



M800 All Automation Mail

M820 Flat-Size Mail

Summary M820 describes the preparation standards for flat-size automation rate First-Class Mail, Periodicals, Standard Mail, and Bound Printed Matter.

1.0 BASIC STANDARDS

Standards Flat-size Bound Printed Matter pieces claiming the barcode discount and flat-size automation rate First-Class Mail, Periodicals, and Standard Mail must be prepared under [M820](#) and the eligibility standards for the rate claimed. Package, sack, and tray preparation are subject to [M010](#), [M020](#), and [M030](#). Trays and sacks must bear the appropriate barcoded container labels under [M032](#).

Mailings All pieces in a mailing must meet the standards in [C820](#) and be sorted together to the finest extent required. First-Class Mail mailings may include pieces prepared at automation 5-digit, 3-digit, ADC, and mixed ADC rates. Periodicals mailings may include pieces prepared at automation 5-digit, 3-digit, and basic rates. Standard Mail mailings may include pieces prepared at automation 3/5 and basic rates. The definitions of a mailing and permissible combinations are in [M011](#). Bound Printed Matter mailings may include presorted pieces claiming the barcode discount.

Documentation A complete postage statement must accompany each mailing, supported by documentation produced by PAVE-certified (or, except for Periodicals, MAC-certified) software or standardized documentation under [P012](#). Mailers may use a single postage statement and a single documentation report for all rate levels in a single mailing. Documentation of postage is not required if the correct rate is affixed to each piece or if each piece is of identical weight and the pieces are separated by rate when presented for acceptance. Combined mailings of Periodicals publications must also be documented under [M210](#) and [M220](#).

Marking Except for Periodicals (which require no markings), all automation rate pieces must be marked under [M012](#). Pieces claimed at an automation rate must bear the appropriate class marking and, except as provided in [M012](#), "AUTO." Pieces not claimed at an automation rate must not bear "AUTO" unless single-piece rate postage is affixed or a corrective single-piece rate marking is applied under [P100](#), [P600](#), or [P700](#).

Package Preparation [\[1-9-03\]](#) Except for First-Class Mail prepared under [3.0](#), all pieces must be prepared in packages and meet the following requirements:

- a. Pieces that meet both the size dimensions and the turning ability and deflection standards under [C820.2.0](#) must be prepared in separate packages from pieces that do not meet all AFSM 100 dimensions and the turning ability and deflection standards (but that do meet the dimensions and other criteria for FSM 1000 processing under [C820.3.0](#)).
- b. Firm packages must not be included in Periodicals mailings prepared under [M820](#).
- c. Each AFSM 100 package and each FSM 1000 package must separately meet the package size minimum number of pieces in [M820.2.1](#), [4.1](#), or [5.1](#). When the total number of AFSM 100 or FSM 1000 pieces for a specific presort destination (e.g., the 5-digit ZIP Code 12345) meets or exceeds the applicable minimum package size, the pieces for that presort destination



must be prepared into a package or packages labeled to that presort destination under the standards for the rate claimed.

- d. The physical size of each package for each specific presort destination may contain the exact package minimum, more pieces than the package minimum, or fewer pieces than the package minimum, depending on the size of the pieces in the mailing or the total quantity of the pieces to that destination. Rate eligibility is not affected when a physical package contains fewer pieces than the minimum package size for the above reasons, provided the total number of AFSM 100 pieces physically packaged for that presort destination or the total number of FSM 1000 pieces physically packaged for that presort destination meets or exceeds the rate eligibility package minimum under [E140](#), [E240](#), or [E640](#).

**5-Digit Scheme
Package Preparation**

1.6

[1-9-03] Pieces meeting the AFSM 100 compatibility criteria in [C820.2.0](#) may be prepared in 5-digit scheme packages for those 5-digit ZIP Code combinations identified in [L007](#). These packages must meet the additional standards in [M011.1.3j](#).

Sack Preparation

1.7

Mailers may combine AFSM 100 packages and FSM 1000 packages in the same tray (First-Class Mail) or in the same sack (Standard Mail, Bound Printed Matter, and Periodicals).

**Exception—
Automation and
Nonautomation
Pieces on Pallets**

1.8

[8-8-02] When the physical dimensions of mailpieces in a Periodicals or Standard Mail mailing meet the definition of both a letter-size piece under [C050](#) and an automation flat-size piece under [C820](#), the entire job may be prepared, merged, and palletized under [M900](#) if the applicable standards are met. The nonautomation portion is all paid at the appropriate nonautomation rates for Periodicals and at nonautomation nonletter rates for Standard Mail. Mailing jobs prepared entirely in sacks and claiming this exception must be co-packaged under [M950](#). As an alternative to [M900](#), if a portion of the job is prepared as palletized automation flats, the nonautomation portion may be prepared as follows:

- a. For Periodicals mail, as palletized flats at Presorted rates and at carrier route rates. The nonautomation rate pieces that cannot be placed on ADC or finer level pallets may be prepared as flats in sacks and paid at the appropriate nonautomation rates.
- b. For Standard Mail, as palletized flats at Presorted nonletter rates and at Enhanced Carrier Route nonletter rates. The nonautomation rate pieces that cannot be placed on BMC or finer level pallets may be prepared as flats in sacks and paid at the appropriate nonautomation nonletter rates. As provided in [E620](#), the following minimum volumes for Standard Mail must be met for this alternative to [M900](#):
 - (1) For the portion claimed at automation nonletter rates, a separate 200-piece minimum must be met. For any portion of the job claimed at Presorted rates, no separate minimum is required.
 - (2) For any portion claimed at Enhanced Carrier Route nonletter rates, a separate 200-piece minimum must be met.

**Exception—
Periodicals
Preparation**

1.9

[1-9-03] As a general exception to [4.1b](#), [4.1c](#), and [4.2b](#) through [4.2d](#), Periodicals may be prepared in 5-digit scheme, 5-digit, and 3-digit packages containing fewer than six pieces, and in sacks containing as few as one such package, when the publisher determines that such preparation improves service. These low-volume packages may be placed on 5-digit scheme, 5-digit, 3-digit, and SCF pallets under [M041](#) and [M045](#), or on merged 5-digit scheme, 5-digit scheme, merged 5-digit, 5-digit, 3-digit, and SCF pallets under [M041](#) and either



**Co-Traying,
Co-Sacking, and
Co-Packaging With
Presorted Rate Mail**
1.10

M920, M930, or M940. They may also be placed in merged 5-digit scheme, merged 5-digit, 5-digit, 5-digit scheme, 3-digit, and SCF sacks prepared under M920. Low-volume sacks may also consist of a firm package(s) when optional 5-digit scheme sortation is performed with mailings prepared in sacks.

The following standards apply:

- a. First-Class Mail: Except for mailings prepared under the tray-based preparation option in 3.0, if the mailing job contains an automation rate mailing and a Presorted rate mailing and both mailings are reported on the same postage statement, then the mailing job must be prepared under the co-traying standards in M910. Automation rate pieces may be co-packaged with Presorted rate pieces under the standards in M950.
- b. [8-8-02] Periodicals (except as provided in 1.8):
 - (1) If the mailing job contains a carrier route mailing, an automation rate mailing, and a Presorted rate mailing, then it must be prepared under one of the following options: 1) the carrier route mailing must be prepared under E230 and M220 and the automation rate and Presorted rate mailings must be prepared under M910; or 2) all three mailings in the mailing job must be prepared under M920.
 - (2) If the mailing job contains an automation rate mailing and a Presorted rate mailing, then it must be prepared under the co-sacking standards in M910. Automation rate pieces may be co-packaged with Presorted rate pieces under the standards in M950.
 - (3) If the mailing job contains a carrier route mailing and an automation rate mailing, then it must be separately sacked under M220 and M820 or prepared using the merged sack option under M920.
- c. [8-8-02] Standard Mail (except as provided in 1.8):
 - (1) If the mailing job contains a carrier route mailing, an automation rate mailing, and a Presorted rate mailing, then it must be prepared under one of the following options: 1) the carrier route mailing must be prepared under E630 and M620 and the automation rate and Presorted rate mailings must be prepared under M910; or 2) all three mailings in the mailing job must be prepared under M920.
 - (2) If the mailing job contains only an automation rate mailing and a Presorted rate mailing and both mailings are reported on the same postage statement, then the mailing job must be prepared under the co-sacking standards in M910. Automation rate pieces may be co-packaged with Presorted rate pieces under the standards in M950.
 - (3) If the mailing job contains only a carrier route mailing and an automation rate mailing, then it must be separately sacked under M620 and M820 or prepared using the merged sack option under M920.
- d. [4-3-03] Bound Printed Matter:
 - (1) If the mailing job contains a carrier route mailing, a Presorted rate mailing qualifying for and claiming the barcoded discount, and a Presorted rate mailing, the job must be prepared as follows: (a) Prior to September 1, 2003, the carrier route mailing must be prepared under M723, the Presorted rate mailing qualifying for the barcoded discount must be prepared under M820, and the Presorted rate mailing must be prepared under M722. (b) Effective September 1, 2003, the carrier route mailing must be prepared under M723, and the Presorted rate mailing qualifying for the barcoded discount and the Presorted rate mailing must be prepared under the co-sacking



standards in M910. Presorted rate pieces qualifying for the barcoded discount may be co-packaged with Presorted rate pieces under M950. Regardless of the date presented for mailing, co-packaged pieces must be co-sacked under M910.

- (2) If the mailing job contains only a Presorted rate mailing qualifying for and claiming the barcoded discount and a Presorted rate mailing, the job must be prepared as follows: (a) Prior to September 1, 2003, the Presorted rate mailing qualifying for and claiming the barcoded discount must be prepared under M820 and the Presorted rate mailing must be prepared under M722. (b) Effective September 1, 2003, the Presorted rate mailing qualifying for and claiming the barcoded discount and the Presorted rate mailing must be prepared under the co-sacking standards in M910. Presorted rate pieces qualifying for and claiming the barcoded discount may be co-packaged with Presorted rate pieces under M950. Regardless of the date presented for mailing, co-packaged pieces must be co-sacked under M910.
- (3) If the mailing job contains only a carrier route mailing and a Presorted rate mailing qualifying for and claiming the barcoded discount, each mailing must be prepared separately under the applicable standards in M723 and M820.

Merged Containerization With Presorted and Carrier Route Flats
1.11

When the conditions and preparation standards in M920, M930, or M940 are met, 5-digit packages of Presorted, automation, and carrier route rate mail that are part of the same mailing job may be combined on merged 5-digit scheme sacks or pallets and merged 5-digit sacks or pallets. Packages that are co-sacked or copalletized must be part of the same mailing job and mail class. Automation rate pieces may be co-packaged with Presorted rate pieces under M950.

Tray-Based Preparation
1.12

For First-Class Mail prepared under the tray-based option in 3.0, mailers may not combine AFSM 100 and FSM 1000 pieces in the same mailing.

2.0 FIRST-CLASS MAIL—REQUIRED PACKAGE-BASED PREPARATION

Packaging
2.1

- [10-3-02] Preparation sequence, package size, and labeling:
- a. 5-digit (optional, but required for 5-digit rate eligibility); 10-piece minimum; red Label D or optional endorsement line (OEL).
 - b. 3-digit (required); 10-piece minimum; green Label 3 or OEL.
 - c. ADC (required); 10-piece minimum; pink Label A or OEL.
 - d. Mixed ADC (required); no minimum; tan Label MXD or OEL.

Traying
2.2

- [10-3-02] Preparation sequence, tray size, and labeling:
- a. 5-digit (optional, but required for 5-digit rate eligibility); full trays (no overflow); labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code destination of packages, preceded for military mail by correct prefix under M031.
 - (2) Line 2: "FCM FLTS 5D BC."
 - b. 3-digit (required); full trays (no overflow); labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: L002, Column A.
 - (2) Line 2: "FCM FLTS 3D BC."
 - c. Origin 3-digit(s) (required); no minimum; labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: L002, Column A.



- (2) Line 2: "FCM FLTS 3D BC."
- d. ADC (required); full trays (no overflow); labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: L004.
 - (2) Line 2: "FCM FLTS ADC BC."
- e. Mixed ADC (required); no minimum; labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: "MXD" followed by city, state, and ZIP of facility serving 3-digit ZIP Code prefix of entry post office, as shown in L002, Column C.
 - (2) Line 2: "FCM FLTS BC WKG."

3.0 FIRST-CLASS MAIL—OPTIONAL TRAY-BASED PREPARATION

Tray size, preparation sequence, and Line 1 labeling:

- a. 5-digit: optional, but 5-digit trays required for rate eligibility (90-piece minimum); one less-than-full or overflow tray allowed; for Line 1, use city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code destination of pieces (for military mail see M031). (Preparation to qualify for 5-digit rate is optional and need not be done for all 5-digit destinations.)
- b. 3-digit: required (90-piece minimum); one less-than-full or overflow tray allowed; for Line 1, use L002, Column A for 3-digit destinations.
- c. Origin 3-digit: required for each 3-digit ZIP Code served by the SCF of the origin (verification) office; no minimum; for Line 1, use L002, Column A for 3-digit destinations.
- d. ADC: required (90-piece minimum); one less-than-full or overflow tray allowed; group pieces by 3-digit ZIP Code prefix; for Line 1, use L004 (ZIP Code prefixes in Column A must be combined and labeled to the corresponding ADC destination shown in Column B). As an exception, pieces do *not* have to be grouped by 3-digit ZIP Code prefix in ADC trays if the mailing is prepared using a MLOCR/barcode sorter and standardized documentation is submitted.
- e. Mixed ADC: required (no minimum for rate eligibility); group pieces by ADC; for Line 1, use "MXD" followed by the city, state, and ZIP of the facility serving the 3-digit ZIP Code of the entry post office, as shown in L002, Column C. As an exception, pieces do *not* have to be grouped by ADCs in mixed ADC trays if the mailing is prepared using a MLOCR/barcode sorter and standardized documentation is submitted.

4.0 PERIODICALS

Packaging [10-3-02] Preparation sequence, package size, and labeling:

- 4.1
 - a. [1-9-03] 5-digit scheme (optional); six-piece minimum (fewer permitted under 1.9); optional endorsement line (OEL) required.
 - b. 5-digit (required); six-piece minimum (fewer permitted under 1.9); red Label D or OEL.
 - c. 3-digit (required); six-piece minimum (fewer permitted under 1.9); green Label 3 or OEL.
 - d. ADC (required); six-piece minimum (fewer permitted under 1.9); pink Label A or OEL.
 - e. Mixed ADC (required); no minimum; tan Label MXD or OEL.

Sacking [10-3-02] For mailing jobs that also contain a Presorted rate mailing, see 1.10 and M910. Other mailing jobs are prepared, sacked, and labeled as follows:

4.2



- a. [1-9-03] 5-digit scheme (required at 24 pieces, optional with one six-piece package minimum except under 1.9, may contain 5-digit scheme packages only); labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: L007, Column B.
 - (2) Line 2: "PER FLTS 5D SCH BC" or "NEWS FLTS 5D SCH BC," as applicable.
- b. 5-digit (required at 24 pieces, optional with one six-piece package minimum except under 1.9); labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code destination of packages, preceded for military mail by correct prefix under M031.
 - (2) Line 2: "PER FLTS 5D BC" or "NEWS FLTS 5D BC," as applicable.
- c. [1-9-03] 3-digit (required at 24 pieces, except optional for packages with 3-digit ZIP Code prefixes indicated by an "N" in L002, further optional with one six-piece package minimum except under 1.9); labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: L002, Column A.
 - (2) Line 2: "PER FLTS 3D BC" or "NEWS FLTS 3D BC," as applicable.
- d. SCF (required at 24 pieces, optional with one six-piece package minimum except under 1.9); labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: L002, Column C.
 - (2) Line 2: "PER FLTS SCF BC" or "NEWS FLTS SCF BC," as applicable.
- e. Origin SCF (required) and entry SCF(s) (optional); no minimum; labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: L002, Column C.
 - (2) Line 2: "PER FLTS SCF BC" or "NEWS FLTS SCF BC," as applicable.
- f. ADC (required at 24 pieces, optional with one six-piece package minimum); labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: L004.
 - (2) Line 2: "PER FLTS ADC BC" or "NEWS FLTS ADC BC," as applicable.
- g. Mixed ADC (required); no minimum; labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: L803. If entered by mailer at an ASF or BMC, L802.
 - (2) Line 2: "PER FLTS BC WKG" or "NEWS FLTS BC WKG," as applicable.

5.0 STANDARD MAIL

Packaging 5.1

- [10-3-02] Preparation sequence, package size, and labeling:
 - a. [3-6-03] [1-9-03] 5-digit scheme (optional); 17-piece minimum, optional 10- to 16-piece minimum (one consistent minimum required for a mailing job); optional endorsement line (OEL) required.
 - b. [9-5-02] 5-digit (required):
 - (1) Packages containing pieces 3/4 inch thick or less only: 17-piece minimum, optional 10- to 16-piece minimum (one consistent minimum required for a mailing job); red Label D or OEL.
 - (2) Packages containing pieces more than 3/4 inch thick: 10-piece minimum; red Label D or OEL.
 - c. 3-digit (required); 10-piece minimum; green Label 3 or OEL.
 - d. ADC (required); 10-piece minimum; pink Label A or OEL.
 - e. Mixed ADC (required); no minimum; tan Label MXD or OEL.



Required Sacking 5.2 [11-14-02] A sack, or a letter tray under M033, must be prepared when the quantity of mail for a required presort destination reaches either 125 pieces or 15 pounds of pieces, whichever occurs first, subject to these conditions:

- a. For identical-weight pieces, a single-piece weight of 1.92 ounces (0.12 pound) results in 125 pieces weighing 15 pounds. Identical-weight pieces weighing 1.92 ounces (0.12 pound) or less must be prepared using the 125-piece minimum; those that weigh more must be prepared using the 15-pound minimum.
- b. For nonidentical-weight pieces, mailers must either use the minimum that applies to the average piece weight for the entire mailing (divide the net weight of the mailing by the number of pieces; the resulting average single-piece weight determines whether the 125-piece or 15-pound minimum applies) or sack by the actual piece count or mail weight for each sack, if documentation can be provided with the mailing that shows (specifically for each sack) the number of pieces and their total weight.
- c. Mailers must note on the accompanying postage statement whether they applied the 125-piece (“PCS”) or 15-pound (“WT”) threshold or the method in 5.2b (“BOTH”).

Sacking 5.3 [10-3-02] Preparation sequence, sack size, and labeling:

- a. [1-9-03] 5-digit scheme (required containing 5-digit scheme packages only); 125-piece/15-pound minimum, labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: L007, Column B.
 - (2) Line 2: “STD FLTS 5D SCH BC.”
- b. 5-digit (required); 125-piece/15-pound minimum; labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code destination of packages, preceded for military mail by correct prefix under M031.
 - (2) Line 2: “STD FLTS 5D BC.”
- c. 3-digit (required); 125-piece/15-pound minimum; labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: L002, Column A.
 - (2) Line 2: “STD FLTS 3D BC.”
- d. Origin 3-digit(s) (required) and entry 3-digit(s) (optional); one-package minimum (for origin and entry); labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: L002, Column A.
 - (2) Line 2: “STD FLTS 3D BC.”
- e. ADC (required); 125-piece/15-pound minimum; labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: L004.
 - (2) Line 2: “STD FLTS ADC BC.”
- f. [5-1-03] Mixed ADC (required); no minimum; labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: L803. If entered at an ASF or BMC or for mail placed on an ASF or BMC pallet under option in M045.3.2, L802.
 - (2) Line 2: “STD FLTS BC WKG.”

6.0 BOUND PRINTED MATTER

Package Preparation 6.1 Packages must be prepared and labeled in the following sequence:

- a. [1-9-03] 5-digit scheme: (optional); minimum 10 pieces or 10 pounds, maximum weight 20 pounds; optional endorsement line (OEL) required.
- b. 5-digit: (minimum 10 pieces or 10 pounds, maximum weight 20 pounds); red Label D or OEL.



- c. 3-digit: (minimum 10 pieces or 10 pounds, maximum weight 20 pounds); green Label 3 or OEL.
- d. ADC: (minimum 10 pieces or 10 pounds, maximum weight 20 pounds); pink Label A or OEL.
- e. Mixed ADC: (no minimum, maximum weight 20 pounds); tan Label MXD or OEL.

Sack Preparation and Labeling
6.2

[4-3-03] [1-9-03] Preparation sequence, sack size, and labeling:

- a. 5-digit scheme (optional, containing 5-digit scheme packages only); minimum 20 addressed pieces; labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: L007.
 - (2) Line 2: "PSVC FLTS 5D SCH BC."
- b. 5-digit (required); minimum 20 addressed pieces; labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code on mail, preceded for military mail by correct prefix under M031.
 - (2) Line 2: "PSVC FLTS 5D BC."
- c. 3-digit (required, except for optional packages with 3-digit ZIP Code prefixes indicated by an "N" in L002, when optional SCF sacks are prepared); minimum 20 addressed pieces; labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: L002, Column A.
 - (2) Line 2: "PSVC FLTS 3D BC."
- d. SCF (optional); minimum 20 addressed pieces; labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: L005.
 - (2) Line 2: "PSVC FLTS SCF BC."
- e. ADC (required); minimum 20 addressed pieces; labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: L004.
 - (2) Line 2: "PSVC FLTS ADC BC."
- f. Mixed ADC (required); no minimum; labeling:
 - (1) Line 1: L803 or, if entered by mailer at an ASF or BMC, L802.
 - (2) Line 2: "PSVC FLTS BC WKG."