

## 423 Prices and Eligibility

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### 1.0 Prices and Fees

#### 1.1 Price Application

[1-26-14] The following price applications apply:

- a. Priority Mail mailpieces are charged per pound; any fraction of a pound is rounded up to the next whole pound. For example, if a piece weighs 1-1/4 pounds, the weight (postage) increment is 2 pounds. The minimum postage amount per addressed piece is the 1-pound price. See exceptions for prices not based on weight or the minimum 1-pound price below.
- b. Flat-rate prices are not based on weight and zone, but are charged a flat rate regardless of actual weight (up to 70 pounds) of the mailpiece and domestic destination.
- c. Commercial Plus items are charged the 1/2-pound price for items up to 1/2 pound. Items over 1/2 pound are rounded up to the next whole pound.
- d. Commercial Plus cubic prices are not based on weight, but are charged by zone and cubic measurement of the mailpiece with any fraction of a measurement rounded down to the nearest 1/4 inch. For example, if a dimension of a Commercial Plus cubic piece measures 12-3/8 inches, it is rounded down to 12-1/4 inches.
- e. Regional Rate Box prices are not based on weight but are priced based on box size and the zone to which it is sent.
- f. Priority Mail items mailed under a specific customer agreement are charged according to the individual agreement.
- g. Priority Mail Open and Distribute tray boxes mailed at Commercial Plus prices are not based on weight but are charged based on the tray box and zone to which it is sent.

#### 1.2 Commercial Base Prices

##### 1.2.1 Commercial Base Price Eligibility

The Commercial Base prices are available for:

- a. Click-N-Ship customers.
- b. Registered end-users of USPS-approved PC Postage products when using a qualifying shipping label managed by the PC Postage system used.
- c. Customers using permit imprint.

- d. Priority Mail Open and Distribute customers using permit imprint when a Service barcode containing a unique service type code 55 is on the address label under [705.18.5.7](#). Priority Mail Open and Distribute is not available for customers using Regional Rate Boxes.
- e. Customers using USPS-approved IBI postage meters that print the IBI with the appropriate price marking (see [402.2.1](#)) and electronically transmit transactional data to USPS.
- f. Permit holders using Merchandise Return Service (MRS) for Priority Mail mailpieces when all MRS requirements are met ([505.3.0](#)).

### 1.2.2 Regional Rate Box Prices

Regional Rate Box prices are available to Priority Mail Commercial Base and Commercial Plus customers who use one of the USPS-produced Priority Mail Regional Rate Boxes and meet the requirements in [1.2.1](#). Prices are based on box size and zone. When sealing a Regional Rate Box, the container flaps must be able to close within the normal folds. Tape may be applied to the flaps and seams to reinforce the container provided the design of the container is not enlarged by opening the sides and the container is not reconstructed in any way. Regional Rate Boxes that exceed the maximum weight limit as specified in [1.6.2](#), or the container flaps do not close within the normal folds will be assessed the applicable Priority Mail single-piece prices. Regional Rate Box options are:

- a. Box A: (Side loading or top loading box) has a maximum weight limit of 15 pounds.
- b. Box B: (Side loading or top loading box) has a maximum weight limit of 20 pounds.
- c. Box C: (Top loading box only) has a maximum weight limit of 25 pounds.

## 1.3 Commercial Plus Prices

### 1.3.1 Basic Eligibility

[\[1-26-14\]](#) Commercial Plus prices are available to Priority Mail (including Critical Mail) customers who qualify for Commercial Base prices and whose cumulative account volume exceeds a combined total of 5,000 letter-size and flat-size pieces (including Flat Rate Envelopes, but not the Padded Flat Rate Envelope) or 50,000 total pieces in the previous calendar year (except Priority Mail Open and Distribute) and who have a customer commitment agreement with USPS (New Priority Mail customers see [1.3.2](#)), and are:

- a. Registered end-users of USPS-approved PC Postage products.
- b. Permit imprint customers.
- c. Priority Mail Open and Distribute (PMOD) customers whose account volume exceeds 600 PMOD containers (see [705.18.5.1](#)).
- d. Permit holders using MRS for Priority Mail items.
- e. Customers using USPS-approved IBI postage meters that print the IBI with the appropriate price marking (see [402.2.1](#)) and electronically transmit transactional data daily to USPS for all mailpieces and mail categories.

### 1.3.2 New Priority Mail Customers

Commercial Plus prices are available for new Priority Mail customers who have a customer commitment agreement with the USPS. Shippers must contact their account manager or the manager, Shipping Support, Shipping Services (see [608.8.0](#) for address) for additional information.

## 1.4 Commercial Plus Cubic

### 1.4.1 Commercial Plus Cubic Eligibility

[1-26-14] Commercial Plus cubic prices are generally available to Priority Mail customers whose account volumes exceeded 50,000 pieces in the previous calendar year and have a customer commitment agreement with the USPS. New Priority Mail customers see [1.4.5](#). Each mailpiece must measure .50 cubic foot or less, weigh 20 pounds or less, and the longest dimension may not exceed 18 inches. Cubic-priced mailpieces may not be rolls or tubes. The Commercial Plus cubic prices are available for:

- a. Registered end-users of USPS-approved PC Postage products.
- b. Permit imprint customers. Customers are required to use the Electronic Verification System (eVS) program or submit an electronic postage statement with a computerized manifest under [705.2.0](#). Mailings must contain at least 200 pieces or 50 pounds of mail. Mailpieces are not required to be identical in weight.
- c. Permit holders using Merchandise Return Service for parcels returned at Priority Mail prices.

### 1.4.2 Commercial Plus Cubic Tiers

Cubic prices consist of the following five tiers:

- a. Tier 1 - mailpieces measuring up to .10 cubic foot
- b. Tier 2 - mailpieces measuring more than .10 up to .20 cubic foot
- c. Tier 3 - mailpieces measuring more than .20 up to .30 cubic foot
- d. Tier 4 - mailpieces measuring more than .30 up to .40 cubic foot
- e. Tier 5 - mailpieces measuring more than .40 up to .50 cubic foot

### 1.4.3 Determining Cubic Tier Measurements for Rectangular and Nonrectangular Parcels

Follow these steps to determine the cubic tier measurement for rectangular and nonrectangular parcels:

- a. Measure the length, width, and height in inches. Round down (see [604.7.0](#)) each measurement to the nearest 1/4 inch. For example, 6-1/8" x 5-7/8" x 6-3/8" is rounded down to 6" x 5-3/4" x 6-1/4".
- b. Multiply the length by the width by the height and divide by 1728. For example: 6" x 5-3/4" x 6-1/4" = 215.6 divided by 1728 = 0.125 (This piece exceeds 0.10 - Tier 1 threshold). It is calculated at Tier 2 - 0.101 to 0.20.



### 1.4.4 Determining Cubic Tier Measurement for Soft Pack and Padded Envelopes

Cubic tier measurements for soft pack and padded envelopes are based on the outside dimensions of length plus width, in inches, of the original packaging material. Mailpieces that are pleated (e.g., expandable) must follow the measurement guidelines in 1.4.3 to be eligible for cubic pricing. Determine cubic tier measurements as follows:

- a. Measure the length and width separately in inches.
- b. Round down (see 604.7.0) each measurement to the nearest 1/4 inch. For example, 10-1/8 inches is rounded down to 10 inches.
- c. Add the two measurements together. The maximum total of length plus width cannot exceed 36 inches. See Exhibit 1.4.4 for corresponding price tiers.

#### Exhibit 1.4.4 Commercial Plus Pricing Tiers for Soft Pack & Padded envelopes

CUBIC PRICE TIERS		LENGTH PLUS WIDTH
0.10	Mailpieces measuring from	0" up to 21"
0.20	Mailpieces measuring more than	21" up to 27"
0.30	Mailpieces measuring more than	27" up to 31"
0.40	Mailpieces measuring more than	31" up to 34"
0.50	Mailpieces measuring more than	34" up to 36"

### 1.4.5 New Priority Mail Customers

Commercial Plus cubic prices are available for new Priority Mail customers who have a customer commitment agreement with the USPS. Shippers must contact their account manager or the manager, Sales and Communication, Expedited Shipping (see 608.8.0 for address) for additional information.

### 1.5 Balloon Price

Parcels addressed for delivery to Zones 1-4 (including Local) that weigh less than 20 pounds but measure more than 84 inches (but not more than 108 inches) in combined length and girth are charged the applicable zone price for a 20-pound parcel (balloon price).

### 1.6 Dimensional Weight Price for Low-Density Parcels to Zones 5-9

Postage for parcels addressed for delivery to Zones 5-9 and exceeding 1 cubic foot (1,728 cubic inches) is based on the actual weight or the dimensional weight (as calculated in 1.6.1 or 1.6.2), whichever is greater.

#### 1.6.1 Determining Dimensional Weight for Rectangular Parcels

Follow these steps to determine the dimensional weight for a rectangular parcel:

- a. Measure the length, width, and height in inches. Round off (see 604.7.0) each measurement to the nearest whole inch.
- b. Multiply the length by the width by the height.

- c. If the result exceeds 1,728 cubic inches, divide the result by 194 and round up (see [604.7.0](#)) to the next whole number to determine the dimensional weight in pounds.

### **1.6.2 Determining Dimensional Weight for Nonrectangular Parcels**

Follow these steps to determine the dimensional weight for a nonrectangular parcel:

- a. Measure the length, width, and height in inches at their extreme dimensions. Round off (see [604.7.0](#)) each measurement to the nearest whole inch.
- b. Multiply the length by the width by the height.
- c. Multiply the result by an adjustment factor of 0.785.
- d. If the final result exceeds 1,728 cubic inches, divide the result by 194 and round up (see [604.7.0](#)) to the next whole number to determine the dimensional weight in pounds.
- e. If the dimensional weight exceeds 70 pounds, the customer pays the 70-pound price.

## **1.7 Flat Rate Envelopes and Boxes**

Any amount of material may be mailed in a USPS-produced Priority Mail Flat Rate Box or Flat Rate Envelope. When sealing a Flat Rate Box or Flat Rate Envelope, the container flaps must be able to close within the normal folds. Tape may be applied to the flaps and seams to reinforce the container; provided the design of the container is not enlarged by opening the sides and the container is not reconstructed in any way.

### **1.7.1 Flat Rate Envelopes—Price and Eligibility**

USPS-produced Priority Mail Flat Rate Envelopes are priced at a flat rate regardless of the actual weight (up to 70 pounds) of the mailpiece or domestic destination. See [Notice 123—Price List](#) for applicable prices.

### **1.7.2 Flat Rate Boxes—Price and Eligibility**

Only USPS-produced Flat Rate Boxes are eligible for the Flat Rate Box prices. Each USPS-produced Priority Mail Flat Rate Box is charged a flat rate regardless of the actual weight (up to 70 pounds) of the mailpiece or domestic destination. See [Notice 123—Price List](#) for applicable prices. Priority Mail Flat Rate Boxes are as follows:

- a. Small Flat Rate Box to domestic, APO/FPO, and DPO destinations.
- b. Medium Flat Rate Boxes (FRB-1) or (FRB-2) to domestic, APO/FPO, and DPO destinations.
- c. Board Game Large Flat Rate Box or Large Flat Rate Box to domestic destinations.
- d. Board Game Large Flat Rate Box or Large Flat Rate Box and “special version of this box” identified with the additional logo: “Americasupportsyou.mil.” to APO/FPO and DPO destinations is priced less than the conventional domestic Large Flat Rate Boxes. If the special version of the APO/FPO Flat Rate Box is used for non-APO/FPO and DPO destination addresses, the domestic or international Large Flat Rate Box prices will apply.



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### **1.8 Pickup on Demand Fee**

The Pickup on Demand fee is charged per occurrence. This service may be combined with Priority Mail Express, Package Services, and international mail pickups (see [507.7.0](#)). See [Notice 123—Price List](#).

### **1.9 Hold For Pickup**

Under Hold For Pickup service, Priority Mail items are held at a designated Post Office location for pick up by a specified addressee or designee (see [508.7.0](#)).

### **1.10 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 two decimal places except mailers using eVS. Mailers using eVS may round off to four decimals, and eVS will automatically round to the appropriate decimal place. If a customer is using a manifest mailing system, the manifest weight field must be properly completed by adhering to the rules relative to the specific manifest.

### **1.11 Computing Postage**

Determine weight increment for each piece and pay postage under [424.1.0](#). For permit imprint mailings, multiply the number of addressed pieces at each weight increment by the corresponding postage price.

## **2.0 Content Standards for Priority Mail**

### **2.1 General**

All mailable matter may be sent as Priority Mail, except matter prohibited by standards (e.g., certain hazardous materials).

### **2.2 Matter Required to be Mailed as First-Class Mail**

Unless Priority Mail Express is used, Priority Mail prices are required for a mailpiece that weighs more than 13 ounces when the mailpiece contains matter that must be mailed as First-Class Mail. Complete descriptions of matter requiring the use of First-Class Mail are provided in [133.3.0](#).

## **3.0 Basic Standards for Priority Mail**

### **3.1 Definition**

Priority Mail is an expedited service and may contain any mailable matter weighing no more than 70 pounds. Lower weight limits apply to Commercial Plus cubic (see [1.4](#)); Regional Rate Boxes (see [1.2.2](#)); Critical Mail (see [223.1.4](#) and [323.1.4](#)); APO/FPO mail subject to [703.2.0](#) and [703.4.0](#); and Department of State mail subject to [703.3.0](#).

**3.2 IMpb Standards**

[1-26-14] All Priority Mail pieces, unless inducted through a retail transaction or a USPS self-service kiosk, must bear an Intelligent Mail package barcode (IMpb) prepared under 708.5.0. Mailpieces not meeting the requirements for use of unique Intelligent Mail package barcodes or extra services barcodes as outlined in Publication 199 will be assessed an IMpb noncompliance fee. For details see the RIBBS website at <https://ribbs.usps.gov>.

**3.3 Service Objectives**

All Priority 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.

**3.4 Matter Closed Against Postal Inspection**

Matter closed against postal inspection includes First-Class Mail, Priority Mail (including Critical Mail), and Priority Mail Express. USPS may open mail other than First-Class Mail, Priority Mail (including Critical Mail), or Priority Mail Express to determine whether the proper 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, Priority Mail, or Priority Mail Express price.

