



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. Bundle, sack, and tray preparation are subject to [M010](#), [M020](#), and [M030](#). Trays and sacks must bear the appropriate barcoded container labels under [M032](#).

1.1

**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.

1.2

**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](#).

1.3

**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](#).

1.4

**Bundle Preparation** [\[10-2-03\]](#) Except for First-Class Mail prepared under [3.0](#), all pieces must be prepared in bundles and meet the following requirements:

1.5

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

be prepared into a bundle or bundles labeled to that presort destination under the standards for the rate claimed.

- d. The physical size of each bundle for each specific presort destination may contain the exact bundle minimum, more pieces than the bundle minimum, or fewer pieces than the bundle 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 bundle contains fewer pieces than the minimum bundle size for the above reasons, provided the total number of AFSM 100 pieces physically bundled for that presort destination or the total number of UFSM 1000 pieces physically bundled for that presort destination meets or exceeds the rate eligibility bundle minimum under [E140](#), [E240](#), or [E640](#).

**5-Digit Scheme  
Bundle Preparation**

1.6

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

**Sack Preparation**

1.7

**[10-2-03]** Mailers may combine AFSM 100 bundles and UFSM 1000 bundles 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

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 cobundled 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

**[9-2-04]** As a general exception to [4.1](#) and [4.2](#), Periodicals may be prepared in low-volume 5-digit scheme, 5-digit, and 3-digit bundles containing fewer than six pieces, when the publisher determines that such preparation improves service, if those bundles are placed in 5-digit scheme, 5-digit, and 3-digit sacks under [M820](#). Low-volume bundles may also be placed in merged 5-digit scheme, merged 5-digit, 5-digit, 5-digit scheme, 3-digit, and SCF sacks under [M920](#). Low-volume sacks may also consist of a firm bundle(s) when optional 5-digit scheme sortation



**Cotraying,  
Cosacking, and  
Cobundling With  
Presorted Rate Mail**  
1.10

is performed with mailings prepared in sacks. Low-volume bundles also may be placed on merged 5-digit scheme, 5-digit scheme, merged 5-digit, 5-digit, 5-digit metro, 3-digit, and SCF pallets.

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 cotraying standards in M910. Automation rate pieces may be cobundled with Presorted rate pieces under the standards in M950.
- b. 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 cosacking standards in M910. Automation rate pieces may be cobundled 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. 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 cosacking standards in M910. Automation rate pieces may be cobundled 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. [9-4-03] Bound Printed Matter:
  - (1) If the mailing job contains a carrier route mailing, a Presorted rate mailing qualifying for and claiming the barcoded discount under E712, and a Presorted rate mailing (not claiming the barcoded discount), then the carrier route mailing must be prepared under M723, and the Presorted rate mailing qualifying for and claiming the barcoded discount and the Presorted rate mailing (not claiming the barcoded discount) must be cosacked under M910. As an option, the Presorted rate pieces qualifying for and claiming the barcoded discount may be cobundled with Presorted rate pieces (not claiming the barcoded discount) under M950. Cobundled pieces must be cosacked 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 (not claiming the barcoded discount), both mailings must be cosacked under [M910](#). As an option, the Presorted rate pieces qualifying for and claiming the barcoded discount may be cobundled with Presorted rate pieces (not claiming the barcoded discount) under [M950](#). Cobundled pieces must be cosacked 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 bundles 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. Bundles that are cosacked or copalletized must be part of the same mailing job and mail class. Automation rate pieces may be cobundled with Presorted rate pieces under [M950](#).

**Tray-Based  
Preparation**  
1.12

**[10-2-03]** For First-Class Mail prepared under the tray-based option in [3.0](#), mailers may not combine AFSM 100 and UFSM 1000 pieces in the same mailing.

**2.0 FIRST-CLASS MAIL—REQUIRED BUNDLE-BASED PREPARATION**

**Bundling and  
Labeling**  
2.1

**[10-30-03]** Preparation sequence, bundle size, and labeling:

- a. 5-digit (optional, but required for 5-digit rate eligibility); 10-piece minimum; red Label 5 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 X or OEL.

**Traying and Labeling**  
2.2

**[10-30-03]** 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 on mail (see [M032](#) for overseas military mail).
  - (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

#### Bundling and Labeling 4.1

[\[10-30-03\]](#) Preparation sequence, bundle size, and labeling:

- a. 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 5 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 X or OEL.

#### Sacking and Labeling 4.2

[\[10-30-03\]](#) 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:

- a. 5-digit scheme (required at 24 pieces, optional with one six-piece bundle minimum except under [1.9](#), may contain 5-digit scheme bundles 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 bundle minimum except under 1.9); labeling:
  - (1) Line 1: city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code on mail (see M032 for overseas military mail).
  - (2) Line 2: "PER FLTS 5D BC" or "NEWS FLTS 5D BC," as applicable.
- c. 3-digit (required at 24 pieces, except optional for bundles with 3-digit ZIP Code prefixes indicated by an "N" in L002, further optional with one six-piece bundle 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 bundle 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 bundle 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

### Bundling and Labeling 5.1

[8-1-04] [10-30-03] Preparation sequence, bundle size, and labeling:

- a. 5-digit scheme (optional):
  - (1) For mailings containing only pieces weighing 5 ounces (0.3125 pound) or less: 15-piece minimum; optional endorsement line (OEL) required.
  - (2) For mailings containing any pieces weighing more than 5 ounces (0.3125 pound): 10-piece minimum; OEL required.
- b. 5-digit (required):
  - (1) For mailings containing only pieces weighing 5 ounces (0.3125 pound) or less and measuring 3/4 inch thick or less: 15-piece minimum; red Label 5 or OEL.
  - (2) For mailings containing any pieces weighing more than 5 ounces (0.3125 pound) or measuring more than 3/4 inch thick: 10-piece minimum; red Label 5 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 X or OEL.



- Required Sacking**  
5.2
- 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 and Labeling**  
5.3

**[10-30-03]** Preparation sequence, sack size, and labeling:

- a. 5-digit scheme (required containing 5-digit scheme bundles 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 on mail (see [M032](#) for overseas military mail).
  - (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-bundle 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. 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

### Bundling and Labeling

6.1

[10-30-03] Bundles must be prepared and labeled in the following sequence:

- a. 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 5 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 X or OEL.

### Sacking and Labeling

6.2

[10-30-03] Preparation sequence, sack size, and labeling:

- a. 5-digit scheme (optional, containing 5-digit scheme bundles 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 (see M032 for overseas military mail).
  - (2) Line 2: "PSVC FLTS 5D BC."
- c. 3-digit (required, except for optional bundles 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."