptable only on penalty BRM used by government agencies.

All ink colors are acceptable if there is a 40 percent print contrast ratio between the ink in the address and the paper, in both the red and the green spectrums.

We recommend that mailers obtain approval from their local postmaster or mailpiece design analyst (MDA) prior to printing. Mailpiece design analysts can review mechanicals or bluelines for this purpose. The MDAs can also supply you with camera ready artwork for your business and courtesy reply pieces. The complete requirements for BRM use and formatting are in DMM 507.8.4.



Business reply mail can significantly boost response rates for mailing campaigns, particularly the return of surveys and questionnaires.

Required Elements For All Business Reply Mail

The following format elements must appear correctly on each BRM piece. The permit holder is responsible for correcting any format errors. Repeated violations can result in revocation of the mailer's BRM permit. A complete description of BRM format elements is in DMM 507.8.

"No Postage Necessary" Endorsement

You must print the endorsement "NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES" in the upper right corner of the address side of the BRM piece. The left edge of the endorsement must be no more than 1 3/4 inches from the right edge of the piece.

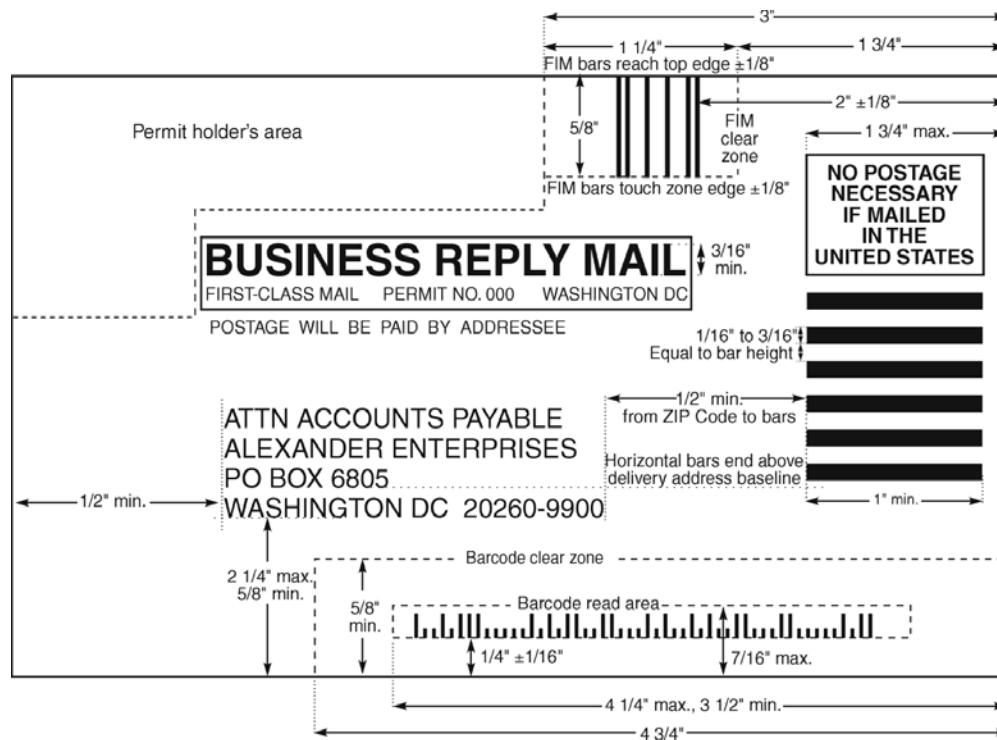
"BUSINESS REPLY MAIL" Legend

The correct business reply mail legend must appear above the permit holder's address in capital letters. Each letter in the legend must be at least 3/16 inch high. Use the two legends as follows:

- Use "BUSINESS REPLY MAIL" on all BRM except business reply labels. This includes all preprinted BRM envelopes, cards, self-mailers, and cartons.
- Use the legend "BUSINESS REPLY LABEL" only for BRM labels applied to matter being returned.

Pieces printed with the legend "BUSINESS REPLY MAIL," including envelopes and cards, may not be used as BRM labels.

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL FORMAT



Permit Number and Postage Endorsement

The Post Office assigns a BRM permit number when it accepts and processes your Form 3615 and annual fee. When designing a business reply mailpiece, please verify your BRM permit number is correct prior to printing. Directly below the BRM legend, the words "FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO." (followed by your business reply permit number) and the name of the issuing Post Office (city and state) must appear in capital letters. Directly below that, the endorsement "POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE" appears all in capital letters. This is the permit holder's statement of responsibility for all postage charges.

BRM Delivery Address

The complete address (including the permit holder's name, delivery address, city, state, and BRM ZIP Code) must be printed directly on the piece, subject to these conditions:

- Preprinted labels with only delivery address information (including a ZIP+4 barcode) are permitted, but the permit holder's name and other required elements must be printed directly on the BRM piece.
- On letter-size pieces, the entire address must appear within the OCR read area (see Module 7).
- The bottom line of the address must not extend lower than 5/8" and can be no higher than 2 1/4" from the bottom of the mailpiece.
- Maintain at least 1/2" between the address and the edge of the piece and 1/2" between the ZIP Code and the horizontal bars.
- There must be at least a 1/2-inch clearance between the ZIP Code and the horizontal bars.

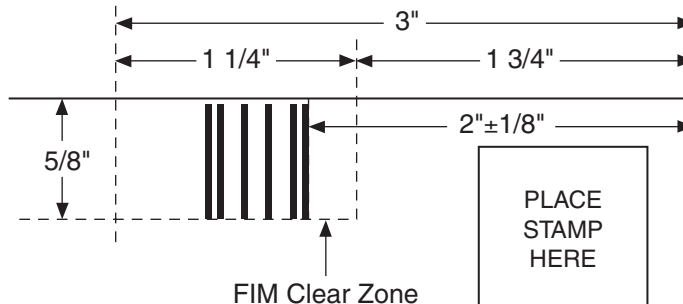
- A unique BRM ZIP+4 code is assigned for each category (postcards, 1-oz., 2-oz. and other).
- A company logo is permitted:
 - a) On nonbarcoded BRM, if it is placed outside the OCR read area (see Module 7).
 - b) On letter-size barcoded BRM, if it is placed no lower than 5/8 inch from the bottom edge of the piece.
 - c) On any piece, if the logo does not interfere with any required format elements.

Horizontal Bars

A vertical series of horizontal bars parallel to the length of the piece must be printed directly below the imprint "NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES." The bars must be uniform in length, evenly spaced and at least 1" long and 1/16" to 3/16" thick. On letter-size nonbarcoded BRM, the bars must not extend below the delivery address line. On barcoded BRM, the bars must not extend lower than 5/8" from the bottom edge of the piece. The purpose for these bars are for clerks to recognize this type of mail as postage due.

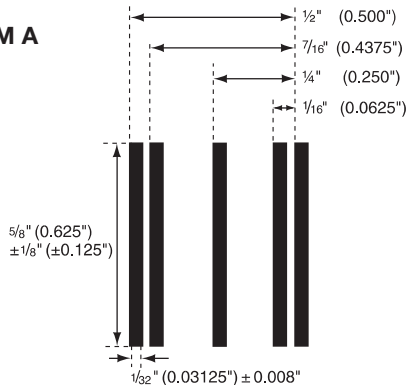
Facing Identification Mark (FIM)

A FIM must be printed on all letter-size BRM and on business reply labels affixed to letter-size mail. One purpose for FIMs is to face the mail as it is processed through the advanced facer canceller machine. The other purpose is to direct the mailpiece to either the optical character reader or the barcode sorter, depending on whether it has a barcode applied. FIMs should be placed in to the left of the "NO POSTAGE NECESSARY..." as follows:



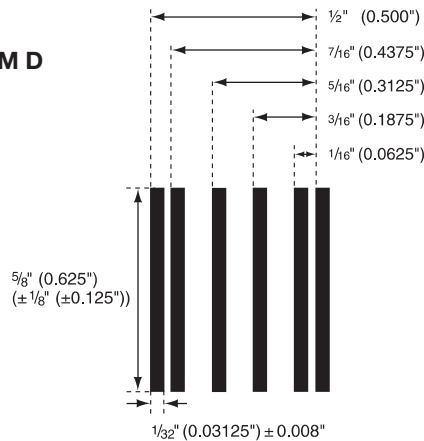
FIM A is used for Courtesy Reply Mail and Metered Reply Mail with a preprinted barcode.

FIM A



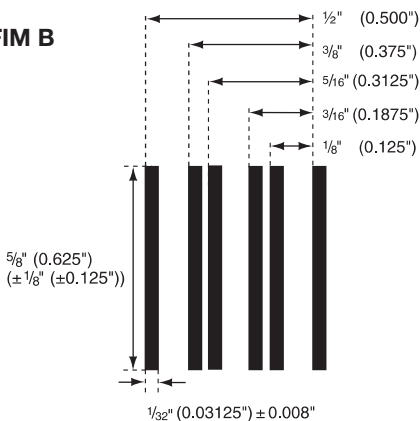
FIM D is used only with information based indicia (IBI) postage.

FIM D



FIM B is used for BRM without a preprinted BRM ZIP+4 barcode.

FIM B



MDAs can verify these and other design standards. DMM 708.9 contains the regulations governing construction and placement of the FIMs.

Mailpiece Characteristics

The paper used for all envelopes must have a minimum basis weight of 20-pound bond paper (500 17" X 22" sheets). The Postal Service must preapprove any designs for nonpaper envelopes. BRM pieces must meet the reflectance requirements for automation-compatible mailpieces.

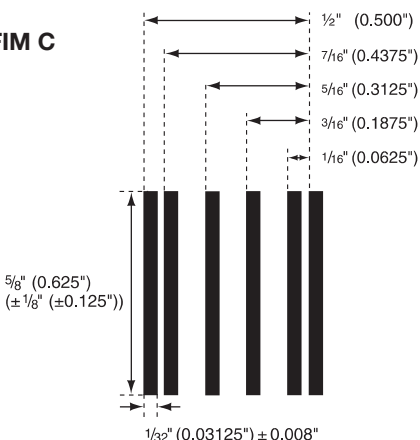
Mailpieces less than 4 1/4" high by 6" long must be at least .007" thick. Mailpieces exceeding this dimension must be at least .009" thick.

You must make sure that the material used for your BRM pieces produce a background reflectance of at least 50 percent in the red portion and 45 percent in the green portion of the optical spectrum, measured with a USPS reflectance meter.

Material must have a fluorescence of no more than 4.0 phosphor meter units. (due to the sensors on the advance facer canceller equipment). Fluorescent colors generally do not meet this requirement. Fluorescent colors should be tested and approved by the Postal Service.

FIM C is used for BRM with a preprinted BRM ZIP+4 barcode.

FIM C



If your BRM pieces contain dark fibers, make sure that the print contrast ratio between the fibers and the material is 15 percent or less in the red and the green portions of the optical spectrum, measured with a USPS reflectance meter.

If the material on which the delivery address is to appear is printed in a halftone screen, the screen should be at least 200 lines per inch (dot size) or at least a 20 percent screen.

BRM Window Envelopes

BRM window envelopes are designed so that the delivery address and barcode are printed on an insert appearing through an open or covered window. Window envelopes must meet specific specifications as follows.

The “NO POSTAGE NECESSARY” endorsement, the horizontal bars, and the business reply mail legend must be printed either directly on the envelope or on the insert appearing through the covered window. The minimum size of the information appearing in the covered window is 2" high and 4-1/4" long. The FIM must be printed on the envelope. Other required elements, including “FIRST-CLASS MAIL” “PERMIT NO.,” city, state, “POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE,” and the permit holder’s name and complete delivery address may be printed on the insert that appears through the window.

Regardless of how much the insert containing the address and barcode shifts inside the envelope, the entire address, including the barcode, must show through the window with at least a 1/8-inch clearance on all sides. This clearance must be maintained throughout the insert’s full range of movement (shift) in the envelope. No printing other than the elements listed above may be visible through the window. The address must be readable through any window-covering material that permits the barcode and its background, as viewed through the window material, to meet the reflectance standards in DMM 708.4.3. The edges of the window cover must be securely glued to the envelope. The address on the insert showing through the window must be that of the permit holder or an authorized representative.

The bottom edge of the window must be at least 1/2 inch from the bottom edge of the envelope.

Folded Self-Mailers and Reusable Mailpieces

In addition to the standards mentioned above, self-mailers and reusable mailpieces must meet the standards for automation compatibility. Permit holders must provide instructions to the user for refolding and sealing so that upon return, the piece meets sealing and folding requirements for automation compatibility as mentioned in Module 6.

BRM Cards

BRM cards must meet the design standards for First-Class Mail postcards. Any postcards larger than 4 1/4" X 6", must be at least .009" thick.

BRM Labels

For general use, the minimum size of a BRM label is 2" high and 3" long. BRM labels are not required to have a FIM or a ZIP+4 barcode, but all other format standards mentioned above must be met. In cases where a BRM card or letter is used improperly as a label, the USPS treats the item as waste.

For labels on letter-size BRM pieces, the following standards apply:

- The minimum size of a BRM label is 2-5/8" high and 4-1/4" long. All format elements, including a FIM, must be printed on the label. BRM labels cannot include a barcode. Exception: The vertical series of horizontal bars must be at least 3/4" high. The back of the label must be coated with a permanent adhesive strong enough to firmly attach the label to an envelope.
- The permit holder must provide instructions (DMM 507.8.7.9) to the user describing how the label should be applied to a mailpiece.
- Pieces with business reply labels cannot qualify for QBRM rates.

BARCODED BRM

Barcoding of BRM is optional except for letter-size BRM enclosed in automation rate discounted mailings. The USPS however, strongly recommends the use of BRM with preprinted barcodes. A barcode on your BRM piece reduces postal handling and improves the delivery of your mail. In addition, properly formatted barcoded letter-size BRM may qualify for QBRM which offers lower per piece charges.

The mailpiece design analyst can inform you of the appropriate ZIP+4 code and provide camera ready artwork for both the correct barcode and FIM C.

General Format Standards:

Barcoded BRM must bear all the required format elements previously covered. You must also maintain the barcoding specifications outlined in module five, *USPS Barcodes*. The following is a summary of the additional requirements for prebarcoded BRM:

- Prepare envelopes sealed on all four edges from paper with a minimum basis weight of 20 pounds (as measured by 500 17 by 22 inch sheets).
- You must use FIM C.
- Use only the ZIP+4 code and corresponding barcode assigned by the USPS for that particular mailpiece. The USPS does not permit delivery point barcodes on BRM.
- The ink used to print the FIM and barcode must generate a minimum 30 percent PRD when measured against the background paper.
- Print the barcode either:
 1. In the barcode clear zone in the lower right of the mailpiece.

OR

 2. In the address block location only if printed on an insert intended to show through a window on a window envelope.

All BRM pieces measuring over 4 1/4" high by 6" long must be at least 0.009" thick.

BRM Restrictions

Domestic BRM may not be sent to foreign countries. The standards for International Business Reply Mail (IBRS) are in the International Mail Manual (IMM). No special services (e.g., certified, insured, registered) are permitted with BRM.

The delivery address on a BRM piece may not be altered to redirect the mailpiece to any address other than the one preprinted on the piece.

BRM may not be used for any purpose other than that intended by the permit holder, even when postage is affixed. In cases where a BRM card or letter is used improperly as a label, the USPS treats the item as waste. Preprinted labels with only delivery address information (including a ZIP+4 barcode as part of the address block) are permitted, but the permit holder's name and other required elements must be printed directly on the BRM piece.

Handwriting, typewriting, and handstamping may not be used to prepare BRM. Printed borders are not permitted on letter-size BRM, but are permitted on business reply labels and cartons and envelopes greater than letter-size.

BRM pieces that are not automation-compatible are not allowed in automation rate mailings.

BRM pieces that exceed maximum postcard size that are less than 0.009" thick are not permitted.

Deposit and Acceptance

You may distribute BRM pieces to your customers inside other mailpieces. You may also use any other legal means to distribute BRM, such as distribution through flyers, take-ones, leave-behinds, and private carriers. Recipients may tender BRM to the Postal Service by any method appropriate for First-Class Mail, including collection boxes.

QUALIFIED BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

For QBRM, the mailer must use the unique ZIP+4 code assigned to them by the Postal Service for use with BRM. The mailer must represent this unique ZIP+4 code by a ZIP+4 barcode printed on the mailpiece.

The ZIP+4 code assigned by the Postal Service is unique for that category of letter-size BRM. The ZIP+4 barcode provides for sortation on postal automated equipment by specific size and rate categories (i.e., cards, 1 oz. letters or 2 oz. letters).

AUTHORIZATIONS AND FEES

To participate in QBRM, you must complete Form 6805, *QBRM Application and Approval*. Contact your postmaster, mailpiece design analyst, or business mail entry personnel for more information.

The BRM format standards are more stringent under QBRM. In addition to meeting the requirements for prebarcoded BRM, the permit holder must also:

- Pay an annual accounting fee.
- Meet all the design requirements for automation-compatible mailpieces, including the aspect ratio.
- Request a unique ZIP+4 code and corresponding barcode for each category of letter-size BRM.
- Submit preproduction samples for review with the completed application.

In return for following the relevant standards, the mailer receives a discount not only on their per piece charge, but also in actual First-Class Mail postage rates. This is possible because of the efficiency of the Postal Service's high-speed barcode sorters. BRM and QBRM postage rates and fees are listed in DMM 507.8.0.



DMM 507.8.1

SUMMARY

BRM allows customers to send replies and orders to your company without affixing postage. You pay only for the pieces returned, not the total distributed.

To use BRM, you must apply for a BRM permit and choose a level of service appropriate to your needs and budget.

All BRM pieces, cards, letters, flats, and parcels, are returned to you as First-Class Mail. The Postal Service collects the appropriate postage and per piece charges either prior to or upon delivery, depending on the option you select.

**EXERCISE 9 - 1**

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. BRM pieces are prepaid.
 - a) true
 - b) false

2. Which endorsement must be printed in the upper right corner of the address side of a BRM mailpiece?
 - a) "BUSINESS REPLY MAIL"
 - b) "POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE"
 - c) "FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. (##), (CITY/STATE)"
 - d) "NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES"

3. The characters used to print the legend "BUSINESS REPLY MAIL" on a BRM piece must be:
 - a) at least 3/16 inch high
 - b) printed in Arial font only
 - c) in at least 12 point type

4. Which of the following endorsements must appear below the "FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. (##), (CITY/STATE)" on a BRM mailpiece?
 - a) "BUSINESS REPLY MAIL"
 - b) "POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE"
 - c) "NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES"
 - d) none of the above

5. FIM stands for _____ Identification _____ .

6. Which FIM is required to be printed on prebarcoded BRM?
 - a) FIM A
 - b) FIM B
 - c) FIM C

7. QBRM requires the assignment of a _____ ZIP+4 code by the USPS prior to printing the barcode on the mailpiece.

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 9 - 1

1. **b, false;** BRM pieces are not prepaid. Payment for returned BRM pieces is due prior to delivery to the BRM permit holder.
2. **d, “NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES”;** this is a required element.
3. **a, at least 3/16 inch high;** this requirement helps ensure ready identification of BRM pieces in the mailstream.
4. **b, “POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE”;** this is a required element.
5. **Facing, Mark;** the appropriate FIM is required on all letter-size BRM.
6. **c, FIM C;** identifies prebarcoded BRM.
7. **unique;** for qualifying QBRM, a unique ZIP+4 code must be assigned for each weight increment and type of letter-size BRM piece.



DMM 201.3.15.2

COURTESY REPLY MAIL

Courtesy Reply Mail (CRM) is a term used to describe preprinted addressed and barcoded return envelopes. Companies supply these envelopes to their recipients for return use. The most common example of courtesy reply mail is an envelope included in a utility bill for sending payments back to the company. Many businesses who bill and fulfill via the mails supply CRM envelopes to their customers.

Companies usually distribute CRM envelopes without a postage stamp affixed. The recipient must place a postage stamp on the envelope before mailing it back. Individual customers pay postage with adhesive stamps or meter stamps.

AUTHORIZATION AND FEES

The USPS requires no fees or prior authorization to distribute CRM.

CRM FORMAT

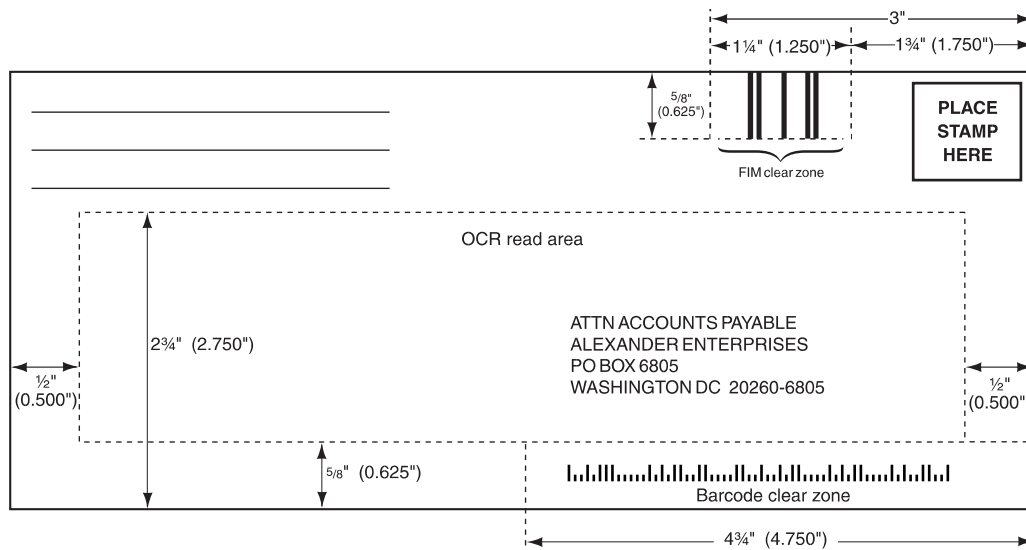
The purpose of CRM is to move the piece through the system using high-speed automation equipment. This ensures that you receive the piece from the customer as soon as possible.


Although there are no DMM design standards for CRM, you should follow the requirements for automated processing. Reply envelopes often contain a monetary payment. A properly designed CRM envelope ensures expeditious and accurate delivery—a true bottom line feature.



The convenience of a handy reply envelope also encourages a faster response and boosts total response rates.

COURTESY REPLY MAIL FORMAT



 CRM is subject to the First-Class Mail nonmachinable surcharge if outside the acceptable aspect ratio if 1 ounce or less in weight.

Common Elements

The elements common to all types of CRM are:

- **Delivery Address**—A properly formatted preprinted address to which the recipient is returning the piece.
- **Postage Reminder**—A simple “Place Stamp Here” style of reminder printed in the upper right corner of the piece.
- **Return Address Area**—Typically a set of parallel lines in the upper left for the recipient’s name and address.

The placement, envelope construction, and address printing guidelines for CRM are the same as those for automation-compatible mail.

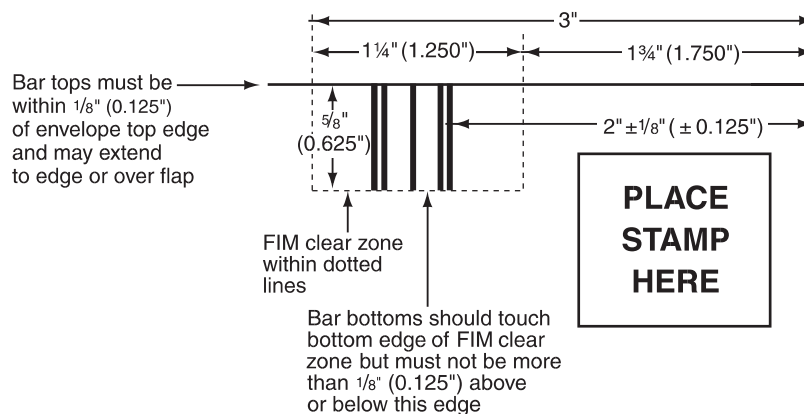
BARCODED CRM

CRM that is barcoded enjoys the maximum benefits of postal automated sortation. The Postal Service encourages all mailers who distribute letter-size CRM to barcode their reply pieces.

Barcode Content and Placement

Barcoded CRM may bear either a delivery point barcode, or if the business has an exclusively assigned ZIP+4 code, a Firm Unique ZIP+4 barcode. You may position the barcode either in the address block, or in the lower right corner in the barcode clear zone. In either case, maintain the positioning, clearance, and printing standards covered earlier in module five, USPS Barcodes, and module six, Automation Requirements.

FIM POSITIONING REQUIREMENTS



FIM A

All prebarcoded CRM envelopes should bear a facing identification mark (FIM) A. The FIM A identifies the mailpiece to postal cancellation and automated equipment as prebarcoded CRM. This allows the piece to be sent directly to dedicated high-speed barcode sorters.

Although the bar pattern is different, the printing and positioning requirements for a FIM A on courtesy reply mail is the same as for BRM.

POSTAL GUIDANCE

Your local mailpiece design analyst can verify your correct ZIP+4 code and provide camera-ready artwork for both the barcode and the correct FIM A. The MDA will also provide feedback and guidance on positioning requirements during the design stage.

RESTRICTIONS

CRM is subject to the same limitations and standards as all mailable matter. Other than these basic standards no additional standards apply.

All letter-size CRM pieces enclosed in barcoded First-Class Mail, Periodicals, and Standard Mail mailpieces claiming automation rates must bear the correct FIM and barcode, and meet all the requirements for CRM.

DEPOSIT AND ACCEPTANCE

You may send CRM pieces to your customers inside other mailpieces. You may also use any other legal means of distribution for CRM. Most commonly, recipients deposit CRM envelopes in postal collection boxes or leave them for pickup by their letter carrier.



DMM 604.4.9.4

METER REPLY MAIL

Meter reply mail is essentially CRM with a meter stamp preapplied as return postage. Print a meter stamp (see module eight, *Postage Payment Methods*) directly on a mailpiece or address label that bears the return address of the meter holder. Meter stamps may prepay return postage for:

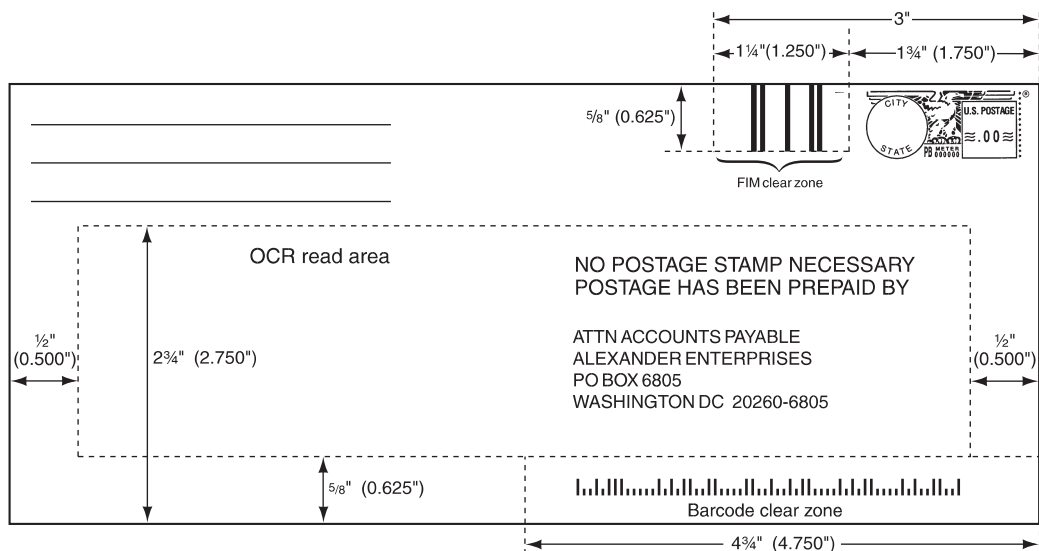
- Express Mail.
- Priority Mail (up to 1 pound).
- First-Class Mail postcards, letters, and flats up to a maximum of 13 ounces.
- Single-piece rate Media Mail and Library Mail.

You must use a meter stamped address label for Priority Mail (over 13oz.), single-piece Media Mail, and Library Mail. When using a label, ensure that it is affixed so that it cannot be removed in one piece. This prevents reuse of postage.

AUTHORIZATION AND FEES

Other than the costs associated with leasing a postage meter and postage, the USPS requires no fees or prior authorization to distribute meter reply mail.

METER REPLY MAIL FORMAT



METER REPLY FORMAT

All forms of printing are acceptable if sufficiently legible. You may not use handwriting, typewriting, or hand-stamping to prepare the address side of metered reply mail.

Required Elements

The phrase “NO POSTAGE STAMP NECESSARY, POSTAGE HAS BEEN PREPAID BY” must appear on the piece directly above the delivery address of the meter license holder. The preprinted address side must appear as shown below. The USPS permits no additions or alterations to this format.

The postage amount must be enough to prepay the postage in full. Because the date of deposit by the recipient for return is unknown, the meter impression must not have a date. Meter stamps used to prepay postage must not show the date, except for Information Based Indicia’s (IBI’s) generated from a PC Postage system which must include the words “Reply Postage”.

PREBARCODED METER REPLY MAIL

Meter reply mail that is prebarcoded enjoys the full benefits of postal automated sortation. As with courtesy reply mail, the Postal Service encourages all mailers who distribute letter-size meter reply mail to prebarcode their reply pieces.



You would typically use meter reply mail as a response vehicle when a reply is more or less assured. If not, consider a BRM permit. Based on anticipated volume, the required BRM fees can often be recouped fairly quickly.

BARCODE CONTENT AND PLACEMENT

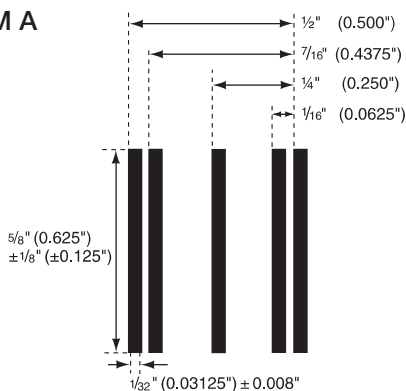
Barcoded meter reply mail (MRM) may bear either a delivery point barcode, or if the business has an exclusively assigned ZIP+4 code, a Firm Unique ZIP+4 barcode. You may position the barcode either in the address block, or in the lower right corner in the barcode clear zone. In either case, maintain the positioning, clearance, and printing standards covered earlier in module five, USPS Barcodes, and module six, Automation Requirements.

FIM A

All barcoded meter reply envelopes should bear a facing identification mark (FIM) A. The FIM A identifies the mailpiece to postal cancellation and automated equipment as barcoded reply mail. This allows the piece to be sent directly to dedicated high-speed barcode sorters.

The printing and positioning requirements for a FIM A on meter reply mail is the same as for CRM and BRM format elements as in DMM 507.8.

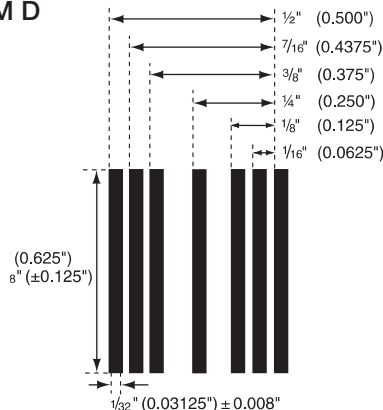
FIM A



FIM D

For PC Postage, a FIM D is required for pre-paid reply mail when the indicium is printed directly on the mailpiece.

FIM D



RESTRICTIONS

The Postal Service delivers meter reply mail only to the address of the meter license holder. If the address is altered, the mail is held for proper postage from the addressee prior to receipt.

All letter-size MRM pieces enclosed in prebarcoded First-Class Mail, Periodicals and Standard Mail mailpieces claiming automation rates must bear the correct FIM and barcode, and meet all the requirements for MRM.

DEPOSIT AND ACCEPTANCE

You may send meter reply pieces to your customers inside other mailpieces. You may also use any other legal means of distribution. Most commonly, recipients deposit MRM envelopes in postal collection boxes or leave them for pickup by their letter carrier.

POSTAL GUIDANCE

Your local mailpiece design analyst can verify your correct ZIP+4 code and provide camera-ready artwork for both the barcode and the correct FIM A. The MDA will also provide feedback and guidance on positioning requirements during the design stage.

**EXERCISE 9 - 2**

Directions: Circle the best response or fill in the blank to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. Courtesy Reply Mail (CRM) is returned postage due to the original sender.
 - a) true
 - b) false

2. Which FIM is used on prebarcoded CRM pieces?
 - a) FIM A
 - b) FIM B
 - c) FIM C
 - d) FIM D

3. A FIM D is required for:
 - a) PC Postage
 - b) Metered Reply Mail
 - c) Courtesy Reply Mail
 - d) Business Reply Mail

4. All letter-size reply pieces included in mailings sent at the barcoded automated rates must bear the correct FIM and barcode.
 - a) true
 - b) false

5. The postage costs for meter reply mail are prepaid by the original sender.
 - a) true
 - b) false

6. On a meter reply piece, directly above the delivery address of the original sender, the following endorsement must appear:
 - a) "NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES"
 - b) "POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE"
 - c) "NO POSTAGE STAMP NECESSARY, POSTAGE HAS BEEN PREPAID BY"
 - d) none of the above

7. Barcoded meter reply mail can bear either a _____ point barcode or a _____ unique ZIP+4 barcode.

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 9 - 2

1. **b, false;** postage is typically applied by the recipient prior to the return of the piece. The original sender may preapply the postage, if desired.
2. **a, FIM A;** identifies prebarcoded CRM.
3. **a, PC Postage;** A FIM D is required for prepaid reply mail when PC Postage is printed directly on the mailpiece.
4. **a, true;** this is a requirement for automated rates.
5. **a, true;** the original sender preapplies postage in the form of a meter stamp or PC postage.
6. **c, "NO POSTAGE STAMP NECESSARY, POSTAGE HAS BEEN PREPAID BY";** this is a required element.
7. **delivery, firm;** either type of barcode may be used. ZIP+4 barcodes assigned to BRM may not be used on CRM and vice versa.

**DMM 601.6.4****REUSABLE MAILPIECES**

Another method of providing a return or reply vehicle for your correspondents is a reusable mailpiece. Reusable mailpieces are outgoing mailpieces designed so that your customers can reuse and return them after receipt.

The recipient reconfigures or modifies the reusable mailpiece to cover the original delivery address and expose the delivery address of the sender. Your design must take this into consideration.

AUTHORIZATION AND FEES

The USPS requires no fees or prior authorization to distribute reusable mailpieces.

REUSABLE MAILPIECE FORMAT

The recipient either refolds or removes part of a reusable mailpiece to prepare it for return. This process must allow the recipient to cover the original delivery address and reveal that of the sender for return.

During all phases of postal handling, it must be clear which is the intended delivery address. You must design a reusable mailpiece so that:

- At the time of mailing, the piece shows only the recipient's address, and if used, the corresponding barcode.
- At the time of mailing, you must cover the originator's (return) address and any applicable markings.
- When returned the piece must show only one complete delivery address, and if used, the appropriate markings, endorsement, FIM, and barcode.
- You must include instructions on how to properly reconfigure the mailpiece.

A reusable mailpiece, once reconfigured, may be designed to return as any one of the reply mail types previously covered in this module.

Permit Imprint Mailings

As alternative for mailings originating as permit imprint mailings, both addresses may be visible on the original outgoing mailpiece. This applies to presorted, prebarcoded, permit imprint mailings only. In this case, you must locate the originator's address (where the reusable piece is returning to) on the reverse side of the mailpiece. The piece must also meet the following requirements:

- You must position the barcode for the recipient's address in the address block location.
- The originator's (return) address must also bear an address block barcode and the appropriate FIM.
- When originally mailed, you must either locate or obscure any postage preapplied for return purposes so that postal personnel do not mistake it as applying to the original piece.
- When reconfigured for return, the piece must still bear only one complete delivery address, FIM, and barcode. The original postage and markings may still be visible.

The Postal Service allows this option because permit imprints are not valid as return postage. Therefore, postal personnel can tell the difference between the outgoing (original) address and the return address.

RESTRICTIONS

Reusable mailpieces not meeting these requirements must be completely re-enveloped. Recipients must apply new postage before return.

DEPOSIT AND ACCEPTANCE

By definition, mailers distribute reusable mailpieces via the mail. If required by postal standards, you must present the original mailing for acceptance.

! *The proper design of a reusable mailpiece is more of an art than a science. Be sure to consult closely with your local mailpiece design analyst to ensure compliance with these standards.*

**DMM 507.9.0****MERCHANDISE RETURN SERVICE**

Merchandise return service allows mailers to receive mailable goods from their customers. The permit holder pays the postage and fees for the returned items. To return a piece, customers affix a merchandise return label to the parcel.

You may return parcels at the single-piece rates for First-Class Mail, Priority Mail, and Package Services. Permit holders may add postal insurance, delivery confirmation, pickup service, registered mail service, or special handling to the basic service.

AUTHORIZATION AND FEES

The Postal Service requires an annual fee for merchandise return service. Mailers must have a Form 3615, *Mailing Permit Application and Customer Profile*, on file at the Post Office which will receive the returning parcels. A sample of the merchandise return label and customer's instructions for use must accompany the Form 3615.

If the permit holder desires registered mail service they must note "Registered Mail" on the application. Permit holders must also provide notice to the Post Office of any changes to the merchandise return label.

In addition to the annual MRS fee, the permit holder must pay an annual accounting fee. The Postal Service deducts the appropriate single-piece rate postage and special service fees for parcels returned from an advance deposit account. The mailer can use an existing postage due account for this purpose but must still pay the annual accounting fee.

POSTAL GUIDANCE

Contact your local mailing requirements office, postmaster, or mailpiece design analyst for more information. They will help you analyze your options and can provide additional information on options such as receiving returned parcels at multiple Post Offices.

LABEL FORMAT

All forms of printing are acceptable if sufficiently legible. You may not use handwriting, typewriting, or hand-stamping to prepare the label. The background may be any light color.

You may print the label format directly on the mailpiece or produce it as a label, a facsimile transmission (fax), or an electronic file that includes instructions. The label adhesive must be strong enough to bond securely to the parcel.

The merchandise return label may include a detachable acknowledgment of mailing. If included, you must perforate the acknowledgment for easy removal. Do not glue it to the parcel. You must also provide written instructions to the customer on how to use the label and mail the parcel.

Obtain guidance from your local postmaster or mailpiece design analyst (MDA) prior to printing. The Postal Service must approve merchandise return labels before use. The complete requirements for merchandise return service and label formatting are in DMM 507.9.6.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

Merchandise return labels must bear the following elements:

“NO POSTAGE NECESSARY” ENDORSEMENT

You must print the endorsement “No Postage Necessary If Mailed In The United States” in the upper right corner of the label. The left edge of the endorsement must not extend more than 1 3/4 inches from the right edge of the label.

“MERCHANDISE RETURN LABEL” Rectangle

Position the following text, directly above the delivery address, enclosed in the “Merchandise Return Label” rectangle:

- Line 1: Print the legend “MERCHANDISE RETURN LABEL” in capital letters, at least 3/16 inch high, above the delivery address.
- Line 2: The words “PERMIT NUMBER” or “PERMIT NO.” followed by the actual number and the city name and state of the issuing Post Office and the ZIP Code. This text must also be in capital letters.
- Line 3: The name and delivery address of the permit holder.

You must follow the format and order shown in the illustration for this information.

Class Marking

If the permit holder wants to receive the piece back as either Priority Mail, First-Class Mail, Media Mail, or Library Mail, you must add the appropriate class markings. Print the marking above and to the right of the merchandise return label rectangle. The marking must be at least 1/4 inch high. It may be either printed or rubber stamped. Only the permit holder may apply this marking.

Pieces without rate markings are returned as Parcel Post.

“POSTAGE DUE...” Statement

If no special service is requested, the text “POSTAGE DUE COMPUTED BY DELIVERY UNIT” must appear in capital letters above and to the left of the merchandise return label rectangle.

As marked with an asterisk below, insurance, special handling, Delivery Confirmation, return receipt for merchandise, and pickup service fee entries may not appear if the permit holder does not choose the corresponding service(s). As appropriate, these postage and fee markings must appear:

POSTAGE \$ ____
 *INSURANCE FEE (IF ANY) \$ ____
 *DELIVERY CONFIRMATION
 FEE (IF ANY) \$ ____
 *RETURN RECEIPT FOR
 MERCHANDISE FEE (IF ANY) \$ ____
 *SPECIAL HANDLING FEE (IF ANY) \$ ____
 *PICKUP SERVICE FEE (IF ANY) \$ ____
 TOTAL POSTAGE AND FEES DUE \$ ____

INSURANCE DESIRED BY \$ ____
 PERMIT HOLDER FOR (VALUE)

Customer’s Return Address

Show the return address of the customer mailing back the parcel in the upper left corner. If not preprinted, provide space for the customer to apply their return address.

Delivery Address

Above the delivery address print the lines “POSTAGE DUE UNIT” and “US POSTAL SERVICE,” in capital letters. Follow with the delivery address of the postage due unit at the office where the permit is authorized. This text must be at least 1 inch from the left edge of the piece.

Horizontal Bars

Place a series of horizontal bars below the “No Postage Necessary...” endorsement. The bars must be the same size, at least 1 inch long, and 1/16 inch in thickness. Evenly space the vertical column of bars and do not extend them below the delivery address (street or PO Box #) line.

Facing Identification Mark

Do not use a facing identification mark (FIM) on merchandise return labels.

MERCHANDISE RETURN LABEL WITH MAILING ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Location of Class of Mail Endorsement

FROM: _____

POSTAGE DUE COMPUTED BY: _____ **I.D. # 654321A**
 DELIVERY UNIT IF NO SPECIAL SERVICES (OR)
 ACCEPTANCE POST OFFICE IF SPECIAL
 SERVICES ARE REQUESTED

*INSURANCE FEE (IF ANY) _____
 *SPECIAL HANDLING FEE (IF ANY) _____
 *PICKUP SERVICE FEE (IF ANY) _____
 TOTAL POSTAGE AND FEES DUE \$ _____
 INSURANCE DESIRED BY _____
 PERMIT HOLDER FOR \$ _____
 (VALUE)

MERCHANDISE RETURN LABEL
 PERMIT NO. 1 CONESTOGA PA 17516
 ABC CO. 501 FIRST AVE.

POSTAGE DUE UNIT
 US POSTAL SERVICE
 PO BOX 9998
 CONESTOGA PA 17516-9998

NO POSTAGE
 NECESSARY
 IF MAILED
 IN THE
 UNITED STATES

FROM: _____

I.D. # 654321A

ROUND DATE _____
 STAMP _____

ACCEPTANCE EMPLOYEE
 INITIAL _____

**MERCHANDISE RETURN
 MAILING ACKNOWLEDGMENT**
 PERMIT NO. 1 CONESTOGA PA 17516
 ABC CO. 501 FIRST AVE.

MERCHANDISE RETURN SERVICE WITH ADDITIONAL SPECIAL SERVICES

If the permit holder desires additional special services like registered mail, insurance, delivery confirmation, pickup service, or special handling, various format elements must be changed or added. For instance:

- You must use a different “POSTAGE DUE...” statement.
- You must add the corresponding entries to the postage calculations.
- You must include the required endorsements and markings for each service.

Seek postal guidance for the proper way to combine and format your label for these additional services.

RESTRICTIONS

The Postal Service computes postage for zone-rated parcels with no cancellation or return address at zone 4.

The Postal Service returns to the sender parcels requiring registered or insurance service deposited in collection boxes. If no return address is present, these parcels are treated as undeliverable.

DEPOSIT AND ACCEPTANCE

The permit holder may distribute merchandise return labels as enclosures with merchandise or as separate items, as a facsimile transmission (fax), or as an electronic transmission for customer downloading and printing.

Merchandise return labels may be distributed as the reply half of a qualifying double postcard. For this method you must have prior approval from the Pricing and Classification Service Center (PCSC).

The customer must mail the parcel in the service area of the Post Office shown in the return address. Parcels with special services or mailing acknowledgments must be tendered directly to postal personnel.

**DMM 507.10.0****BULK PARCEL RETURN SERVICE**

Mailers of Standard Mail machinable parcels who have their undeliverable parcels returned via an ancillary service endorsement can now participate in Bulk Parcel Return Service (BPRS). Participation in BPRS can represent significant savings in return charges.

The service is limited to mailers who have over 10,000 undeliverable parcels returned per year. Only machinable parcels weighing less than one pound and originally mailed as Standard Mail are eligible for BPRS.

The Postal Service returns BPRS pieces to a designated postal facility such as a Processing and Distribution Center (P&DC). Mailers can then pick them up or the Postal Service will deliver them if more efficient for postal operations.

AUTHORIZATION AND FEES

Mailers must submit a written request to the postmaster at the office where the parcels will be returned. This request must include the annual permit fee and annual accounting fee:

- Documentation of the 10,000 piece minimum yearly volume.
- A description of the mail.
- A sample of the documentation the mailer will use to report the number of parcels returned each day.
- The requested location and frequency of pickup.

The mailer must have an advance deposit account. The permit holder pays the BPRS per piece charge via this account. Mailers using BPRS pay only the per piece charge for each parcel returned.

BPRS FORMAT

Each piece must bear one of the qualifying BPRS endorsements. The return address must be in the delivery area of the issuing Post Office. Valid BPRS endorsements are:

- Return Service Requested—BPRS.
- Address Service Requested—BPRS.

The piece must meet all requirements for the use of ancillary service endorsements. The Postal Service only charges the BPRS fee for returned pieces, not the weighted fee (see module four, *Addressing*).

RESTRICTIONS

The assigned BPRS permit number must not appear on the mailpiece. Any Standard Mail piece that qualifies for a single-piece Package Services rate and is so endorsed, is not eligible for BPRS.

EXTRA SERVICES

No extra services are allowed.

DEPOSIT AND ACCEPTANCE

You must initially present BPRS eligible pieces as part of a presorted Standard Mail mailing. All relevant standards apply. Undeliverable parcels are returned by postal delivery personnel.

SUMMARY

Reply mail, sent by your business to customers or potential customers, is a type of return mailpiece with a request for a response. Order forms and invoices are common types of reply mail.

Reply and return mail envelopes and labels are the vehicle for this communication with your customers. The Postal Service offers a number of options for your use. You may simply provide return envelopes for your customers (CRM). You may prepay the postage for all envelopes you distribute with meter reply mail.

Business reply mail, on the other hand, allows you to distribute many more pieces than you anticipate might be returned. You pay only for those pieces that are actually returned to you. Postal reply mail options allow your customer contacts to be truly interactive, further enhancing an already attractive and effective communications medium.

The MQC program is meant to provide a thorough exposure to all options and relevant standards for reply mail. Publication 25, *Designing Letter and Reply Mail*, provides complete coverage and illustrations for BRM, CRM, and meter reply mail. Publication 25 is intended as a key reference for all designers.

**EXERCISE 9 - 3**

Directions: Circle the best response to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. Unless originally mailed using a permit imprint, a reusable mailpiece must show only the recipient's address at the time of mailing.
 - a) true
 - b) false

2. Which of the following special services are available for use with merchandise return service?
 - a) bulk insured service
 - b) collect on delivery (COD) service
 - c) restricted delivery
 - d) registered mail service

3. Pieces bearing merchandise return labels without a clear rate marking are returned as:
 - a) First-Class Mail
 - b) Parcel Post
 - c) Priority Mail
 - d) Library Mail

4. A properly designed merchandise return label includes the correct facing identification mark (FIM).
 - a) true
 - b) false

5. To be eligible for Bulk Parcel Return Service (BPRS) a mailer must receive returned parcels totaling at least _____ a year.
 - a) 1,000
 - b) 10,000
 - c) 100,000
 - d) 1,000,000

6. Bulk Parcel Return Service (BPRS) is available for:
 - a) Package Services parcels only
 - b) Package Services machinable parcels only
 - c) Standard Mail parcels only
 - d) Standard Mail machinable parcels only

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 9 - 3

1. **a, true;** unless mailed using a permit imprint, a reusable mailpiece must be configured to obscure the original sender's address when mailed.
2. **d, registered mail service;** postal insurance and special handling may also be included with merchandise return service.
3. **b, Parcel Post;** pieces may be returned, at the discretion of the permit holder, as either Priority Mail, First-Class Mail, Media Mail, or Library Mail if properly marked.
4. **b, false;** facing identification marks are not used on merchandise return labels.
5. **b, 10,000;** is the minimum volume requirement for returned parcels to qualify for Bulk Parcel Return Service (BPRS).
6. **d, Standard Mail machinable parcels only;** weighing less than 16 ounces and originally mailed as part of a presorted Standard Mail mailing.

The Postal Service offers many additional services that you may combine with its basic delivery offerings. Most of these are listed in the Extra Services module of the Domestic Mail Manual (DMM 503). These extra services represent additional value added offerings that you may add to your basic mailing service. You choose and pay for only those services you truly need. The ability to mix and match these services as desired remains the premier feature of USPS extra services.

This module will outline the basic requirements and features of these services, along with the necessary postal forms and markings. Afterwards, you should be able to recognize when you or your customers will benefit from using one or more of these services.



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT POSTAL EXTRA SERVICES

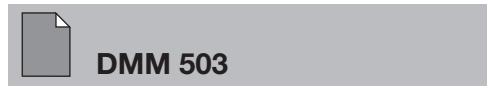
Upon completion of this module, you should be able to do the following:

- Describe the basic features of each postal extra service option for:
 - Certified Mail
 - Collect on Delivery (COD)
 - Insurance
 - Certificate of Mailing
 - Registered
 - Restricted Delivery
 - Return Receipt
 - Return Receipt for Merchandise
 - Special Handling
 - Delivery Confirmation
 - Signature Confirmation
- Discuss the basic requirements and restrictions for each.
- Identify the proper content and placement of required markings.
- Explain the restrictions for entering mail with each type of extra service into the mailstream.

 Certified mail does not provide insurance. For valuable items, use insured or registered mail.

EXTRA SERVICES

The Postal Service offers additional value added services you may use. These services are covered in *Domestic Mail Manual*, Extra Services.



Each of these services may only be used with certain classes of mail. For example, Registered Mail is only available with First-Class Mail. The Postal Service charges a fee, in addition to normal postage, for each service you select. Choose the extra service that best meets the needs of both you and your customer.

CERTIFIED MAIL—DMM 503.3.0

Certified Mail provides proof of delivery of mail. The sender receives a mailing receipt at the time of mailing. The Postal Service keeps only a record of delivery at the recipient’s Post Office.

Service Combinations

Only First-Class Mail (including Priority Mail) can be certified. You may combine Certified Mail with return receipt service and/or restricted delivery service.

Markings

You must affix Form 3800, *Receipt for Certified Mail*, to each piece. Mailers may also use privately printed Forms 3800.

You must obtain authorization prior to printing versions of these postal forms. The mailpiece design analyst (MDA) is the approving postal official for this purpose. Contact your local MDA for more information.

CERTIFIED MAIL LABEL



Endorse the mailpiece “Restricted Delivery” if you desire this service. In this case, you must address the article to an individual.

Deposit and Acceptance

If you properly complete and attach the correct forms, postage, and fees, you may deposit Certified Mail in a collection box. However, there will be no proof of mailing if Certified Mail is deposited in a collection box. As always, you may also deposit Certified Mail at any Post Office.

Mailers may use Form 3877, *Firm Mailing Book for Accountable Mail*, for multiple records.

Restrictions

Certified Mail service is not available for international mail. Standard Mail may not use certified service.

COLLECT ON DELIVERY— DMM 503.11.0

Use Collect on Delivery (COD) when you want to collect payment for merchandise and/or postage upon delivery. If the recipient pays by check, the check is forwarded to the mailer. If the recipient pays by cash, the Postal Service sends the mailer a postal money order.

The fees for COD service include insurance. The amount collected or the amount of insurance, whichever is higher, determines the COD fee.

Service Combinations

You may use COD service for:

- Express Mail.
- First-Class Mail.
- Priority Mail.
- Package Services.

You may also obtain return receipt, Delivery Confirmation, Registered Mail, Signature Confirmation, special handling, and restricted delivery service with COD mail.

Markings

Mailers must affix Form 3816, *COD Mailing and Delivery Receipt*, to each piece. If sending more than three items, the mailer may use Form 3816-AS, COD Card—Firm Mailings. Mailers may also use privately printed forms upon approval.

You must obtain authorization prior to printing versions of these postal forms. The MDA is the approving postal official for this purpose. Contact your local MDA for more information.

Deposit and Acceptance

You must present COD articles at a Post Office, or to a rural carrier. Do not deposit COD mail in maildrops or street collection boxes.

The Postal Service identifies COD articles by a unique number. Mailers may use Form 3877, *Firm Mailing Book*, as receipts for multiple items.

Restrictions

The recipient must have ordered the goods being shipped. COD service may not be used for:

- International mail.
- Collection agency purposes.
- Billing only. Balance due on past shipments may be included with a shipment of merchandise, if the addressee consents to such action.
- Articles shipped to military addresses showing an APO or an FPO designation.
- The return of merchandise, unless the new addressee (distributor, retailer, manufacturer, etc.) consents in advance.
- The mailing of motion picture films.

You may not use COD for Presorted Standard Mail.

INSURANCE

Insured mail provides coverage for lost, missing, or damaged articles. Insurance coverage for loss is the actual value of the item.

Insured mail service provides the mailer with a mailing receipt. No record of insured mail is kept at the office of mailing. For mail insured for \$200 or less, the USPS maintains delivery information (not including a signature) for a specified period of time. For mail insured for more than \$200, the USPS maintains a delivery record (which includes the recipient's signature) for a specified period of time.

Service Combinations

You may insure all Package Services. You may also insure Package Services matter mailed at the First-Class Mail and Priority Mail rates.

You may use Delivery Confirmation, Signature Confirmation, special handling, parcel airlift, and merchandise return service with insured mail. You may obtain restricted delivery service, and return receipt service for parcels insured for more than \$200. Return receipt for merchandise is available for items insured for \$200 or less.

Markings and Forms

The treatment of pieces is determined by the insurance amount. The mailer must affix a barcoded Form 3813 for pieces insured for \$200 or less to each piece above the delivery address and to the right of the return address. No signature is obtained.

Mailers may use privately printed bar-coded Forms 3813-P. However, authorization must be obtained prior to printing. The MDA is the approving official for this purpose. Contact your MDA for additional information. Mailers must affix a barcoded Form 3813-P for pieces insured for more than \$200.

All insured items must be postmarked unless a meter stamp or permit imprint is used to pay postage. Endorsements for private insurance may not appear on the address side of mail, but may appear elsewhere. The Postal Service prohibits private insurance endorsements that resemble postal markings.

Deposit and Acceptance

Mailers must present insured mail at a Post Office, or to a rural carrier. Do not deposit insured mail in a maildrop or street collection box.

The Postal Service keeps no mailing records for insured parcels. Mailers must write the addressee's name and address on the receipt and keep it. Show this receipt when filing a claim.

Mailers may also use Form 3877, *Firm Mailing Book for Accountable Mail*, for multiple listings of three or more items. The sheets of the book become the mailer's receipts.

Restrictions

Mailers may not insure matter that is:

- Sent to prospective purchasers who have not ordered or authorized the sending of the merchandise.
- Nonmailable matter.
- Not adequately packaged to withstand normal postal handling.
- So fragile that it cannot be carried safely regardless of the packaging.
- Without the complete name and address of the sender and recipient.
- Classified as, and required to be mailed at First-Class Mail rates (see module one, *Classes of Mail*).
- Standard Mail letters, flats, and NFM's.

U.S. Postal Service® DOMESTIC ONLY
INSURED MAIL RECEIPT \$200 and under

OFFICIAL USE

Postage \$ Fragile Perishable
Insurance Fee Liquid Hazardous
Special Handling Fee Restricted Delivery
Return Receipt Fee (endorsement required)
Total Postage & Fees \$

Send to:
Street, Apt. No., or PO Box No.
City, State, ZIP+4®

PS Form 3813, May 2007 See Reverse for Instructions

Insured Mail Form 3813

U.S. Postal Service® DOMESTIC ONLY
INSURED MAIL RECEIPT Over \$200

OFFICIAL USE

Postage \$ Fragile Perishable
Insurance Fee Liquid Hazardous
Special Handling Fee Restricted Delivery
Return Receipt Fee (endorsement required)
Total Postage & Fees \$

Send to:
Street, Apt. No., or PO Box No.
City, State, ZIP+4®

PS Form 3813-P, May 2007 See Reverse for Instructions

Insured Mail Form 3813-P

BULK INSURED SERVICE

Bulk insured service is a less costly, more efficient process for purchasing insurance on large quantities of parcels. Using bulk insurance saves mailers on per piece insurance fees.

Bulk insurance will provide compensation for either the actual value of the article at the time of mailing or the wholesale cost of the contents to the sender— whichever is less.

Markings

The basic piece markings are the same as for regular insured service.

Deposit and Acceptance

Mailers must apply for authorization to mail at the bulk insured service rates through their local postmaster or designee by completing the customer portion of the bulk insured service verification form. If the mailer meets the requirements, the postmaster or designee will certify on the bulk insured service verification form that the mailer qualifies and forward the form to the manager of Claims Processing at the St. Louis Accounting Service Center (ASC). After reviewing the information, the ASC will notify the postmaster of their concurrence of the application and provide a range of claim numbers to be used by the mailer for filing claims. The postmaster or designee will then provide the customer with the approval of the application and with information needed to file claims, including the assigned claim numbers.

At a future date, electronic filing of indemnity claims will become mandatory. Prior to mandatory electronic claims filing, customers will be provided with the format instructions for the new electronic (soft copy) of Form 3877 and instructions for electronic filing indemnity claims.

Restrictions

In addition to the restrictions on regular insurance, only the sender may file claims for loss or damage under this service. Mailers must mail a minimum of 10,000 insured articles annually. You may not insure matter required to be mailed at First-Class Mail rates.

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING— DMM 503.5.0

A certificate of mailing is a receipt showing that an item was mailed. The Postal Service keeps no record of delivery of the item. The certificate does not provide insurance coverage for loss or damage.

Service Combinations

You may obtain a certificate of mailing for mail of any class. The Postal Service provides a certificate for bulk mailings of identical weight pieces of First-Class Mail, Standard Mail, and Package Services bearing stamps or metered postage. This certifies only the total number mailed, and is not available for mailings paid for by permit imprint account.

Markings

There are no special markings for this service.

Deposit and Acceptance

The mailer must complete a Form 3817, Certificate of Mailing, for each item. Use Form 3606 for bulk mailings of identical weight pieces. Mailers may also use Form 3877, *Firm Mailing Book for Accountable Mail*, for multiple listings of three or more items.

You must present certificates of mailing to postal personnel for acceptance.

Restrictions

The Postal Service does not issue a certificate for bulk mailings paid by permit imprint.

REGISTERED MAIL—DMM 503.2.0

Registered Mail is the most secure service option offered by the Postal Service. It provides added protection for valuable and important mail.

Registered Mail articles are under tight security from the point of mailing to the point of delivery. The Postal Service provides the mailer with a receipt and keeps a delivery record at the addressee's Post Office.

Service Combinations

Only matter mailed at the First-Class Mail rates (including Priority Mail) may be registered. The face (address side) of a registered article must be at least 5 inches long and 3 1/2 inches high. Mailers may combine registered mail service with collect on delivery (COD) service, Delivery Confirmation, Signature Confirmation, merchandise return service, return receipt service, and restricted delivery.

Markings

Registered Mail must bear a red Label 200. The label contains a registration number in OCR-A readable font. Place the label above the delivery address and to the right of the return address.

LABEL 200

Mailers may also use privately printed labels. You must obtain authorization prior to printing versions of these postal forms. Contact your local MDA for more information.

Deposit and Acceptance

You must present Registered Mail in person at a Post Office, or to a rural carrier. The mailer must tell the USPS clerk the full value of the matter presented for registration. The mailer must tell the USPS employee if the matter is fragile, and, if so, describe the packaging.

The mailer must securely seal all packages and envelopes. Regulations do not permit postal employees to help customers seal

Registered Mail. Mailers may also use Form 3877, *Firm Mailing Book for Accountable Mail*, as their receipt.

Restrictions

Items presented for Registered Mail service must not be:

- Business reply mail.
- Opened and resealed or otherwise improperly packaged.
- Deposited in a collection box.
- Multiple articles tied or fastened together.
- Presented for mailing in a padded envelope, a plastic envelope (including Tyvek), or an envelope or mailer made of glossy-coated paper.

You may not use Registered Mail for Presorted Standard Mail.

RESTRICTED DELIVERY

Mail marked "Restricted Delivery" is delivered only to the addressee or to the person authorized in writing as the addressee's agent to receive the mail, subject to DMM 503.7.0 and these exceptions:

- Mail for famous personalities and for executives of large organizations is normally delivered to an authorized agent.
- Mail for military and government officials may be delivered to a person authorized by the addressee or the agency.
- Mail for prison inmates may be delivered to the warden or designee.
- Mail for minors or persons under guardianship may be delivered to their parents or guardians.

Service Combinations

You may obtain restricted delivery only for:

- Registered Mail.
- COD mail.
- Signature Confirmation.
- Delivery Confirmation.
- parcel airtlift service.
- special handling.
- Certified Mail.
- mail insured for more than \$200.

Markings

Mailers must mark pieces sent with restricted delivery service “Restricted Delivery.” Place this endorsement above the delivery address and to the right of the return address.

Deposit and Acceptance

A mailer may request restricted delivery service at the time of mailing, or by marking the piece “Restricted Delivery.” The mailer may request restricted delivery after mailing by notifying the mailing Post Office in writing.

Restrictions

The Postal Service refunds restricted delivery fees only when it fails to give restricted delivery service. Service properly rendered would include delivery to authorized agents (see above).

RETURN RECEIPT—503.6.0

Return receipt service provides you with evidence of delivery (to whom the mail was delivered and date of delivery), along with information about the recipient’s actual delivery address. You may choose to receive this information via the return receipt by mail or electronically (not available for APO or FPO addresses or U.S. territories, possessions and freely associated states).

Service Combinations

This service is available for:

- Express Mail
- First-Class Mail (including Priority Mail) when purchased at the time of mailing with Certified Mail, COD, insured mail (for more than \$200), or Registered Mail service.
- Standard Mail prepared as parcels when bulk insurance (for more than \$200) is purchased at the time of mailing.
- Package Services when purchased at the time of mailing with COD or insured mail (for more than \$200).

If return receipt service has already been purchased with one of the services listed above, then one or more of the following extra

services may be combined with those services at the time of mailing if the applicable standards for the services are met and the additional service fees are paid:

- Delivery Confirmation
 - Priority Mail
 - First-Class Mail parcels
 - Package Services
- Parcel airlift service (PAL)
 - Priority Mail
 - Package Services
- Restricted Delivery
- Signature Confirmation
 - Priority Mail
 - Package Services
- Special handling.

Markings

When return receipt service is requested by mail (Form 3811), the words “Return Receipt Requested” must be placed above the delivery address and to the right of the return address.

Deposit and Acceptance

You can only mail articles with return receipt service as required by the extra service with which it is combined.

Requests for service may be at the time of mailing using Form 3811 with the marking above. The return address and name and address of the person or organization to which the return receipt is to be returned must be that of the mailer or the mailer’s agent. Requests for return receipt service may be made after mailing (within 90 days for Express Mail and up to 2-years for all other requests) by sending the delivery Post Office a completed Form 3811-A.

Privately printed Form 3811 may also be used. Authorization must be obtained prior to printing these postal forms. Contact your local MDA for more information.

Restrictions

The Postal Service refunds return receipt fees only when it fails to furnish a return receipt.

RETURN RECEIPT FOR MERCHANDISE—DMM 503.8.0

This form of return receipt service provides a mailing receipt, return receipt, and record of delivery. The Postal Service keeps a delivery record, but no record at the office of mailing.

Service Combinations

This service is available only for merchandise sent as:

- Priority Mail.
- Package Services.
- Standard Mail parcels.

You may combine this service with special handling service, Delivery Confirmation, insured (\$200 or less), and parcel airlift service.

Markings

You must use Form 3804 for return receipt for merchandise service. Place the form and the endorsement "Return Receipt Requested" above the delivery address and to the right of the return address.

Mailers may also use privately printed Forms 3804. You must obtain authorization prior to printing versions of these postal forms. Contact your local MDA for more information.

Deposit and Acceptance

A mailer must mail the articles at a Post Office, or give the mail to a rural carrier. You may not deposit mail requesting this service in a letterdrop or street collection box.

SPECIAL HANDLING—DMM 503.12.0

Special handling provides preferential handling in the dispatch and transportation of your items. Special handling service is required for unusual contents needing additional care and handling. Examples of such contents include live poultry or bees.

Special handling service is not necessary for ordinary fragile items. Proper packaging with the marking "FRAGILE" is sufficient. Use Registered Mail with insurance for valuable or irreplaceable items.

Service Combinations

Special handling service is available only for First-Class Mail (including Priority Mail) and Package Services.

You may combine special handling service with:

- Parcel Airlift Service.
- Delivery Confirmation.
- Insurance.
- Collect on Delivery (COD).
- Return receipt for merchandise.
- Signature Confirmation.

Markings

Mailers must mark pieces "Special Handling." Place this endorsement above the delivery address and to the right of the return address.

Restrictions

You may not use special handling with Presorted Standard Mail.

SIGNATURE CONFIRMATION — DMM 503.10.0

Signature Confirmation provides the mailer with information about the date and time an article was delivered or attempted to be delivered. Signature Confirmation is available at the time of mailing. The Postal Service maintains a delivery record that includes the recipient's signature and is made available via fax or mail upon the mailer's request.

Service Combinations

Signature Confirmation is available for Priority Mail, and also for First-Class Mail parcels and Package Services parcels. It may be used with Collect on Delivery (COD), Insured Mail, Registered Mail, Restricted delivery (if purchased with insurance over \$200, COD, or registry service) and Special Handling.

Signature Confirmation service options are as follows:

1. Retail option - available at Post Offices at the time of mailing. This option provides a mailing receipt and access to Signature Confirmation information by calling 1-800-222-1811 or accessing the USPS web site at www.usps.com and providing the article number.
2. Electronic Option - available to mailers who apply identifying barcodes to each piece, establish an electronic link with the Postal Service to exchange acceptance and delivery date, provide an electronic file of Signature Confirmation pieces that are entered for mailing, and retrieve delivery status information electronically. No mailing receipt is provided. Mailers can access delivery information through their electronic file or by calling 1-800-222-1811 or accessing the USPS web site at www.usps.com and providing the article number.

Labels and Placement

Mailers may use one of three Signature Confirmation label options:

1. Form 153, obtained from the Post Office at no charge. This form may be used only with the retail option
2. Label 315, available at no charge to electronic option mailers
3. Privately printed barcoded labels that meet the requirements in DMM 503.10.3 or Publication 91, *Confirmation Services Technical Guide*. On the Priority Mail label, mailers must use the registered trademark symbol following the Priority Mail text or add the following statement at the bottom of the label in at least 6-point Helvetica type: "Priority Mail is a registered trademark of the U.S. Postal Service."

The barcoded label section of Label 315 or Form 153 must be placed either above the delivery address and to the right of the return address or to the left of the delivery address. A privately printed Signature Confirmation label that is separate from a privately printed address label must be placed in close proximity to the address label. In all cases, the entire Signature Confirmation label must be placed on the address side of the mailpiece and not overlap any adjacent item.

SIGNATURE CONFIRMATION LABEL

The image shows a sample of a U.S. Postal Service Signature Confirmation Receipt form. It features a barcode on the left side with the text 'United States Postal Service SIGNATURE CONFIRMATION' and '3103 0370 0000 7047 4435'. Below the barcode is a section for 'SIGNATURE CONFIRMATION NUMBER' with the same number. To the right of the barcode is a 'POSTAL CUSTOMER' section with instructions: 'Keep this receipt. For inquiries, Access Internet web site at www.usps.com or call 1-800-222-1811'. There are checkboxes for 'Priority Mail' and 'Package Services'. At the bottom, it says 'PS Form 324, February 2007' and 'Check Receipts'.

Deposit and Acceptance.

A mailer may mail articles with retail option Signature Confirmation at a Post Office, branch, or station, or give articles to a rural carrier. You may not deposit Signature Confirmation in a maildrop or street collection box. The applicable Signature Confirmation fee must be paid in addition to the correct postage.

Restrictions

Signature Confirmation is not available for the following: Express Mail, Periodicals, and Standard Mail pieces; First-Class mail letter-size and flat-size pieces; Package Services flat-size pieces; mail paid with precanceled stamps; APO/FPO destinations; U.S. territories, except Puerto Rico and the U.S.

Virgin Islands.

DELIVERY CONFIRMATION DMM 503.9.0

Delivery Confirmation service provides the mailer with the date the USPS delivered an article. Alternatively, the USPS will confirm a delivery attempt.

The Postal Service does not keep a record of receipt at the office of mailing. Delivery Confirmation does not include insurance. You may purchase insurance separately.

Service Combinations

For availability, see the chart below. You may combine Delivery Confirmation with:

- Insured Mail.
- Registered Mail.
- COD.
- Special Handling.
- Return receipt, if insured for over \$200 or combined with COD or registered service.
- Restricted Delivery, if insured for over \$200 or combined with COD or registered service.
- Return receipt for merchandise.

Delivery Confirmation service options are as follows:

1. Retail Option—available at Post Offices at the time of mailing. This option provides a mailing receipt and access to Delivery Confirmation information by calling 1-800-222-1811 or accessing the USPS web site at www.usps.com.
2. Electronic Option—available only to mailers who establish an electronic link to exchange acceptance and delivery data.

Labels and Placement

Mailers must use one of the label options

Availability of Delivery Confirmation and Signature Confirmation Services

Mail Class	Letter-Size	Flat-Size	Parcel	NFMs
Priority Mail	Yes	Yes	Yes	—
First-Class Mail	No	No	Yes	—
Standard Mail ¹	No	No	Yes ¹	Yes ¹
Package Services	No	No	Yes ²	—

¹Standard Mail: Signature Confirmation service not available. Delivery Confirmation electronic option only for Standard Mail parcels and NFMs

²No charge for Parcel Select Delivery Confirmation electronic option

shown below:

1. Form 152, obtained from the Post Office at no charge. This form may be used only with the retail option.
2. Label 314, available at no charge to electronic option mailers.
3. Privately printed barcoded labels that meet the requirements in DMM 503.9.0 or Publication 91, *Confirmation Services Technical Guide*. You must obtain authorization prior to printing versions of Form 152. Contact the National Customer Support Center (NCSC) at 800-331-5746 for more information.

Identical to Signature Confirmation, on the Priority Mail labels, mailers must use the registered trademark symbol following the Priority Mail text or add the following statement at the bottom of the label in at least 6-point Helvetica type: "Priority Mail is a registered trademark of the U.S. Postal Service."

The barcoded label section of Label 314 or Form 152 must be placed either above the delivery address and to the right of the return address or to the left of the delivery address. A privately printed Delivery Confirmation label that is separate from the address label must be placed in close proximity to the address label. In all cases, the entire Delivery Confirmation label must be placed on the address side and not overlap any adjacent item.

DELIVERY CONFIRMATION LABEL



Deposit and Acceptance

Mailers must mail a retail Delivery Confirmation item at a Post Office or give the mail to a rural carrier. You may not deposit Delivery Confirmation mail in a maildrop or street collection box.

The applicable Delivery Confirmation fee, if any, must be paid in addition to the correct postage. Fees apply to all pieces except those mailed at Priority Mail rates using the electronic option. For a complete listing of all postage rates and fees, see *Domestic Mail Manual* 503.9.0.



DMM 503.9.0

Restrictions

Further restrictions apply. Mailers must follow the procedures outlined in Publication 91, *Confirmation Services Technical Guide*. Mailers may contact the National Customer Support Center (NCSC) at 1-800-331-5746 for a copy of this publication. Publication 91 is also available at www.usps.com

CONFIRM

CONFIRM is the product name for the electronic tracking service introduced by the USPS for barcoded mail. CONFIRM provides authorized subscribers with data electronically collected from the optical scanning of specially barcoded pieces as they pass through certain automated mail processing operations.

To use the CONFIRM process, the customer submits mailpieces with the appropriate PLANET Code barcode, POSTNET barcode, or Intelligent Mail barcode for evaluation and approval to the NCSC.

CONFIRM offers mailers the ability to predict delivery, anticipate payments, and diagnose bottlenecks. This information gives mailers accurate and timely delivery information for marketing purposes.

Service Combinations

You may use CONFIRM with any qualifying prebarcoded mailing.

Markings

The Postal Service requires no additional markings, other than the barcode and the rate markings required by the discount category and class of mail.

Deposit and Acceptance

Mailpieces using CONFIRM must be part of qualifying, discounted, prebarcoded mailings. All discounted mailings must be presented to postal personnel for acceptance at a time and place designated by the local postmaster.

Restrictions

Mailers must be able to receive the data electronically using either a file transfer protocol or over the Postal Service web site. Visit the USPS web site for the most current and up to date information on this unique value added service, or contact your local postal representative.

SUMMARY

The Postal Service offers a wide variety of value-added services in addition to its basic delivery services. You may combine these extra services in many different ways. Choose the appropriate service combination that best meets your company's or your client's unique delivery and fulfillment needs.

If you need more information, further clarification, or help in selecting the appropriate options, contact your local postmaster, mailing requirements personnel, customer service representative, or account representative. As always, the *Domestic Mail Manual* remains the primary reference and ultimate authority for service definitions.

**EXERCISE 10 - 1**

Directions: Circle the best response to answer the following questions. Check your answers when you have completed the exercise.

1. Which of the following classes of mail can be sent as Certified Mail?
 - a) Standard Mail
 - b) Package Services
 - c) First-Class Mail
 - d) Periodicals Mail

2. Collect on Delivery (COD) service may not be used for:
 - a) international mail
 - b) billing statements
 - c) shipments to APO or FPO military addresses
 - d) all of the above

3. Presorted Standard Mail may not use certified, COD, registered, return receipt, or special handling services.
 - a) true
 - b) false

4. Return receipt service can only be used for mail sent using:
 - a) meter stamps
 - b) special packaging
 - c) other extra services
 - d) delivery point barcodes

5. Return receipt for merchandise service is not available for merchandise sent as:
 - a) Priority Mail
 - b) Package Services
 - c) Standard Mail
 - d) First-Class Mail

6. The Postal Service's Delivery Confirmation service offers two options: a retail option, and an electronic option.
 - a) true
 - b) false

ANSWERS TO EXERCISE 10 - 1

1. **c, First-Class Mail;** only First-Class Mail (including Priority Mail) may be sent as Certified Mail.
2. **d, all of the above;** none of these examples may be sent using COD service.
3. **a, true;** these extra services are not available with Standard Mail mailings.
4. **c, other extra services;** return receipt service must be used in combination with another qualifying extra service.
5. **d, First-Class Mail**
6. **a, true;** the retail option is offered over-the-counter at Post Office lobbies or by a rural carrier. The electronic option is available to mailers who establish an electronic link to exchange acceptance and delivery data.

POSTAL CONTACTS

The following is a list of Postal Service job titles and position descriptions that you will find useful. These are postal employees to contact for information when performing your duties as mailpiece quality control specialist at your company.

MAILPIECE DESIGN ANALYSTS

The mailpiece design analysts' primary job is to help customers design mailpieces that meet postal standards and to increase the amount of mail compatible with the sorting technology used by the Postal Service. They visit customers to suggest ways for mailers to conform to barcode standards so that customers can take full advantage of the automated processing equipment of the Postal Service. Mailpiece design analysts can also determine the causes for failure of automated equipment to correctly handle customer mail and suggest improvements for the customer's mailpiece design.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS REPRESENTATIVES

Consumer affairs representatives respond to customer complaints, inquiries, and suggestions. They provide for the collection, tracking, and analyzing of complaint data and make recommendations for corrective action to improve service to customers. They also supervise the We Want to Know (WWTK) program, which enables customers to register complaints, offer suggestions, and give complements about postal products and services via direct contact with their local Post Office, by calling 800-ASK-USPS, or at www.usps.com.

ACCOUNT REPRESENTATIVES

Account representatives analyze needs of large volume mailers to determine the best postal programs, products, and services to help the customer's mailing operations. Their primary job is to ensure that customers understand how the Postal Service functions and how the customer's organization can work with the USPS to provide them with the best possible service.

NATIONAL CUSTOMER SUPPORT CENTER, MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

The National Customer Support Center (NCSC) in Memphis, Tennessee (1-800-238-3150) handles customer requests for postal products and services. Postal products include files containing postal address information, such as the Carrier Route Information System (CRIS), Drop Shipment locations, Delivery Sequence Files, and ZIP+4 code data. Services include ZIP+4 code conversion of customer address files, ordering postal publications and the testing of CASS/PAVE software. Hours of the NCSC are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Central Time.

POSTMASTER

The postmaster manages, often through subordinate supervisors, the operation of a Post Office, providing distribution, delivery, collection, and window services. The postmaster may also provide for the operation of carrier stations or finance branches within a large area, such as a multi-ZIP Code city, where two or more additional facilities are used to handle the mail.

CUSTOMER SERVICE SUPERVISOR

The customer service supervisor directly supervises employees engaged in the distribution, dispatch, collection, and delivery of mail in a delivery unit. Customer service supervisors report to postmasters.

POSTAL INSPECTOR

The postal inspector investigates criminal acts involving the use of the postal system. Inspectors are responsible for protecting postal consumers, the mail, postal funds and property, and conducting internal audits.

BUSINESS MAILER SUPPORT ANALYST

Business Mailer Support Analysts develop and implement quality-based postage payment systems that respond to customer, financial and operational requirements for domestic and international mail programs. Analysts also have an important role in the Mail Preparation Total Quality Management Program by leading or participating in certification reviews. The program provides mailers with a complete set of quality measures that, once installed, will enable them to produce high quality mail on a daily basis. Our goal is to give mailers easy access to the mail stream in ways that prevent errors either in preparation or in postage calculations.

PRICING AND CLASSIFICATION SERVICE CENTER (PCSC)

PCSC provides oversight, support, and guidance for local Post Offices engaged in acceptance and classification activities. PCSC issues higher level rulings on classification and acceptance decisions.

The address and telephone number of the PCSC is listed in DMM 608.8.4.

MANAGER, BUSINESS MAIL ENTRY

Manages activities related to mailing requirements, business mail acceptance, and revenue protection for a USPS district. Provides program and technical guidance on mail preparation and business mail entry operational procedures to all Post Offices within a district.

A complete listing of USPS Managers, Business Mail Entry, by District with coverage ZIP Codes, is in DMM 608.8.4.



DMM 608

SUPERVISOR, BUSINESS MAIL ENTRY UNIT (BMEU)

The supervisor at the business mail entry unit ensures that all bulk, presort, and automation mail is accepted properly. The supervisor ensures that employees observe proper acceptance procedures regarding classification, weighing, computing postage, and recording of BMEU transactions. The BMEU supervisor reports to the manager, business mail entry at a designated district.

DETACHED MAIL UNIT CLERKS

Detached mail unit clerks are Postal Service bulk mail clerks physically assigned to a mailer's facility. They are responsible for verification, acceptance, and dispatch of bulk mail directly from the mailer's plant.

MAILING REQUIREMENTS CLERKS

Mailing requirements clerks are a part of the business mail entry department. Typically located at major Post Offices throughout a district, they are available for customer applications for permits and nonprofit authorizations. They assist customers with questions about the preparation of bulk mailings. In some locations, free classes in bulk mail preparation are given by the mailing requirements clerks. Mailing requirements clerks can interpret regulations outlined in the *Domestic Mail Manual* and can answer questions concerning classification of mailpieces.



BMEU

Supervisors are key decision makers and influencers in the USPS acceptance process. Establish a good working relationship with your local BMEU supervisor!

CHECKLISTS**LETTER-SIZE MAILPIECE DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS CHECKLIST
FOR OCR (OPTICAL CHARACTER READER) "READABILITY"**

The ideal characteristics of an addressed letter-size mailpiece:

- mailpiece material**—envelopes: minimum, 16-pound paper; cards (such as reply cards, postcards): minimum, 75-pound offset paper.
- mailpiece color** (includes inserts showing through windows)—preferably white. If colored, reflectance of at least 50 percent in the red portion and 45 percent in the green portion of the optical spectrum.
- mailpiece dimensions**—minimum: 3 1/2" (3.500") high, 5" long, 0.007" thick; maximum: 6 1/8" (6.125") high, 11 1/2" (11.500") long, 1/4" (0.250") thick; aspect ratio: 1.3-2.5.
- address block location**—1/2" (0.500") vertical clear space (margin) from left and right edges of envelope; at least 5/8" (0.625") but no more than 2 3/4" (2.750") horizontal clear space from bottom edge of envelope.
- address format**—uniform left margin, all caps (all uppercase characters), two-letter state abbreviation, ZIP Code or ZIP+4.
- address font style**—uniform stroke widths, simple sans serif style.
- address character height**—8 to 18 points (80 to 200 mils).
- address character stroke width**—3/4 to 2 points (10 to 30 mils).
- address character spacing**—3/4 to 3 points (10 to 40 mils) between characters.
- address word spacing**—1 to 5 "em" spaces (1 to 5 full-size character spaces) between words.
- address line spacing**—2 points to 2 "em" spaces (28 mils to 2 full-size character heights) between lines.
- address skew**—maximum 5 degrees.
- mailpiece clear zones**—OCR read area free of return address with logos and other extraneous printing above delivery address line. POSTNET clear zone free of all printing and patterns except barcode. FIM clear zone free of all printing except FIM.
- window-edge clearance**—through full range of insert shift 1/8" (0.125").
- print contrast ratio**—40 percent minimum in the red and the green portions of the optical spectrum; 45 percent if glassine windows used.
- print quality**—sharp, uniform contrast; no voids, extraneous ink, or smudges.
- ink color**—black or dark color.
- background interference**—underlines, halftone backgrounds, nonaddress printing avoided.

FLAT-SIZE MAILPIECE DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS CHECKLIST FOR PREBARCODING

The characteristics of a prebarcoded flat-size mailpiece:

- Placement**—The barcode and address should be on the same side of the mailpiece. Either a ZIP+4 barcode or a delivery point barcode is acceptable.
- Reflectance**—Barcode and background reflectance for automation flat-size mail are the same as address block barcoding requirements for letter-size mail.
- Clearances**—No printing 1/8 inch to the left and right of the barcode. No printing 1/25 inch above and below the barcode. The barcode must be placed at least 1/8 inch from any edge of the mailpiece.
- Skew/Rotation**—Bar rotation must not exceed 10 degrees.
- OCR readability**—Address should be OCR readable, if possible.
- Tabs**—Tabbing is not required for flats.
- Polywrap**—Polywrap and shrinkwrap are not permitted unless their design is evaluated by the USPS and approved for use (see Quick Service Guide 301a).
- Flexibility/Rigidity**—Barcoded flat-size pieces must meet flexibility and rigidity requirements in DMM 301.3.0.

BARCODES

General checklist for POSTNET barcodes:

- barcode locations**—lower right: no more than 5/8" (0.625") from bottom edge of envelope and no more than 4 3/4" (4.750") from lower right edge of envelope; address block: above recipient line or below the city, state, and ZIP Code line of address.
- window-edge clearance**—through full range of insert shift, barcodes must maintain 1/8" (0.125") clear space on left and right sides and 1/25" (0.040") clear space above and below.
- bar size**—full bar: 0.125" (± 0.010 ") high; half bar: 0.050" (± 0.010 ") high; both bars: 0.020" (± 0.005 ") wide.
- bar pitch**—22 bars per inch (± 2 bars).
- bar tilt**—5 degrees maximum.
- print reflectance difference**—30 percent minimum in the red portion of the optical spectrum.
- ink color**—black or dark color.
- print quality**—sharp, uniform contrast; no voids, extraneous ink, or smudges.

FACING IDENTIFICATION MARKS

Checklist for proper FIM use:

- proper type**—FIM A for courtesy reply mail; FIM C for prebarcoded business reply mail.
- location and clear zone**—right most bar of FIM must be $2" \pm 1/8"$ ($\pm 0.125"$) from right edge and the leftmost bar no more than 3" from right edge of envelope. The tops of the FIM bar must be no lower than $1/8"$ ($0.125"$) from the top edge of each mailpiece and may extend over the top edge to the flap.
- Bar dimensions, pitch, and tilt**— $5/8"$ ($0.625"$) $\pm 1/8"$ ($\pm 0.125"$) long; $1/32"$ ($0.03125"$) $\pm 1/128"$ ($\pm 0.008"$) wide; no more than 5 degrees combined positional and rotational skew.
- print reflectance difference**—30 percent minimum in the red portion of the optical spectrum.
- ink color**—black or dark color.
- print quality**—sharp, uniform contrast; no voids, extraneous ink, or smudges.

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL CHECKLIST

Checklist for required BRM elements:

No Postage Necessary Endorsement

You must print the endorsement “NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES” in the upper right corner on the face of the BRM piece. The endorsement may not extend any farther than 1 3/4 inches (1.750 inches) from the right edge of the BRM piece. It is recommended that the endorsement be enclosed in a box. The top of the box should be 1/2 inch (0.500 inch) from the top edge of the BRM piece.

Horizontal Bars

You must print a series of horizontal bars immediately below the no postage necessary endorsement. The bars must be uniform in size, at least 1 inch long (not longer than 1-1/2 inches (1.500 inches)), 1/16 inch (0.0625 inch) to 3/16 inch (0.1875 inch) thick, and evenly spaced. The bars must not extend below the top of the delivery address line — the line directly above the city, state, and ZIP Code line. There must be at least a 1/2-inch (0.500 inch) clearance between the ZIP Code and the series of horizontal bars.

Facing Identification Mark

You must print a facing identification mark (FIM) in the top right portion of the BRM piece. Use FIM B for BRM printed without a barcode. Use FIM C for BRM printed with a barcode.

Business Reply Legend Box

You must print in capital letters (uppercase) “BUSINESS REPLY MAIL” above the complete delivery address. The letters must be at least 3/16 inch (0.1875 inch) high. Immediately below the business reply legend, you must print in capital letters “FIRST-CLASS MAIL,” “PERMIT NO.” followed by your permit number, and the issuing post office name (city and state). You must enclose those two lines in a rectangular box.

Postage Endorsement Line

You must print in capital letters the line “POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE” below the business reply legend box and above the complete delivery address.

○ Complete Delivery Address

You must print the complete delivery address — including the permit holder's name — directly onto the BRM piece or insert (for window envelopes). The bottom line of the address must be at least 5/8 inch (0.625 inch), but no more than 2-1/4 inch (2.250 inch), from the bottom edge of the BRM piece. A clear 1/2-inch margin is required on both the left and right edges of the BRM piece (excluding the horizontal bars).

○ POSTNET Barcode

A barcode is a series of full (tall) bars and half (short) bars printed at the bottom of a mailpiece. The barcode for BRM represents the ZIP+4 barcode. A camera-ready barcode positive may be obtained at no charge from the Postal Service (see Appendix I for the nearest postal business center).

A unique ZIP+4 code is issued to each BRM permit holder. Always make sure that the proper ZIP+4 code and barcode are printed on your BRM piece. If in doubt, contact your local mailing requirements office.

○ Permit Holder's Space

You may use the upper left corner of the address side for a return address, logo, attention line, distribution code, or form number.

○ Company Logo

You may use your company logo in the address block if the logo does not extend below the top of the delivery address line. If the BRM piece is barcoded, the logo may extend no lower than 5/8 inch from the bottom edge of the mailpiece. The logo must not interfere with any required business reply endorsements.

○ Attention or Information Lines

If you use an attention or information line in your complete delivery address, you must place that line above the delivery address line. Determine with your mailpiece design analyst how many production sample BRM pieces must be submitted for a test before the Postal Service can approve your QBRM application. Participation in QBRM depends on whether your BRM pieces meet automation requirements.

○ Size Standards

To be automation-compatible, BRM letter-size pieces must measure no less than 3 1/2 inches (3.500 inches) high and 5 inches long and no more than 6 1/8 inches (6.125 inches) high and 11 1/2 inches (11.500 inches) long. To qualify for the postcard rate, BRM cards must be at least 3 1/2 inches (3.500 inches) high by 5 inches long, but no larger than 4 1/4 inches (4.250 inches) high by 6 inches long. Larger card sizes are mailable; however, they are charged at the regular First-Class Mail letter rates. Pieces formed of a single piece of cardstock, larger than the card maximums of 4 1/4 x 6 inches, must be a minimum of 0.009 inch in thickness.

○ Ink/Paper Colors and Type Styles

Not all paper and ink colors and not all type styles are compatible with automated sorting equipment. Contact your mailpiece design analyst for guidance on paper colors, ink colors, and readable type styles. Both the FIM and the barcode must have at least a 30 percent print reflectance difference. The combined effects of positional and rotational skew must be limited to ± 5 degrees from the FIM or barcode to the top or bottom edge of your BRM piece.

QBRM REQUIREMENTS

Checklist for QBRM qualification:

BRM Account

You must have a valid business reply mail account with annual BRM and annual accounting fees paid.

Automation Standards

You must make sure that the physical characteristics of your BRM pieces meet all automation standards and these standards:

- Properly assigned ZIP+4 code for postcard, 1-ounce envelope, or 2-ounce envelope.
- Corresponding preprinted barcodes on the pieces.
- FIM C printed on the pieces.
- Envelope stock:
 - Minimum thickness: 0.007 inch.
 - Maximum thickness: 1/4 inch (0.250 inch).
- Card stock:
 - Minimum thickness: 0.007 inch.
 - Maximum thickness: 0.0095 inch.
 - Minimum basis weight: 75 pounds.

All other BRM requirements

Application

Submit Form 6805, QBRM Application, to the postmaster or business mail entry unit.

Stock Samples

Submit ten samples of paper or card stock for approval with your letter or application.

Authorization

Authorization is issued by copy of the approved application from the Post Office or business mail entry unit.

Sample of the Order

Submit a small sample of your BRM pieces for final review before acceptance into QBRM. That way, in case a format change must be made, you can make the change before printing a full supply of incorrect BRM pieces.

Post Office (MDA) Review

The Post Office reviews artwork and assists you if needed. Every effort should be made to create a perfect BRM piece before printing. Do not forget to read and verify the FIM and ZIP+4 barcode.