

## 243 Rates and Eligibility

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### 1.0 Rates and Fees for Standard Mail

#### 1.1 Rate Application

Postage is based on the rate that applies to the weight (postage) increment of each addressed piece.

#### 1.2 Standard Mail Rate Application

Standard Mail rates are based on the weight of the pieces and are applied differently to pieces weighing less than or equal to 3.3 ounces (0.2063 pound) and those weighing more, as follows:

- a. The appropriate minimum per piece rate applies to any Standard Mail piece that weighs 3.3 ounces or less.
- b. A rate determined by adding the appropriate fixed per piece charge and the corresponding variable per pound charge (based on the weight of the piece) applies to any Standard Mail piece that weighs more than 3.3 ounces.

#### 1.3 Regular Standard Mail—ECR and Automation Rates

	Entry Discount	Enhanced Carrier Route (ECR) <sup>1</sup>			Automation			
		Saturation	High Density	Basic	5-Digit	3-Digit	AADC	Mixed AADC
Letters weighing 3.3 oz. or less  per piece rate	None	\$0.177	\$0.186	\$0.226	\$0.218	\$0.233	\$0.238	\$0.252
	DBMC	0.144	0.153	0.193	0.185	0.200	0.205	0.219
	DSCF	0.135	0.144	0.184	0.176	0.191	0.196	---
	DDU	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
more than 3.3 oz. <sup>2</sup>  per pound rate	None	0.621	0.621	0.621	0.739	0.739	0.739	0.739
	DBMC	0.462	0.462	0.462	0.580	0.580	0.580	0.580
	DSCF	0.418	0.418	0.418	0.536	0.536	0.536	---
	DDU	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
+ per piece rate		+ 0.049 <sup>3</sup>	+ 0.058 <sup>3</sup>	+ 0.098 <sup>3</sup>	+ 0.069 <sup>3</sup>	+ 0.084 <sup>3</sup>	+ 0.089 <sup>3</sup>	+ 0.103 <sup>3</sup>

1. ECR letters that are not automation-compatible and barcoded (201.3.0) are mailable at the flat-size rates (243.6.4 or 243.6.5). Mailers may not pay ECR flat rates and claim the DDU discount for letter-size pieces.
2. For pieces weighing more than 3.3 ounces, each piece is subject to both a per piece rate and a per pound rate. Multiply the number of pieces in the mailing by per piece rate. Multiply the number of pounds of the mailing by per pound rate. Add both totals.
3. Per piece rate for ECR letters and automation letters that weigh more than 3.3 ounces but less than (or equal to) 3.5 ounces includes a discount that equals the applicable flat-size rate (3.3 ounces or less) minus the applicable letter piece rate (3.3 ounces or less).



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### 1.4 Regular Standard Mail—Nonautomation Rates

	Entry Discount	Machinable		Nonmachinable <sup>1</sup>			
		AADC	Mixed AADC	5-Digit	3-Digit	ADC	Mixed ADC
Letters weighing 3.3 oz. or less per piece rate	None	\$0.246	\$0.255	\$0.328	\$0.411	\$0.440	\$0.520
	DBMC	0.213	0.222	0.295	0.378	0.407	0.487
	DSCF	0.204	---	0.286	0.369	0.398	---
	DDU	---	---	---	---	---	---

1. For pieces over 3.3 ounces, see Standard Mail Not Flat-Machinable rates.

### 1.5 Nonprofit Standard Mail—ECR and Automation Rates

	Entry Discount	Enhanced Carrier Route (ECR) <sup>1</sup>			Automation			
		Saturation	High Density	Basic	5-Digit	3-Digit	AADC	Mixed AADC
Letters weighing 3.3 oz. or less per piece rate	None	\$0.108	\$0.117	\$0.157	\$0.127	\$0.142	\$0.147	\$0.161
	DBMC	0.075	0.084	0.124	0.094	0.109	0.114	0.128
	DSCF	0.066	0.075	0.115	0.085	0.100	0.105	---
	DDU	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
more than 3.3 oz. <sup>2</sup> per pound rate	None	0.432	0.432	0.432	0.622	0.622	0.622	0.622
	DBMC	0.273	0.273	0.273	0.463	0.463	0.463	0.463
	DSCF	0.229	0.229	0.229	0.419	0.419	0.419	---
	DDU	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
+		+	+	+	+	+	+	
per piece rate		0.019 <sup>3</sup>	0.028 <sup>3</sup>	0.068 <sup>3</sup>	0.001 <sup>3</sup>	0.016 <sup>3</sup>	0.021 <sup>3</sup>	0.035 <sup>3</sup>

1. ECR letters that are not automation-compatible and barcoded (201.3.0) are mailable at the flat-size rates (243.6.4 or 243.6.5). Mailers may not pay ECR flat rates and claim the DDU discount for letter-size pieces.

2. For pieces weighing more than 3.3 ounces, each piece is subject to both a per piece rate and a per pound rate. Multiply the number of pieces in the mailing by per piece rate. Multiply the number of pounds of the mailing by per pound rate. Add both totals.

3. Per piece rate for ECR letters and automation letters that weigh more than 3.3 ounces but less than (or equal to) 3.5 ounces includes a discount that equals the applicable flat-size rate (3.3 ounces or less) minus the applicable letter piece rate (3.3 ounces or less).

### 1.6 Nonprofit Standard Mail—Nonautomation Rates

	Entry Discount	Machinable		Nonmachinable <sup>1</sup>			
		AADC	Mixed AADC	5-Digit	3-Digit	ADC	Mixed ADC
Letters weighing 3.3 oz. or less per piece rate	None	\$0.155	\$0.164	\$0.237	\$0.320	\$0.349	\$0.429
	DBMC	0.122	0.131	0.204	0.287	0.316	0.396
	DSCF	0.113	---	0.195	0.278	0.307	---
	DDU	---	---	---	---	---	---

1. For pieces over 3.3 ounces, see Standard Mail Not Flat-Machinable rates.

**1.7 Fees****1.7.1 Presort Mailing Fee**

Mailing fee, per 12-month period: \$175.00.

**1.7.2 Weighted Fee**

For return of pieces bearing the ancillary service markings “Address Service Requested” and “Forwarding Service Requested.”

**WEIGHTED FEE**

<b>Single Piece Weight Not Over (ounces)</b>	<b>Weighted Fee per Piece<sup>1</sup></b>
Card Rate	\$0.65
1	1.02
2	1.44
3	1.86
3.5	2.28

1. Weighted fee equals single-piece First-Class Mail or Priority Mail rate (plus the nonmachinable surcharge, if applicable) multiplied by 2.472.

**1.8 Computing Postage for Standard Mail****1.8.1 Weight**

To compute the total weight of the addressed pieces in a mailing or mailing segment for:

- a. Identical-weight pieces, multiply the computed average weight of a single piece by the corresponding number of pieces; do not round the product.
- b. Nonidentical-weight pieces, add the actual weight of the individual pieces or weigh the entire mailing in bulk; do not round either result.

**1.8.2 Determining Single-Piece Weight**

To determine single-piece weight in any mailing of nonidentical-weight pieces, weigh each piece individually. To determine single-piece weight in a mailing of identical-weight pieces, weigh a sample group of at least 10 randomly selected pieces and divide the total sample weight by the number of pieces in the sample. Express all single-piece weights in decimal pounds rounded off to four decimal places.

**1.8.3 Net Postage**

Postage is computed at the applicable rates on the entire mailing to be mailed at one time. The net postage rate that must be paid is either the applicable minimum per piece rate or the piece/pound rate, as reduced by any discounts for which the piece is eligible, and/or as increased by any surcharge to which the piece is subject. The net postage rate is commonly designated by the name of the primary rate category or discount (e.g., Enhanced Carrier Route rate, automation letter rate, automation flat rate, Presorted rate).



### 1.8.4 Per Piece and Per Pound Charges

The per piece charge is computed based on the total number of addressed pieces for each rate category claimed. The minimum rate may apply to each piece as detailed in [1.2, Standard Mail Rate Application](#). Otherwise, the per piece charge must be added to the per pound charge to determine total postage. Where applicable, the per pound charge is computed based on the total weight of the addressed pieces for each rate category claimed, and is added to the per piece charge to determine total postage. For example, a quantity of pieces weighing 100.25 pounds is charged 100.25 times the applicable rate per pound, based on the rate claimed, plus one unit of the applicable per piece charge for each addressed piece.

### 1.8.5 Computing Affixed Postage

To compute postage to be affixed to each piece, multiply the weight of the piece (in pounds) by the applicable rate per pound; add the applicable per piece charge and any surcharge; and round the sum up to the next tenth of a cent. The applicable minimum per piece charge must be affixed if it is more than the total computed per piece postage.

### 1.8.6 Computing Affixed Postage—Heavy Letters

To compute postage to be affixed to each piece, multiply the weight of the piece (in pounds) by the applicable rate per pound; add the applicable per piece charge, subtract the heavy letter discount (see [1.8.8](#) through [1.8.9](#)); and round the sum up to the next tenth of a cent.

### 1.8.7 Permit Imprint

In any permit imprint mailing:

- a. For each rate or rate category, multiply the number of addressed pieces by the corresponding rate per piece and (if applicable) multiply the *unrounded* total weight of the pieces by the corresponding rate per pound; round off each product to four decimal places.
- b. Add the per piece and per pound charges and round off the total postage to the nearest whole cent.

### 1.8.8 Discount for Heavy Automation Letters

Automation letters that weigh more than 3.3 ounces but not more than 3.5 ounces are charged postage equal to the automation piece/pound rate for that piece and receive a discount equal to the corresponding automation flat-size piece rate (3.3 ounces or less) minus the corresponding automation letter-size piece rate (3.3 ounces or less). If a destination entry rate is claimed, the discount is calculated using the corresponding rates.

### 1.8.9 Discount for Heavy ECR Letters

Pieces that otherwise qualify for the high density or saturation letter rate and weigh more than 3.3 ounces but not more than 3.5 ounces pay postage equal to the piece/pound rate and receive a discount equal to the flat-size piece rate (3.3 ounces or less) minus the letter-size piece rate (3.3 ounces or less). If a destination entry rate is claimed, the discount is calculated using the corresponding rates.

## 2.0 Content Standards for Standard Mail Letters

### 2.1 Definition and Weight

Standard Mail consists of mailable matter that is neither mailed or required to be mailed as First-Class Mail nor entered as Periodicals (unless permitted or required by standard) and that weighs less than 16 ounces. Standard Mail includes matter formerly classified as Standard Mail (A) and third-class mail.

### 2.2 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.

### 2.3 Bills and Statements of Account

Mail containing bills or statements of account as defined in [233.2.2](#) may not be entered as Standard Mail except under the conditions described in [2.5.2](#).

### 2.4 Handwritten and Typewritten Matter

Mail containing handwritten or typewritten matter may not be entered as Standard Mail except under the conditions described in [2.6](#).

### 2.5 Attachments and Enclosures

#### 2.5.1 Invoice

An invoice, whether it also serves as a bill, may be placed either inside a Standard Mail piece or in an envelope marked "Invoice Enclosed" and attached to the outside of the piece if the invoice relates solely to the matter with which it is mailed. The invoice may show this information:

- a. Names and addresses of the sender and addressee.
- b. Names and quantities of the articles enclosed, descriptions of each (e.g., price, tax, style, stock number, size, and quality, and, if defective, nature of defects).
- c. Order or file number, date of order, date and manner of shipment, shipping weight, postage paid, and initials or name of packer or checker.

#### 2.5.2 Incidental First-Class Attachments and Enclosures

Incidental First-Class matter may be enclosed in or attached to Standard Mail merchandise (including books but excluding merchandise samples) without payment of First-Class postage. Incidental First-Class matter may not be enclosed in or attached to matter mailed as Customized MarketMail under [705.1.0](#). An incidental First-Class attachment or enclosure must be matter that, if mailed separately, would require First-Class postage, is closely associated with but secondary to the host piece, and is prepared not to encumber postal processing. An incidental First-Class attachment or enclosure may be a bill for the product or publication, a statement of account for past products or publications, or a personal message or greeting included with a product, publication, or parcel. Postage at the



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Standard Mail or Package Services rate for the host piece is based on the combined weight of the host piece and the incidental First-Class attachment or enclosure.

#### **2.5.3 Nonincidental First-Class Enclosures**

Letters or other pieces of nonincidental First-Class Mail, subject to postage at First-Class Mail rates, may be enclosed with Standard Mail pieces (except matter mailed as Customized MarketMail under [705.1.0](#)). Postage for the First-Class enclosure must be placed on the outside of the piece. It may be affixed separately or added to the postage for the host piece. The endorsement "First-Class Mail Enclosed" must be placed on the piece, below the postage and above the address.

#### **2.5.4 Nonincidental First-Class Attachments**

Letters or other pieces of nonincidental First-Class Mail may be placed in an envelope and securely attached to the address side of a Standard Mail piece (except matter mailed as Customized MarketMail under [705.1.0](#)), or of the principal piece, as applicable. Combination envelopes or containers with separate parts for the two classes of mail may be used. The names and addresses of the sender and addressee must be placed on both the principal piece and the attachment. Alternatively, the sender's name and address must be placed on one part and the addressee's name and address on the other. If the piece is a combination container with inseparable parts or compartments, the names and addresses may appear on only one part. The applicable Standard Mail postage for the Standard Mail matter must be prepaid and placed in the upper right corner of the address space. Postage at the applicable First-Class rate must be paid for and affixed to the First-Class attachment, unless other payment methods are permitted by standard.

#### **2.5.5 Attachment of Other Standard Mail Matter**

Standard Mail pieces may bear an attachment that is eligible as Standard Mail matter if these additional conditions are met:

- a. The piece bearing the attachment is claimed as Customized MarketMail (CMM) under [705.1.0](#) or as Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail under [6.0](#).
- b. The face of the attachment may bear only the rate markings and endorsements permitted for the rate claimed for the host piece.
- c. At the time of mailing, the piece shows only one complete delivery address. If the attachment is a reply card, the address for returning the piece is not visible.
- d. Enhanced Carrier Route host pieces are larger than 6 by 11 inches. CMM host pieces are any size permitted under [705.1.1.3, Physical Standards](#).
- e. The attachment is not larger than the host piece and does not extend beyond the host piece. An attachment affixed to a CMM piece may not be greater than 1/4 inch thick at its thickest point.
- f. Each piece in the mailing bears the attachment, and the attachment is of identical size, weight, and positioning on the host piece. Different wording or designs may be used.
- g. The attachment does not interfere with processing or delivery. Folded or multipage attachments must be secured to prevent opening during handling.

## 2.6 Written Additions

Markings that have the character of personal correspondence require, with certain exceptions, additional postage at the First-Class rates. The following written additions and enclosures do not require additional First-Class postage:

- a. The sender's and the addressee's names, occupations, and addresses, preceded by "From" or "To," and directions for handling.
- b. Marks, numbers, names, or letters describing the contents.
- c. Words or phrases such as "Do Not Open Until Christmas" and "Happy Birthday, Mother."
- d. Instructions and directions for the use of the item mailed.
- e. A manuscript dedication or inscription not having the nature of personal correspondence.
- f. Marks to call attention to words or passages in the text.
- g. Corrections of typographical errors in printed matter.
- h. Manuscripts accompanying related proof sheets and corrections of proof sheets including corrections of typographical and other errors, changes in the text, insertions of new text, marginal instructions to the printer, and corrective rewrites of parts.
- i. Handstamped imprints, unless the added material is in itself personal or converts the original matter to a personal communication.
- j. Matter mailable separately as Standard Mail printed on the wrapper, envelope, tag, or label.

## 3.0 Basic Standards for Standard Mail Letters

### 3.1 Description of Service

#### 3.1.1 Service Objectives

Standard Mail may receive deferred handling. Service objectives for delivery are 2 to 9 days; however, delivery time is not guaranteed.

#### 3.1.2 Minimum Quantity

Standard Mail provides economical rates for mailings of 200 or more pieces or 50 or more pounds of mail.

### 3.2 Defining Characteristics

#### 3.2.1 Mailpiece Weight

All Standard Mail pieces must weigh less than 16 ounces. The following weight limits also apply to pieces mailed at Standard Mail letter rates:

- a. Pieces mailed at machinable and nonmachinable letter rates may weigh up to 3.3 ounces. Letter-size pieces weighing more than 3.3 ounces and prepared as nonmachinable letters are mailable at Not Flat-Machinable rates (see [443](#)) and must be marked "Not Flat-Machinable" or "NFM" according to [402.2.0](#), unless they are barcoded and eligible to be mailed as automation flats under [301.3.0](#).



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- b. Pieces mailed at automation letter rates or Enhanced Carrier Route rates may weigh up to 3.5 ounces.

#### **3.2.2 Preparation Requirements**

Standard Mail is subject to specific volume, marking, and preparation requirements.

#### **3.2.3 Inspection of Contents**

Standard Mail is not sealed against postal inspection.

#### **3.2.4 Forwarding Service**

The price of Standard Mail typically does not include forwarding service. Forwarding service is available under [507.1.5](#).

#### **3.2.5 Return Service**

The price of Standard Mail does not include return service. Return service is available under [507.1.5](#) for an additional fee.

#### **3.2.6 Extra Services**

Extra services available with Standard Mail are insured mail service (bulk insurance only), certificate of mailing service (bulk certificate of mailing only), return receipt for merchandise service, and Delivery Confirmation service (parcels only). See information regarding extra services in [503](#).

#### **3.2.7 Periodicals**

Authorized Periodicals may not be entered as Standard Mail unless permitted by standard.

#### **3.2.8 Identical Pieces**

The contents of printed matter in a Standard Mail mailing must be identical to a piece sent to at least one other addressee. Standard Mail may include the addressee's name and address but may not transmit personal information except as permitted under [2.2](#).

### **3.3 Additional Basic Standards for Standard Mail**

Each Standard Mail mailing is subject to these general standards:

- a. All pieces in a mailing must be of the same processing category.
- b. Each mailing must contain at least 200 pieces or 50 pounds of pieces. See [3.6](#), [Residual Volume Requirement](#), for volume requirement eligibility unique to Presorted Standard rate mailings. Other volume standards also can apply, based on the rate claimed.
- c. All pieces in an automation mailing must be eligible for an automation rate.
- d. All pieces in a mailing must be sorted together and marked under the standards for the rate claimed.
- e. Each piece must bear the addressee's name and delivery address, including the correct ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code (see [3.8.1](#)), unless an alternative addressing format is used subject to [602.3.0](#). Detached address labels may be used subject to [602.4.0](#).
- f. Postage must be paid under [244.1.0](#) through [244.3.0](#) with precanceled stamps, meter stamps, or permit imprint.





- g. A postage statement, completed and signed by the mailer, using the correct USPS form or an approved facsimile, must be submitted with each mailing. In addition, mailings must be documented under [244.4.2, Basic Documentation Standards](#), and the standards for the rate claimed.
- h. Each piece must meet the standards for any other rate or discount claimed.
- i. Any POSTNET barcode on a mailpiece must be correct for the delivery address and meet the standards in [202.5.0, Barcode Placement](#), [708.3.0, Coding Accuracy Support System \(CASS\)](#), and [708.4.0, Standards for POSTNET and Intelligent Mail Barcodes](#).
- j. Mailings must be deposited at a business mail entry unit of the post office where the postage permit or license is held and the annual mailing fee paid, unless deposit elsewhere is permitted by standard.

### 3.4 Presort Mailing Fees

An annual mailing fee must be paid once each 12-month period at each post office of mailing. A mailer paying this fee may enter clients' mail as well as the mailer's own. The mailer whose permit imprint appears on pieces in a mailing paid with a permit imprint must show that permit number on the postage statement and must pay the annual mailing fee for that permit; this fee is in addition to the one-time fee for an application to use permit imprints. The fee may be paid in advance only for the next 12 months and only during the last 60 days of the current service period. The fee charged is that which is in effect on the date of payment.

### 3.5 Merging Similar Standard Mailings

Mailings are subject to the general definitions and conditions in [245.1.0, General Information for Mail Preparation](#). Generally, mailers may merge similar Standard Mail matter into a single mailing. Differences in text, address labels, and address lists or list key numbers do not prohibit the mailer from merging and sorting pieces together. Pieces with different methods of postage payment may be combined in the same mailing only if authorized by Business Mailer Support (BMS). Pieces of nonidentical weight, if merged in the same mailing, must bear the correct postage when mailed, unless otherwise authorized by BMS.

### 3.6 Residual Volume Requirement

Pieces in an Enhanced Carrier Route rate mailing that has separately met a 200-piece or 50-pound minimum quantity requirement may be counted toward the minimum quantity requirement for a Presorted rate mailing, provided that the Enhanced Carrier Route rate mailing and the Presorted rate mailing are part of the same mailing job. Likewise, pieces in an automation rate mailing that has separately met a 200-piece or 50-pound minimum quantity requirement may be counted toward the minimum quantity requirement for a Presorted rate mailing, provided that the automation rate mailing and the Presorted mailing are part of the same mailing job. Pieces mailed at Presorted Standard Mail rates must not be counted toward the minimum volume requirements for an Enhanced Carrier Route rate or an automation rate mailing.



### 3.7 Residual Mail Subject to First-Class or Priority Mail Rates

Pieces prepared as Standard Mail (i.e., that bear Standard Mail rate markings, ACS codes, etc.) that do not qualify for Enhanced Carrier Route, automation, or Presorted Standard Mail rates are subject to the single-piece First-Class or Priority Mail rates as applicable for the weight of the mailpiece. Metered pieces weighing over 13 ounces but less than 16 ounces that do not qualify for Standard Mail rates and any pieces that do not qualify for Standard Mail rates for which First-Class or Priority Mail service is desired must be re-enveloped or otherwise prepared so that they do not bear Standard Mail markings, endorsements, and ACS codes and must bear the proper First-Class Mail or Priority Mail rate markings and ACS codes. Mailers who have pieces (other than metered pieces weighing over 13 ounces but less than 16 ounces) that do not qualify for Standard Mail rates but that are prepared as Standard Mail and who do not desire to receive First-Class Mail or Priority Mail service for those pieces may enter their mailpieces “as is” (i.e., bearing the Standard Mail markings and endorsements), provided the requirements in [244.5.1](#), [Residual Standard Mail Subject to First-Class Rates](#), and [244.5.2](#), [Residual Standard Mail Subject to Priority Mail Rates](#), are met.

### 3.8 ZIP Code Accuracy

#### 3.8.1 Basic Standards

The ZIP Code accuracy standard is a means of ensuring that the 5-digit ZIP Code in the delivery address correctly matches the delivery address information. For the purposes of this standard, *address* means a specific address associated with a specific 5-digit ZIP Code. Addresses used on pieces claiming certain rates under [3.8.1d](#) that are subject to the ZIP Code accuracy standard must meet these requirements:

- a. Each address and associated 5-digit ZIP Code used on the mailpieces in a mailing must be verified and corrected within 12 months before the mailing date with one of the USPS-approved methods in [3.8.2](#).
- b. Each individual address in the mailing is subject to the ZIP Code accuracy standard.
- c. If an address used on a mailpiece in a mailing at one class of mail and rate is verified and corrected with an approved method, the same address may be used during the following 12 months to meet the ZIP Code accuracy standard required for mailing at any other class of mail and rate.
- d. Except for mail bearing a simplified address, addresses used on pieces claiming Standard Mail rates, regardless of any required surcharges, must meet the ZIP Code accuracy standard.

#### 3.8.2 USPS-Approved Methods

The following methods are authorized for meeting the ZIP Code accuracy standard:

- a. For computerized lists, Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS)-certified address matching software and current USPS City State Product, within a mailer's computer systems or through an authorized service provider.
- b. For manually maintained lists or small computerized lists, options include the following:

1. Surveys of addressees on mailer's address list inquiring about the accuracy of ZIP Code information.
2. Any mailing list service in [507.6.0](#).
3. An authorized service provider.
4. CASS-certified matching software.
5. USPS Web site [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com).

### 3.8.3 Mailer Certification

The mailer's signature on the postage statement certifies that the ZIP Code accuracy standard has been met for each address in the corresponding mailing presented to the USPS.

## 4.0 Rate Eligibility for Standard Mail

### 4.1 General Information

All Standard Mail rates are presorted rates (including all nonprofit rates). These rates apply to mailings meeting the basic standards in [2.0](#) through [4.0](#) and the corresponding standards for Presorted rates under [3.0](#) and [5.0](#), Enhanced Carrier Route rates under [6.0](#), automation rates under [7.0](#), or Customized MarketMail rates under [705.1.0](#). Except for Customized MarketMail pieces, destination entry discount rates are available under [246.2.0](#) through [246.5.0](#). Nonprofit rates may be used only by organizations authorized by the USPS. Not all processing categories qualify for every rate. Pieces are subject to either a single minimum per piece rate or a combined piece/pound rate, depending on the weight of the individual pieces in the mailing.

### 4.2 Minimum Per Piece Rates

The minimum per piece rates (the minimum postage that must be paid for each piece) apply as follows:

- a. Basic Requirement. Pieces mailed at Regular, Enhanced Carrier Route, Nonprofit, and Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route rates are subject to minimum per piece rates when they weigh no more than 3.3 ounces (0.2063 pound).
- b. In applying the minimum per piece rates, a mailpiece is categorized as either a letter or a nonletter, based on whether the piece meets the letter-size standard in [201.1.1.1](#), *Dimensional Standards for Letters*, without regard to placement of the address on the piece, except under these conditions:
  1. If the piece meets both the definition of a letter in [201.1.1.1](#) and the definition of an automation flat in [301.3.0](#), the piece may be prepared and entered at an automation flat rate.
  2. If the piece is prepared for automation letter rates, address placement is used to determine the length when applying the size standards and aspect ratio requirements to qualify for automation letter rates under [201.3.0](#), *Physical Standards for Automation Letters and Cards*. For this purpose, the length is considered to be the dimension parallel to the address.



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3. Pieces mailed as Customized *MarketMail* under [705.1.0](#) must pay the Regular or Nonprofit Standard Mail 5-digit nonentry rates for Not Flat-Machinable pieces and must not exceed 3.3 ounces.
- c. Individual Rates. There are separate minimum per piece rates for each subclass (Regular, Enhanced Carrier Route, Nonprofit, and Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route) and within each subclass for the type of mailing and the level of presort within each mailing.

### 4.3 Piece/Pound Rates

Pieces that exceed 3.3 ounces (0.2063 pound) are subject to a two-part piece/pound rate that includes a fixed charge per piece and a variable pound charge based on weight. Pieces exceeding 3.3 ounces may not be mailed as Customized MarketMail. There are separate per piece rates for each subclass (Regular, Enhanced Carrier Route, Nonprofit, and Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route) and within each subclass for the type of mailing and the level of presort within each mailing under [3.0](#) through [7.0](#). There are separate per pound rates for each subclass (Regular, Enhanced Carrier Route, Nonprofit, and Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route) under [3.0](#) through [7.0](#). Discounted per pound rates also may be claimed for destination entry mailings (destination bulk mail center (DBMC) and destination sectional center facility (DSCF)) under [246](#).

## 5.0 Additional Eligibility Standards for Nonautomation Standard Mail Letters

### 5.1 Basic Standards

All pieces in a Regular Standard Mail or Nonprofit Standard Mail nonautomation rate mailing must:

- a. Meet the basic standards for Standard Mail in [2.0](#) through [4.0](#) in *Rates and Eligibility*.
- b. Except as provided in [3.6](#), *Residual Volume Requirement*, be part of a single mailing of at least 200 addressed pieces or 50 pounds of pieces qualifying for nonautomation Standard Mail. Regular and Nonprofit mailings must meet separate minimum volumes.
- c. Bear a delivery address that includes the correct ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code and that meets these address quality standards:
  1. The ZIP Code accuracy standard in [3.8](#).
  2. If an alternative addressing format is used, the additional standards in [602.3.0](#).
- d. Be marked, sorted, and documented as specified in [245](#), *Mail Preparation*, or [705.8.0](#), *Preparing Pallets*.

### 5.2 Weight Standards for Machinable Pieces

Maximum weight limit for machinable nonautomation Standard mail is 3.3 ounces (0.2063 pound).

**5.3 Rate Application**

Nonautomation rates for Regular and Nonprofit Standard Mail apply to letters that meet the eligibility standards in [2.0, Content Standards for Standard Mail Letters](#), and the preparation standards in [245, Mail Preparation](#), or [705.8.0, Preparing Pallets](#).

**5.4 Machinable Rate Application**

Machinable letters are subject only to AADC and mixed AADC rates.

**5.4.1 AADC Rate**

The AADC rate applies to qualifying letter-size machinable pieces (see [201.1.0, Physical Standards for Machinable Letters and Cards](#)) placed in origin/entry 3-digit trays, to quantities of 150 or more pieces prepared in AADC trays for a single AADC, and to pieces placed in mixed AADC trays in lieu of overflow AADC trays.

**5.4.2 Mixed AADC Rate**

The mixed AADC rate applies to qualifying letter-size machinable pieces that the mailer prepares in mixed AADC trays, except for pieces placed in mixed AADC trays in lieu of overflow AADC trays (see [245.5.3.2](#)).

**5.5 Nonmachinable Rate Application**

Nonmachinable rates in [1.0](#) apply only to Standard Mail letter-size pieces (including card-size pieces) weighing 3.3 ounces or less that have one or more of the nonmachinable characteristics in [201.2.1](#). Except for Enhanced Carrier Route letter-size pieces, nonmachinable letter-size pieces weighing more than 3.3 ounces are subject to Not Flat-Machinable rates (see [443](#)), unless they are barcoded and eligible to be mailed as automation flats under [301.3.0](#). Nonmachinable Enhanced Carrier Route letter-size pieces over 3.3 ounces are subject to the Enhanced Carrier Route flats rates.

**5.5.1 5-Digit Rate**

The 5-digit rate applies to letter-size pieces subject to the nonmachinable rates (see [5.5](#)) prepared in quantities of 150 or more pieces for a 5-digit ZIP Code and presented in 5-digit trays under [245.5.0](#).

**5.5.2 3-Digit Rate**

The 3-digit rate applies to letter-size pieces subject to the nonmachinable rates (see [5.5](#)) prepared in quantities of 150 or more pieces for a 3-digit ZIP Code and presented in 3-digit trays under [245.5.0](#).

**5.5.3 ADC Rate**

The ADC rate applies to letter-size pieces subject to the nonmachinable rates (see [5.5](#)) placed in 3-digit origin/entry trays and to pieces prepared in quantities of 150 or more for an ADC and presented in ADC trays under [245.5.0](#).

**5.5.4 Mixed ADC Rate**

The mixed ADC rate applies to letter-size pieces that are subject to the nonmachinable rates and prepared in mixed ADC trays.



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## 6.0 Additional Eligibility Standards for Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail Letters

### 6.1 General Enhanced Carrier Route Standards

#### 6.1.1 Optional Preparation

Preparation to qualify for any Enhanced Carrier Route rate is optional and need not be performed for all carrier routes in a 5-digit area. An Enhanced Carrier Route mailing may include pieces at basic, high density, and saturation Enhanced Carrier Route rates.

#### 6.1.2 Basic Eligibility Standards

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

- a. Meet the basic standards for Standard Mail in [2.0](#) through [4.0](#) in *Rates and Eligibility*.
- b. Be part of a single mailing of at least 200 pieces or 50 pounds of pieces of Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail. ECR and Nonprofit ECR mailings must meet separate minimum volumes.
- c. Be sorted to carrier routes, marked, and documented under [245.6.0](#), *Preparing Enhanced Carrier Route Letters*, or [705.8.0](#), *Preparing Pallets*.
- d. Bear a delivery address that includes the correct ZIP Code, ZIP+4 code, or numeric equivalent to the delivery point barcode (DPBC) and that meets these address quality standards:
  1. The carrier route accuracy standard in [6.2](#).
  2. The address matching and coding standards in [7.4](#), *Address Standards for Barcoded Pieces*, and [708.3.0](#), *Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS)*.
  3. If an alternative addressing format is used, the additional standards in [602.3.0](#).
- e. Meet the applicable sequencing requirements in [6.3](#) through [6.5](#) and [245.6.8](#).
- f. Meet the applicable documentation and postage payment standards in [244](#), *Postage Payment and Documentation*, and [1.8](#), *Computing Postage for Standard Mail*.

#### 6.1.3 Maximum Weight for Enhanced Carrier Route Letters

Maximum weight for Standard Mail Enhanced Carrier Route pieces: 3.5 ounces (0.2188 pound) (see [201.3.13.4](#), *Heavy Letter Mail*, for pieces heavier than 3 ounces).

## 6.2 Carrier Route Accuracy

### 6.2.1 Basic Standards

The carrier route accuracy standard is a means of ensuring that the carrier route code correctly matches the delivery address information. For the purposes of this standard, *address* means a specific address associated with a specific carrier route code. Addresses used on pieces claiming certain rates under [6.2.2](#) that are subject to the carrier route accuracy standard must meet these requirements:

- a. Each address and associated carrier route code used on the mailpieces in a mailing must be updated within 90 days before the mailing date with one of the USPS-approved methods in [3.8.2](#).
- b. Each individual address in the mailing is subject to the carrier route accuracy standard.
- c. If the carrier route code (and accuracy) of an address used on a mailpiece in a carrier route mailing at one class of mail and rate is updated with an approved method, the same address may be used during the following 90 days to meet the carrier route accuracy standard required for mailing at any other class of mail and rate.

### 6.2.2 Mail Classes and Rates

Except as provided in [243.6.2.3](#), addresses used on pieces claiming all Enhanced Carrier Route rates for Standard Mail, regardless of any required surcharges, must meet the carrier route accuracy standard.

### 6.2.3 Exception

The carrier route accuracy standard does not apply to mail of any class bearing a simplified address format under [602.3.0](#), *Use of Alternative Addressing*.

### 6.2.4 USPS-Approved Methods

Carrier route coding must be performed using CASS-certified software and the current USPS Carrier Route Product or another Address Information System (AIS) product containing carrier route information subject to [509.1.0](#), *Address Information System Products*, and [708.3.0](#), *Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS)*.

### 6.2.5 Mailer Certification

The mailer's signature on the postage statement certifies that the carrier route accuracy standard has been met for each address in the corresponding mailing presented to the USPS.

## 6.3 Basic Rate Enhanced Carrier Route Standards

### 6.3.1 Sequencing

All pieces mailed at basic rates must be prepared in walk sequence or in line-of-travel (LOT) sequence according to LOT schemes prescribed by the USPS (see [245.6.8](#) through [245.6.9](#) in *Preparing Enhanced Carrier Route Letters*).



#### **6.3.2 Basic Rate Eligibility**

Basic rates apply to each piece sorted under [245.6.0](#) or [705.8.0](#) in a full carrier route tray, in a carrier route bundle of 10 or more pieces, or in groups of 10 or more pieces placed in a 5-digit carrier routes or a 3-digit carrier routes tray. Basic rates also apply under these conditions:

- a. Basic letter rates apply to each piece that is automation-compatible according to [201.3.0, \*Physical Standards for Automation Letters and Cards\*](#), and has an accurate delivery point barcode or Intelligent Mail barcode under [202.5.0, \*Barcode Placement\*](#), and [708.4.0, \*Standards for POSTNET and Intelligent Mail Barcodes\*](#).
- b. Pieces that are not automation-compatible or not barcoded are mailable at the basic rate for flat-size pieces.

### **6.4 High Density Enhanced Carrier Route Standards**

#### **6.4.1 Basic Eligibility Standards for High Density Rates**

High density rates apply to each piece that is automation-compatible according to [201.3.0](#), and has an accurate delivery point barcode or Intelligent Mail barcode matching the delivery address and meeting the standards in [202.5.0, \*Barcode Placement\*](#), and [708.4.0, \*Standards for POSTNET and Intelligent Mail Barcodes\*](#). High density rates also apply under these additional conditions: Mailpieces must be in a full carrier route tray or in a carrier route bundle of 10 or more pieces placed in a 5-digit carrier routes or 3-digit carrier routes tray.

- a. Pieces that are not automation-compatible or not barcoded are mailable at the high density rate for flat-size pieces.
- b. Pieces bearing a simplified address do not need to meet the standards in [201.3.0, \*Physical Standards for Automation Letters and Cards\*](#), and are not required to have a barcode to qualify for letter rates.

#### **6.4.2 High Density Rates for Letters**

All pieces mailed at high density rates must:

- a. Be prepared in walk sequence according to schemes prescribed by the USPS (see [245.6.8](#) through [245.6.9](#) in [245.6.8 through 245.6.9 in \*Preparing Enhanced Carrier Route Letters\*](#)).
- b. Meet the density requirement of at least 125 pieces for each carrier route. Multiple pieces per delivery address can count toward this density standard.

#### **6.4.3 High Density Discount for Heavy Letters**

Pieces that otherwise qualify for the high density letter rate and weigh more than 3.3 ounces but not more than 3.5 ounces pay postage equal to the piece/pound rate and receive a discount equal to the high density flat-size piece rate (3.3 ounces or less) minus the high density letter piece rate (3.3 ounces or less). If claiming a destination entry rate, the discount is calculated using the corresponding rates.



## 6.5 Saturation ECR Standards

### 6.5.1 Basic Eligibility Standards for Saturation Rates

Saturation rates apply to each piece that is automation-compatible according to [201.3.0](#), and has an accurate delivery point barcode or Intelligent Mail barcode matching the delivery address and meeting the standards in [202.5.0, Barcode Placement](#), and [708.4.0, Standards for POSTNET and Intelligent Mail Barcodes](#).

Saturation rates also apply under these additional conditions:

- a. Mailpieces must be in a full carrier route tray or in a carrier route bundle of 10 or more pieces placed in a 5-digit carrier routes or 3-digit carrier routes tray.
- b. Pieces that are not automation-compatible or not barcoded are mailable at the saturation rate for flat-size pieces.
- c. Pieces bearing a simplified address do not need to meet the standards in [201.3.0, Physical Standards for Automation Letters and Cards](#), and are not required to have a barcode to qualify for letter rates.

### 6.5.2 Saturation Rates for Letters

All pieces mailed at saturation rates must:

- a. Be prepared in walk sequence according to schemes prescribed by the USPS (see [245.6.8](#) through [245.6.9 in Preparing Enhanced Carrier Route Letters](#)).
- b. Meet the density requirement of at least 90% or more of the active residential addresses or 75% or more of the total number of active possible delivery addresses on each carrier route receiving this mail. Pieces bearing a simplified address must meet the coverage standards in [602.3.0, Use of Alternative Addressing](#). Multiple pieces per delivery address do not count toward this density standard.

### 6.5.3 Saturation Discount for Heavy Letters

Pieces that otherwise qualify for the saturation letter rate and weigh more than 3.3 ounces but not more than 3.5 ounces pay postage equal to the piece/pound rate and receive a discount equal to the saturation flat-size piece rate (3.3 ounces or less) minus the saturation letter piece rate (3.3 ounces or less). If claiming a destination entry rate, the discount is calculated using the corresponding rates.

## 7.0 Eligibility Standards for Automation Rate Standard Mail

### 7.1 Basic Eligibility Standards for Automation Rate Standard Mail

All pieces in a Regular Standard Mail or Nonprofit Standard Mail automation rate mailing must:

- a. Meet the basic standards for Standard Mail in [2.0](#) through [4.0 in Rates and Eligibility](#).
- b. Be part of a single mailing of at least 200 pieces or 50 pounds of pieces of automation rate Standard Mail (Regular and Nonprofit mailings must meet separate minimum volumes).



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- c. Be in the same processing category and meet the physical standards in [201.3.0, \*Physical Standards for Automation Letters and Cards\*](#).
- d. Bear a delivery address that includes the correct ZIP Code, ZIP+4 code, or numeric equivalent to the delivery point barcode (DPBC) and that meets these address quality standards:
  - 1. The address matching and coding standards in [7.4, \*Address Standards for Barcoded Pieces\*](#), and [708.3.0, \*Coding Accuracy Support System \(CASS\)\*](#).
  - 2. If an alternative addressing format is used, the additional standards in [602.3.0](#).
- e. Bear an accurate DPBC or Intelligent Mail barcode matching the delivery address and meeting the standards in [202.5.0, \*Barcode Placement\*](#), and [708.4.0, \*Standards for POSTNET and Intelligent Mail Barcodes\*](#). Mailers must apply the barcode either on the piece or on an insert showing through a window.
- f. Be marked and sorted according to [245.7.0, \*Preparing Automation Rate Letters\*](#).
- g. Meet the applicable documentation and postage payment standards in [1.8, \*Computing Postage for Standard Mail\*](#), and [244.1.0](#) through [244.3.0](#) in [244.3.0, \*Postage Payment and Documentation\*](#).

#### **7.2 Maximum Weight for Automation Letters**

Maximum weight limit for automation rate mail is 3.5 ounces (0.2188 pound). See [201.3.13.4, \*Heavy Letter Mail\*](#), for pieces heavier than 3 ounces.

#### **7.3 Rate Application for Automation Letters**

Automation rates apply to each piece that is sorted under [245.7.0, \*Preparing Automation Rate Letters\*](#), into the corresponding qualifying groups:

- a. Groups of 150 or more pieces in 5-digit/scheme trays qualify for the 5-digit rate. Preparation to qualify for that rate is optional. Pieces placed in full 3-digit/scheme trays under [245.7.5](#) in lieu of 5-digit/scheme overflow trays are eligible for 5-digit rates (see [245.7.5](#)).
- b. Groups of 150 or more pieces in 3-digit/scheme trays qualify for the 3-digit rate. Pieces placed in full AADC trays under [245.7.5](#) in lieu of 3-digit/scheme overflow trays are eligible for 3-digit rates (see [245.7.5](#)).
- c. Groups of fewer than 150 pieces in origin/entry 3-digit/scheme trays and groups of 150 or more pieces in AADC trays qualify for the AADC rate. Pieces placed in mixed AADC trays under [245.7.5](#) in lieu of AADC overflow trays also are eligible for AADC rates (see [245.7.5](#)).
- d. Pieces in mixed AADC trays qualify for the mixed AADC rate, except for pieces prepared under [7.3c](#).

## 7.4 Address Standards for Barcoded Pieces

### 7.4.1 Basic Address Standards for Barcodes

To qualify for automation rates, addresses must be sufficiently complete to enable matching to the current USPS ZIP+4 Product when used with current CASS-certified address matching software. Standardized address elements are not required. Any barcode as defined in [202.5.0, Barcode Placement](#), and [708.4.0, Standards for POSTNET and Intelligent Mail Barcodes](#), that appears on a mailpiece claimed at an automation rate must be the correct barcode for the corresponding delivery address on the piece.

### 7.4.2 Numeric ZIP+4

A numeric ZIP+4 code must consist of five digits, a hyphen, and four digits.

### 7.4.3 Numeric Delivery Point Barcode (DPBC)

The numeric equivalent is formed by adding three digits directly after the ZIP+4 code.

### 7.4.4 Address Elements

Addresses must include the correct street number, predirectional, street name, suffix, and postdirectional that are input to obtain a match with the current USPS ZIP+4 Product.

### 7.4.5 Firm Name

An address must include a firm name when necessary to obtain a match with the finest level of ZIP+4 code in the USPS ZIP+4 Product. If an address contains a firm name assigned a unique ZIP+4 code in the USPS ZIP+4 Product, the unique ZIP+4 code must be used. If the firm name is not one assigned a unique ZIP+4 code in the USPS ZIP+4 Product and the apartment/suite number is included in the address, the ZIP+4 code for the range in which the apartment/suite number appears must be used in that address. If the firm name does not correspond to a firm name that has a unique ZIP+4 code assigned in the USPS ZIP+4 Product and the apartment/suite number is not included in the address, the ZIP+4 code for the building must be used.

### 7.4.6 Secondary Designator

If a secondary address designator (e.g., an apartment number) is shown in the address, the mailpiece must show the appropriate ZIP+4 code representing the range for that secondary address as contained in the current USPS ZIP+4 Product. If a secondary address designator is required to obtain an exact match with the finest level of ZIP+4 code in the USPS ZIP+4 Product but the information is not available, the alternative ZIP+4 code or ZIP+4 or delivery point barcode for the building must be used.

### 7.4.7 Rural and Highway Contract Routes

If a rural route or highway contract route box number is included in the address, the mailpiece must show the appropriate ZIP+4 code representing the range for that box number as contained in the current USPS ZIP+4 Product. If a rural route or highway contract route box number is required to obtain a match with the finest level of ZIP+4 code but is not available, the alternative ZIP+4 code or ZIP+4 or delivery



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point barcode for the rural route or highway contract route must be used. If used, the rural route or highway contract route box number must be placed on the line immediately above the city/state/ZIP Code line.

### **7.4.8 Post Office Box**

A post office box address must contain a post office box number that can be exactly matched with the USPS ZIP+4 Product in effect.

### **7.5 Enclosed Reply Cards and Envelopes**

All letter-size reply cards and envelopes (business reply, courtesy reply, and meter reply mail) provided as enclosures in automation Regular or Nonprofit Standard Mail, and addressed for return to a domestic delivery address, must meet the standards in [201.3.0, \*Physical Standards for Automation Letters and Cards\*](#), for enclosed reply cards and envelopes. The mailer's signature on the postage statement certifies that this standard has been met when the corresponding mail is presented to the USPS.

### **7.6 Discount for Heavy Automation Letters**

Automation letters that weigh more than 3.3 ounces but not more than 3.5 ounces pay postage equal to the automation piece/pound rate and receive a discount equal to the automation nonletter piece rate (3.3 ounces or less) minus the automation letter piece rate (3.3 ounces or less). If claiming a destination entry rate, the discount is calculated using the corresponding rates.