



E100 First-Class Mail

## E110 Basic Standards

**Summary** E110 describes letter and card-size pieces eligible to be mailed as First-Class Mail, presort mailing fees and documentation.

### 1.0 CLASSIFICATION AND DESCRIPTION

**Eligibility** All mailable matter may be sent as First-Class Mail (which for the purposes of the standards in 1.0 includes Priority Mail) or as Express Mail, except Customized MarketMail under E660 or other matter prohibited by the respective standards.

**Written or Typewritten Matter** Matter wholly or partially in handwriting or typewriting must be mailed as First-Class Mail or Express Mail, except authorized additions to Periodicals, Standard Mail, and Package Services and written or typewritten matter in Library Mail and Media Mail, as permitted by the corresponding standards.

**Matter Closed Against Postal Inspection** [9-1-03] Matter closed against postal inspection includes First-Class Mail and Express Mail. The USPS may open mail other than First-Class Mail or Express Mail to determine whether the proper rate of postage is paid. Material wrapped or packaged so that it cannot be examined easily or examined without destruction or serious damage is closed against postal inspection and is charged the appropriate First-Class Mail or Express Mail rate.

**Correspondence** Matter that has the character of actual and personal correspondence must be mailed as First-Class Mail or Express Mail.

**Bills and Statements of Account** Bills and statements of account must be mailed as First-Class Mail or Express Mail according to these definitions:

- a. A *bill* is a request for payment of a definite sum of money claimed to be owing by the addressee to the sender or a third party. The mere assertion of a debt in a definite sum combined with a demand for payment is sufficient to make the message a bill.
- b. A *statement of account* is the assertion of a debt in a definite amount owed by the addressee to the sender or a third party but does not necessarily contain a request or a demand for payment. The amount may be immediately due or may become due after a certain time or on demand or billing at a later date.
- c. A bill or statement of account must present enough details of a debt to inform the debtor of the amount the debtor must pay to acquit himself or herself of the debt. Neither a bill nor a statement of account need state the precise amount if the bill or statement contains enough information to enable the debtor to determine the exact amount of the claim asserted.
- d. A bill or statement of account does not lose that character just because the amount claimed is not, in fact, owing or may not be legally collectible.

**Examples** These are examples of material that must be mailed at First-Class Mail or Express Mail rates:

- a. Handwritten or typewritten matter, including identical copies prepared by automatic typewriter and manifold or carbon copies of this matter. Handwritten or typewritten matter does not include all matter produced by



computers, but computer-prepared material is subject to First-Class postage if it has the character of actual and personal correspondence.

- b. Autograph albums containing writing.
- c. Notebooks or blank books containing written or typewritten entries or stenographic or shorthand notes.
- d. Blank printed forms filled out in writing, such as notices, certificates, and checks, either canceled or uncanceled.
- e. Printed price lists containing written figures changing individual items.
- f. Printed cards or letters bearing a written date, where the date is not the date of the card but gives information about when something is to occur or has occurred.
- g. Any matter marked "Postcard" or "Double Postcard."

## 2.0 AIR TRANSPORTATION PROHIBITIONS

All First-Class Mail is subject to limitations for air transportation. Generally, all mailable matter may be transported by aircraft, unless restricted in [C023](#).

## 3.0 CARD RATE

A card may be a single or double (reply) stamped card or a single or double postcard. Stamped cards are available from the Postal Service with postage imprinted on them. Postcards are commercially available or privately printed mailing cards. To be eligible for a card rate, a card and each half of a double card must meet the physical standards in [C100](#) and the applicable eligibility and preparation standards for the rate claimed. Ineligible cards are subject to letter-size rates. Cards may be prepared and mailed at the First-Class Mail single-piece card rate, Presorted card rate, or automation card rates.

## 4.0 FEES

### Presort Mailing

- 4.1 [\[9-1-03\]](#) A First-Class Mail presort mailing fee must be paid once each 12-month period at each office of mailing by any person or organization entering mailings at automation or Presorted First-Class Mail rates. Payment of one fee allows a mailer to enter mail at all those rates. Persons or organizations paying this fee may enter mail of their clients as well as their own mail. 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.

### Address Correction

- 4.2 The fee for manual or automated address correction service is charged per notice issued.

## 5.0 DOCUMENTATION

A postage statement, completed and signed by the mailer, using the correct USPS form or an approved facsimile, must be submitted with each mailing except for single-piece First-Class Mail or single-piece Priority Mail mailings in which the correct postage is affixed to each piece. Supporting documentation might be required by the standards for the rate claimed or the postage payment method used.