

133 Rates and Eligibility

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1.0 First-Class Mail Rates and Fees

1.1 First-Class Mail Single-Piece Rate Application

The single-piece rates for First-Class Mail are applied as follows:

- a. The card rate applies to a card meeting the applicable standards in [101.6.3, Cards Claimed at Card Rates](#).
- b. The letter rate applies to any other First-Class Mail (letter, flat, and parcel) weighing 13 ounces or less that is not eligible for and claimed at the card rate. [E130.2.1]

1.2 Rate Computation for First-Class Mail

First-Class rates are charged per ounce or fraction thereof; any fraction of an ounce is considered a whole ounce. For example, if a piece weighs 1.2 ounces, the weight (postage) increment is 2 ounces. The minimum postage per addressed piece is that for a piece weighing 1 ounce. [P013.2.3]

1.3 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.

[P013.1.3]

1.4 Rates for Cards

Cards meeting the standards in [101.6.3, Cards Claimed at Card Rates](#): \$0.23 each.

[R100.1.1]

1.5 Rates for Letters, Flats, and Parcels

Letters, flats, and parcels; nonmachinable surcharge in [1.9](#) might apply:

WEIGHT INCREMENT	RATE
First ounce or fraction of an ounce	\$0.37
Each additional ounce or fraction	0.23

[R100.1.2]



133.1.6

1.6 First-Class Mail Rates

Weight Not Over (ounces) ^{1,2}	Single-Piece
1 ³	\$0.37
2	0.60
3	0.83
4	1.06
5	1.29
6	1.52
7	1.75
8	1.98
9	2.21
10	2.44
11	2.67
12	2.90
13	3.13
Card Rate⁴	\$0.23

1. For each additional ounce, postage includes \$0.23 for single-piece rates.
2. For keys and ID devices, add a \$0.60 fee. If more than 13 ounces, refer to Retail Priority Mail (see [123](#)).
3. Pieces weighing 1 oz. or less may be subject to a nonmachinable surcharge of \$0.12 per piece (see [101.6.4](#)).
4. The card rate applies to each single or double postcard when originally mailed; reply half of double postcard must bear postage at applicable rate when returned unless prepared as business reply mail.

[R100.9.1]

1.7 Rates for Keys and Identification Device

WEIGHT NOT OVER (ounces)	RATE¹
1 ²	\$0.97
2	1.20
3	1.43
4	1.66
5	1.89
6	2.12
7	2.35
8	2.58
9	2.81
10	3.04
11	3.27
12	3.50
13	3.73
1 pound	4.45
2 pounds	5.15 ³

1. Rates shown include \$0.60 fee.

2. Nonmachinable surcharge might apply.

3. Zone 4 postage charged for all pieces.

[R100.11.0]

1.8 Keys and Identification Devices

Keys and identification devices (e.g., identification cards or uncovered identification tags) that weigh more than 13 ounces but not more than 1 pound are returned at the 1-pound Priority Mail rate plus the fee. Keys and identification devices weighing more than 1 pound but not more than 2 pounds are mailed at the 2-pound Priority Mail rate for zone 4 plus the fee. The key or identification device must bear, contain, or have securely attached the name and complete address of a person, organization, or concern, with instructions to return the key or identification device to that address and a statement guaranteeing payment of postage due on delivery.

[E120.2.4]

1.9 Nonmachinable Surcharge

Surcharge per piece at single-piece rate: \$0.12. [R100.12.0]

1.10 Applicability of Nonmachinable Surcharge

The nonmachinable surcharge applies to pieces that weigh 1 ounce or less and meet one or more of the nonmachinable characteristics in [101.1.2](#). Pieces mailed at the card rate are not subject to the nonmachinable surcharge. [E130.2.4]

1.11 Computing Postage—First-Class Mail

Determine single-piece weight and weight (postage) increment for each addressed piece as prescribed in [1.2](#), [Rate Computation for First-Class Mail](#), and [1.8](#), [Keys and Identification Devices](#). For First-Class Mail, affix postage to each piece under



[134.1.2, Affixing Postage—Single-Piece Rate Mailings](#), or, for permit imprint mailings, multiply the number of addressed pieces at each rate increment by the corresponding postage rate. [P013.6.0]

2.0 Basic Eligibility Standards for First-Class Mail

2.1 **Service Objectives**

All First-Class Mail receives expeditious handling and transportation. The USPS follows uniform guidelines for distributing and delivering mail but does not guarantee delivery within the specified time. Local postmasters can provide more information. [D100.1.0]

2.2 **Matter Closed Against Postal Inspection**

Matter closed against postal inspection includes First-Class Mail (including Priority 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. [E110.1.3]

2.3 **All First-Class Mail Pieces**

All pieces of First-Class Mail must:

- a. Meet the basic eligibility standards for First-Class Mail in [2.0](#) and [3.0](#).
- b. Weigh 13 ounces or less.
- c. Bear a delivery address.
- d. Meet the applicable postage payment standards. [E130.1.1]

3.0 Content Standards

3.1 **Eligibility**

All mailable matter 13 ounces or less may be sent as First-Class Mail (including Priority Mail) except Customized MarketMail under [705.1.0](#) or other matter prohibited by the respective standards. [E110.1.1]

3.2 **Written or Typewritten Matter**

Matter wholly or partially in handwriting or typewriting must be mailed as First-Class Mail (including Priority 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. [E110.1.2]

3.3 **Correspondence**

Matter that has the character of actual and personal correspondence must be mailed as First-Class Mail (including Priority Mail) or Express Mail. [E110.1.4]

3.4 Bills and Statements of Account

Bills and statements of account must be mailed as First-Class Mail (including Priority 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. [E110.1.5]

3.5 Examples

These are examples of material that must be mailed at First-Class Mail (including Priority 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." [E110.1.6]

3.6 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 [601.10.0, Hazardous Materials](#). [E110.2.0]

