# 434 Postage Payment and Documentation

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## 1.0 Basic Standards for Postage Payment

### 1.1 Postage Payment Options

Postage for discount (presorted) price First-Class Mail must be paid with affixed postage (604.1.0 for stamps, 604.3.0 for precanceled stamps, or 604.4.0 for metered postage) or permit imprint (604.5.0) as specified in 2.0. Mail manifested using the Electronic Verification System (eVS) under 705.2.9 must be paid with a permit imprint. A permit imprint may be used for mailings of nonidentical-weight pieces only if authorized by Business Mailer Support at USPS Headquarters.

## 2.0 Postage Payment for Presorted Parcels

### 2.1 Payment Methods for Presorted Prices

Presorted First-Class Mail price postage must be paid with meter stamps under 604.4.0, permit imprints under 604.5.0, or precanceled postage under 604.3.0, subject to the corresponding standards for these methods. All pieces in a mailing must be paid with the same method unless otherwise permitted by standard or Business Mailer Support authorization.

### 2.2 Affixed Postage for Presorted First-Class Mail

Unless permitted by other standards or by Business Mailer Support, USPS Headquarters, when precanceled postage or meter stamps are used, only one payment method may be used in a mailing and each piece must bear postage under one of these conditions:

a. The full postage at the First-Class Mail price for which it qualifies (no postage documentation is required).

b. A precanceled stamp or the full postage at the lowest First-Class Mail 1-ounce price applicable to the mailing job, and full postage on metered pieces for additional ounce(s), surcharge, or extra services.

c. Postage in an amount not less than the lowest available First-Class Mail first-ounce letter or card price (as applicable) in the mailing job if authorized by Business Mailer Support, plus full postage on metered pieces for any extra ounce(s); postage documentation may be required by standard.

### 2.3 Additional Postage

Additional postage for pieces not bearing sufficient postage when presented to the USPS must be paid before acceptance either using an advance deposit account or with a meter stamp affixed to the postage statement accompanying the mail. When

the amount of postage affixed is subject to Business Mailer Support authorization under 2.2c, credit is not given for postage affixed in excess of the authorized amount.

## 3.0 Mailing Documentation

### 3.1 Completing Postage Statements

Unless manifested using eVS under 705.2.9, any mailing claiming a discount and all permit imprint mailings must be accompanied by a postage statement completed and signed by the mailer (in duplicate if the mailer wants a receipted copy). A change made to any postage statement requires the mailer (agent) to correct the postage statement accordingly and document the correction.

### 3.2 Basic Documentation Standards

Unless manifested using eVS under 705.2.9, mailings presented to the USPS generally require paper documentation. Supporting documentation of postage is required unless the correct price is affixed to each piece or each piece is of identical weight and the pieces are separated by price when presented for acceptance. Documentation describes the preparation, price levels, and the content of the mailing; details the volume and postage data; and, by comparison with the actual mailing it describes, supports the claims contained on the postage statement accompanying the mailing and allows the USPS to verify its accuracy. Documentation must be submitted when specified for the price claimed or postage payment method used.

### 3.3 Preparing Documentation

As provided by standard, documentation may be presented in abbreviated form or on computer-readable media. Required documentation must be presented with every mailing unless, by standard, it may be provided to support multiple mailings or mailings that are part of the same job or cycle.

### 3.4 Multiple Standards

If multiple documentation standards apply to the same mailing, only one set of documentation is necessary if it provides enough information to meet all applicable standards. Redundant or duplicate documentation is not required simply to meet individual standards.

### 3.5 Standard Format for Documentation

Documentation must be produced by software certified under the Presort Accuracy Validation and Evaluation (PAVE) program or the Manifest Analysis and Certification (MAC) program, appropriate for the price claimed, or the documentation must be prepared as standardized documentation. Standardized documentation contains the elements described in 708.1.0, as applicable. Documentation produced by PAVE-certified or MAC-certified software is considered standardized documentation.

### 3.6 Providing Additional Information

The postmaster of the office of mailing may require additional information if the documentation submitted does not allow the corresponding mailing to be verified. Failure to provide information is sufficient reason for the USPS to refuse a mailing. The mailer may appeal any determination to the PCSC under 607.2.0.

### 3.7 Reporting Multiple Mailings on One Statement

Each group of pieces prepared as a separate mailing must be presented with a postage statement using the correct USPS form for the particular class, price, and postage payment method. A mailer may report more than one mailing from a single job on the same postage statement if the mailings are presented at the same time for verification, the pieces are in the same processing category, each mailing separately meets all applicable eligibility standards, and the number of pieces in each mailing is separately reported on the postage statement.

### 3.8 Facsimile Postage Statements

Facsimile postage statements must contain data and elements in locations as close as possible to where they appear on the USPS form. Data fields that do not pertain to information and prices claimed in the mailing and other extraneous information that appears on the USPS form do not have to be included. Facsimiles must include all other information pertaining to the mailing, including the class of mail (or subclass as appropriate), postage payment method (e.g., permit imprint), and four-digit form number (hyphen and suffix optional). All parts, and line numbers within each part, must reflect those on the USPS form. In some cases, this can include fields from multiple USPS forms onto a single facsimile. Most importantly, the facsimile must fully and exactly reproduce the “Certification” and “USPS Use Only” fields that appear on the USPS form. A facsimile postage statement produced by software certified by the USPS Presort Accuracy Validation and Evaluation (PAVE) or Manifest Analysis and Certification (MAC) program is considered a USPS-approved form for these standards. Others may be approved by the entry office postmaster.