E600 Standard Mail

E610 Basic Standards

Summary E610 describes basic standards and rate eligibility for Standard Mail.

1.0 BASIC INFORMATION

Definition and Weight
1.1 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.

Postal Inspection
1.2 [9-1-03] Standard Mail is not sealed against postal inspection. Regardless of physical closure, the mailing of articles at Standard Mail rates constitutes consent by the mailer to postal inspection of the contents.

2.0 CONTENT

Circulars
2.1 [9-1-03] Circulars, including printed letters that, according to their contents, are sent in identical terms to more than one person are Standard Mail. A circular does not lose its character as such if a date and the individual names of the addressee and sender are written (handwritten or typewritten) on the circular or written corrections of typographical errors are made on the circular.

Printed Matter
2.2 Printed matter weighing less than 16 ounces may be sent as Standard Mail. For this standard, *printed matter* means paper on which words, letters, characters, figures, or images (or any combination of them), not having the character of a bill or statement of account or of actual and personal correspondence, are reproduced by any process other than handwriting or typewriting.

Computer-Prepared Material
2.3 Computer-prepared material is considered printed matter. Such material is not considered to have the character of actual and personal correspondence merely because it contains:

a. Specific information about a product (e.g., size, color, price) or a service being offered for sale or lease (e.g., the name, address, and telephone number of a company representative).

b. Information relating the addressee directly to an advertised product or service being offered for sale or lease.

c. Information such as the amount paid for a previous purchase, pledge, or donation, when associated with a sales promotion or solicitation for donations.

3.0 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.

4.0 ENCLOSURES AND ATTACHMENTS

Invoice
4.1 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.

Incidental First-Class Attachments and Enclosures
4.2 [3-4-04] 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 E660. 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 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.

Nonincidental First-Class Enclosures
4.3 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 E660). 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.

Nonincidental First-Class Attachments
4.4 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 E660), 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.

Standard Mail Attachments
4.5

[3-4-04] 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 E660 or as Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail under E630.

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 C600.2.0.

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.

5.0 RATES

General Information
5.1

All Standard Mail rates are presorted rates (including all nonprofit rates). These rates apply to mailings meeting the basic standards in E610 and the corresponding standards for Presorted rates under E620, Enhanced Carrier Route rates under E630, automation rates under E640, or Customized MarketMail rates under E660. Except for Customized MarketMail pieces, destination entry discount rates are available under E650, and barcode discounts are available for machinable parcels under E620. A mailpiece is subject to the residual shape surcharge if it is prepared as a parcel, or if it is not letter-size or flat-size under C050, or if it is prepared as a Customized MarketMail piece under E660. Nonprofit rates may be used only by organizations authorized by the USPS under E670. 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 under 5.2 or 5.3.

Minimum Per Piece Rates
5.2

The minimum per piece rates (i.e., 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. Letters and Nonletters. 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 C050, 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 C050 and the definition of an automation flat in C820, the piece may be prepared and entered at an automation flat (nonletter) 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 C810. For this purpose, the length is considered to be the dimension parallel to the address.
   (3) If the piece is mailed as a Customized MarketMail piece under E660, the piece is always subject to the applicable Regular or Nonprofit Standard Mail basic nonletter per piece rate and must not exceed the maximum weight for those rates.

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 under E620, E630, E640, and E660. Except for Customized MarketMail pieces, discounted per piece rates also may be claimed for destination entry mailings (destination bulk mail center (DBMC), destination sectional center facility (DSCF), and destination delivery unit (DDU)) under E650. DDU rates are available only for mail entered at Enhanced Carrier Route or Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route rates. See R600 for individual per piece rates.

Piece/Pound Rates
5.3

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 E620, E630, and E640. There are separate per pound rates for each subclass (Regular, Enhanced Carrier Route, Nonprofit, and Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route) under E620, E630, and E640. Discounted per pound rates also may be claimed for destination entry mailings (destination bulk mail center (DBMC), destination sectional center facility (DSCF), and destination delivery unit (DDU)) under E650.

Machinable Parcel Barcode Discount
5.4

Machinable parcels (C050) mailed at Regular or Nonprofit rates that are prepared with barcodes under C850 and meet the eligibility requirements in E620 may qualify for a barcoded discount. Pieces eligible for a barcoded discount also are subject to a residual shape surcharge under 5.5. Pieces mailed at Enhanced Carrier Route, Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route, or Customized MarketMail rates are not eligible for a barcoded discount.

Residual Shape Surcharge
5.5 Any Standard Mail piece that is prepared as a parcel or is not letter-size or flat-size as defined in C050 is subject to a residual shape surcharge. Any piece that is prepared as Customized MarketMail under E660 is also subject to the residual shape surcharge. There are different surcharges for Presorted rate pieces and Enhanced Carrier Route rate pieces. Only the surcharges for Presorted rate pieces apply to Customized MarketMail pieces.

Net Postage
5.6 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).

6.0 FEES

Annual Fees
6.1 [9-1-03] 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.

Address Correction
6.2 The fee for manual or automated address correction service is charged per notice issued (R900).

7.0 MERGING

Mailings are subject to the general definitions and conditions in M011. 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.

8.0 PREPARATION

[9-1-03] Each Standard Mail mailing is subject to these general standards:

a. All pieces in a mailing must be of the same processing category, except that irregular and machinable parcels may be combined in 5-digit scheme and 5-digit sacks or on 5-digit scheme and 5-digit pallets.

b. Each mailing must contain at least 200 pieces or 50 pounds of pieces. See E620 for volume requirement eligibility unique to Presorted Standard rate mailings. Other volume standards also can apply, based on the rate claimed.

c. For letter-size and flat-size mail, all pieces in an automation mailing must be eligible for an automation rate. Separate automation and Presorted rate mailings of flats that are reported on the same postage statement must be cosacked under M910. Separate automation, Presorted, and Enhanced

Carrier Route mailings of flats may be co-containerized under M920, M930, or M940.

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, unless an alternative addressing format is used subject to A020. Detached address labels may be used subject to A060.

f. Postage must be paid under P600 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 P012 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 C840 and A950.

j. Any postal routing code barcode on a machinable parcel must be correct for the delivery address and must meet the standards in C850.

k. 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.

9.0 SPECIAL SERVICES

Available Services
9.1

Only the following special services may be used with Standard Mail that is eligible under 9.2:

a. Bulk insurance.

b. Return receipt for merchandise.

c. Delivery Confirmation (electronic option only).

Eligible Matter
9.2

Special services available for Standard Mail may be used only with Standard Mail subject to the residual shape surcharge under 5.5.

Ineligible Matter
9.3

Special services may not be used for any of the following types of Standard Mail:

a. Pieces not subject to the residual shape surcharge.

b. Machinable parcels mailed using Bulk Parcel Return Service.

c. Pieces mailed with detached address labels under A060.

d. Pieces mailed at Enhanced Carrier Route rates.

e. Pieces mailed as Customized MarketMail.

Additional Preparation Requirements
9.4

Any eligible mailpiece with a special service must bear a return address under A010 and an ancillary service endorsement under F010 as follows:

a. Pieces with bulk insurance or return receipt for merchandise must bear an endorsement that returns any undeliverable-as-addressed piece to the sender. Required endorsements are "Address Service Requested," "Forwarding Service Requested," or "Return Service Requested."

b. Pieces with Delivery Confirmation must bear one of the required endorsements in 9.4a or "Change Service Requested."