

## 245 Mail Preparation

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### 1.0 General Information for Mail Preparation

#### 1.1 Definition of Presort Process

Presort is the process by which a mailer prepares mail so that it is sorted to at least the finest extent required by the standards for the price claimed. Generally, presort is performed sequentially, from the lowest (finest) level to the highest level, to those destinations specified by standard and is completed at each level before the next level is prepared. Under standards for bundle reallocation for Standard Mail flats on pallets (see [705.8.0](#)), mail will not necessarily be placed on the lowest (finest) level pallets (bundle reallocation is optional, but, if performed, must be done for the complete mailing job). Not all presort levels are applicable in all situations.

#### 1.2 Definition of Mailings

Mailings are defined as:

- a. General. A mailing is a group of pieces within the same class of mail and the same processing category that may be sorted together and/or presented under a single minimum volume mailing requirement under the applicable standards. Generally, types of mail that follow different flows through the postal processing system (e.g., automation, nonautomation carrier route, and other nonautomation) and mail for each separate class and subclass must be prepared as a separate mailing. Other specific standards may define whether separate mailings may be combined, palletized, reported, or deposited together.
- b. Standard Mail. Except as provided in [243.3.6](#), the types of Standard Mail listed below may not be part of the same mailing.
  1. Automation Enhanced Carrier Route and any other type of mail.
  2. Automation price and any other type of mail.



3. Enhanced Carrier Route and any other type of mail.
4. Enhanced Carrier Route letter price pieces and Enhanced Carrier Route nonletter price pieces.
5. Product Sample parcels and any other type of mail.
6. Product Sample parcels of nonidentical size or nonidentical weight.
7. Presorted price mail and any other type of mail.
8. Machinable and nonmachinable pieces.
9. Except as provided by standard, Regular mail may not be in the same mailing as Nonprofit mail, and Enhanced Carrier Route mail may not be in the same mailing as Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route mail.
10. Customized MarketMail and any other type of mail.

### 1.3 Terms for Presort Levels

#### 1.3.1 Letters

Terms used for presort levels are defined as follows:

- a. *Carrier route*: all pieces for delivery to the same city route, rural route, highway contract route, Post Office box section, or general delivery unit.
- b. *5-digit*: the delivery address on all pieces includes the same 5-digit ZIP Code.
- c. *5-digit scheme (trays) for automation letters*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces is one of the 5-digit ZIP Code areas processed by the USPS as one scheme, as shown in labeling list [L012](#).
- d. *3-digit*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces begins with the same three digits (see [L002](#), Column A).
- e. *3-digit scheme*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces begins with one of the 3-digit prefixes processed by the USPS as a single scheme, as shown in [L003](#).
- f. *Origin/entry 3-digit(s)*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces begins with one of the 3-digit prefixes processed at the sectional center facility (SCF) in whose service area the mail is verified/entered. Separation is optional for each such 3-digit area. Mail may be prepared for each 3-digit (or 3-digit scheme) area served by the SCF/plant where mail is entered (if that is different from the SCF/plant serving the Post Office where the mail is verified—e.g., a PVDS deposit site). In all cases, only one less-than-full tray may be prepared for each 3-digit (or 3-digit scheme) area.
- g. *SCF*: the separation includes pieces for two or more 3-digit areas served by the same sectional center facility (SCF) (see [L005](#)), except that, where required or permitted by standard, mail for a single 3-digit area may be prepared in an SCF separation when no mail for other 3-digit ZIP Code areas is available. For pallets, the SCF sort may include mail for a single 3-digit ZIP Code area.

- h. *Origin/optional entry SCF*: the separation includes bundles for one or more 3-digit areas served by the same sectional center facility (SCF) (see [L002](#), Column C, or [L005](#)) in whose service area the mail is verified/entered. Subject to standard, this separation is required regardless of the volume of mail.
- i. *ADC/AADC*: all pieces are addressed for delivery in the service area of the same area distribution center (ADC) or automated area distribution center (AADC) (see [L004](#) or [L801](#)).
- j. *ASF/NDC*: all pieces are addressed for delivery in the service area of the same auxiliary service facility (ASF) or network distribution center (NDC) (see [L601](#), [L602](#), or [L605](#)).
- k. *Mixed [ADC or AADC]*: the pieces are for delivery in the service area of more than one ADC or AADC.
- l. *Residual pieces/bundles*: contain material remaining after completion of a presort sequence. Residual mail lacks the volume set by standard to require or allow preparation to a particular destination, and usually does not qualify for a presort price.

### 1.3.2 Flats

Terms used for presort levels are defined as follows:

- a. *Carrier route*: all pieces for delivery to the same city route, rural route, highway contract route, Post Office box section, or general delivery unit.
- b. *5-digit*: the delivery address on all pieces includes the same 5-digit ZIP Code.
- c. *5-digit scheme (bundles and sacks) for flats meeting the automation-compatibility standards in 201.4.0*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces is one of the 5-digit ZIP Code areas processed by the USPS as a single scheme, as shown in [L007](#).
- d. *5-digit scheme carrier routes (pallets and sacks) for Standard Mail flats*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces in carrier route bundles is one of the 5-digit ZIP Codes processed by the USPS as a single scheme, as shown in [L001](#).
- e. *Merged 5-digit sacks*: the carrier route bundles and/or automation price 5-digit bundles and/or Presorted price 5-digit bundles in a sack are all for a 5-digit ZIP Code that has an “A” or “C” indicator in the Carrier Route Indicators field in the City State Product that allows combining carrier route price bundles with automation price 5-digit bundles and Presorted price 5-digit bundles in the same 5-digit container.
- f. *Merged 5-digit pallet*: contains carrier route bundles and noncarrier route 5-digit bundles (automation price 5-digit bundles and/or presorted price 5-digit bundles).
- g. *Merged 5-digit scheme sack*: the 5-digit ZIP Codes on pieces in carrier route bundles and/or automation price 5-digit bundles and/or Presorted price 5-digit bundles in a sack are all for 5-digit ZIP Codes that are part of a single scheme as shown in [L001](#), and the automation price 5-digit bundles and/or the Presorted price 5-digit bundles also are for 5-digit ZIP Codes that have an “A”



or “C” indicator in the Carrier Route Indicators field in the City State Product that allows combining carrier route bundles with automation price 5-digit bundles and Presorted price 5-digit bundles in the same 5-digit container.

- h. *Merged 5-digit scheme pallet*: contains carrier route bundles and noncarrier route 5-digit bundles (automation price 5-digit bundles and/or presorted price 5-digit bundles) for those 5-digit ZIP Codes that are part of a single scheme as shown in [L001](#).
- i. *3-digit*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces begins with the same three digits (see [L002](#), Column A).
- j. *3-digit scheme bundles for flats meeting the automation-compatibility standards in 201.3.0*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address begins with one of the 3-digit prefixes processed by the USPS as a single scheme, as shown in [L008](#).
- k. *Origin/entry 3-digit(s)*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces begins with one of the 3-digit prefixes processed at the sectional center facility (SCF) in whose service area the mail is verified/entered. Separation is optional for each such 3-digit area.
- l. *SCF*: the separation includes pieces for two or more 3-digit areas served by the same sectional center facility (SCF) (see [L005](#)), *except that*, where required or permitted by standard, mail for a single 3-digit area may be prepared in an SCF separation when no mail for other 3-digit ZIP Code areas is available. For pallets, the SCF sort may include mail for a single 3-digit ZIP Code area.
- m. *Origin/optional entry SCF*: the separation includes bundles for one or more 3-digit areas served by the same sectional center facility (SCF) (see [L002](#), Column C, or [L005](#)) in whose service area the mail is verified/entered. Subject to standard, this separation is required regardless of the volume of mail.
- n. *ADC*: all pieces are addressed for delivery in the service area of the same area distribution center (ADC) (see [L004](#)).
- o. *ASF/NDC*: all pieces are addressed for delivery in the service area of the same auxiliary service facility (ASF) or network distribution center (NDC) (see [L601](#), [L602](#), or [L605](#)).
- p. *Mixed ADC*: the pieces are for delivery in the service area of more than one ADC.
- q. *Residual pieces/bundles/sacks*: contain material remaining after completion of a presort sequence. Residual mail lacks the volume set by standard to require or allow preparation to a particular destination, and usually does not qualify for a presort price.

### 1.3.3 Marketing Parcels

Terms used for presort levels are defined as follows:

- a. *Targeted (Product Samples or Simple Samples)*: a type of Marketing parcel that is intended for specific carrier routes, with DALs sorted to and marked at the carrier route level; with a minimum of one piece per carrier route. Multiple DALs per route are all addressed for delivery to the same city route, rural route, highway contract route, Post Office box section, or general delivery unit.
- b. *5-digit*: the delivery address on all pieces includes the same 5-digit ZIP Code.
- c. *5-digit scheme (pallets and sacks) for Standard Mail parcels*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces begins with one of the 5-digit ZIP Code zones processed by the USPS as a single scheme, as shown in [L606](#).
- d. *3-digit*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces begins with the same three digits (see [L002](#), Column A).
- e. *SCF*: the separation includes pieces for two or more 3-digit areas served by the same sectional center facility (SCF) (see [L005](#)), except that, where required or permitted by standard, mail for a single 3-digit area may be prepared in an SCF separation when no mail for other 3-digit ZIP Code areas is available. For pallets, the SCF sort may include mail for a single 3-digit ZIP Code area.
- f. *ASF/NDC*: all pieces are addressed for delivery in the service area of the same auxiliary service facility (ASF) or network distribution center (NDC) (see [L601](#), [L602](#), or [L605](#)).
- g. *Origin NDC*: this separation includes all pieces addressed for delivery to ZIP Codes within the same NDC (see [L601](#)) that serves the acceptance office that verifies the mailing. There is no minimum quantity requirement for this separation.
- h. *Mixed [NDC, ADC, etc.]*: the pieces are for delivery in the service area of more than one NDC, ADC, etc.
- i. *Residual pieces/bundles/sacks* contain material remaining after completion of a presort sequence. Residual mail lacks the volume set by standard to require or allow bundle preparation to a particular destination, and usually does not qualify for a presort price. Residual mail is also referred to as *nonqualifying* or *working* mail.

#### 1.4 Preparation Definitions and Instructions

For purposes of preparing mail:

- a. *Pieces* refers to individually addressed mailpieces.
- b. A *full* letter tray is one in which faced, upright pieces fill the length of the tray between 85% and 100% full.
- c. A *less-than-full* letter tray is one that contains mail for the same destination regardless of quantity or whether a full tray was previously prepared for that destination. Less-than-full trays may be prepared only if permitted by the standards for the price claimed.
- d. An *overflow* letter tray is a less-than-full tray that contains all pieces remaining after preparation of full trays for the same destination. Overflow trays may be prepared only if permitted by the standards for the price claimed.
- e. A *full* sack is defined in the standards for the class and price claimed.



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- f. *A 5-digit scheme sort for automation letters yields 5-digit scheme trays for 5-digit ZIP Codes identified in labeling list L012 and 5-digit trays for other areas. The 5-digit ZIP Codes in each scheme are treated as one presort destination subject to a minimum volume, with no further separation by 5-digit ZIP Code required. Trays prepared for a 5-digit scheme destination that contain pieces for only one of the schemed 5-digit ZIP Codes are considered 5-digit scheme sorted. When standards require 5-digit/scheme sort, mailers must prepare all possible 5-digit scheme trays, then prepare all possible 5-digit trays.*
- g. *A 5-digit scheme sort for flats meeting the automation-compatibility standards in 201.3.0 yields 5-digit scheme bundles for those 5-digit ZIP Codes identified in L007 and 5-digit bundles for other ZIP Codes. When standards require 5-digit/scheme sort, mailers must prepare all possible 5-digit scheme bundles and sacks of flats, then prepare all possible 5-digit bundles and sacks. The 5-digit ZIP Codes in each scheme are treated as a single presort destination subject to a single minimum volume, with no further separation required. Bundles prepared for a 5-digit scheme destination that contain pieces for only one of the schemed 5-digit ZIP Codes are still considered 5-digit scheme sorted and are labeled accordingly. Bundles must be labeled using an optional endorsement line (OEL) under 708.7.0 or with a red “5 SCH” bundle label. Bundles are placed in appropriate containers using the OEL “label to” 5-digit ZIP Code or using L007 column B.*
- h. *A 5-digit scheme carrier routes sort for Enhanced Carrier Route price Standard Mail flats prepared in sacks or as bundles on pallets yields a 5-digit scheme carrier routes sack or pallet for those 5-digit ZIP Codes listed in L001 and 5-digit carrier routes sacks or pallets for other areas. The 5-digit ZIP Codes in each scheme are treated as a single presort destination subject to a single minimum sack or pallet volume, with no further separation by 5-digit ZIP Code required. Sacks or pallets prepared for a 5-digit scheme carrier routes destination that contain carrier route bundles for only one of the schemed 5-digit areas are still considered to be sorted to 5-digit scheme carrier routes and are labeled accordingly. The 5-digit scheme carrier routes sort is required for carrier route bundles of Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail flats. Preparation of 5-digit scheme carrier routes sacks or pallets must be done for all 5-digit scheme destinations.*
- i. *A 5-digit scheme sort for Standard Mail flats prepared as bundles on pallets yields 5-digit scheme pallets containing automation price and nonautomation price 5-digit bundles for those 5-digit ZIP Codes listed in L001 and yields 5-digit pallets containing automation price and nonautomation price 5-digit bundles for other areas. The 5-digit ZIP Codes in each scheme are treated as a single presort destination subject to a single minimum pallet volume, with no further separation by 5-digit ZIP Code required. Pallets prepared for a 5-digit scheme destination that contain 5-digit bundles for only one of the schemed 5-digit areas are still considered to be sorted to the 5-digit scheme and are labeled accordingly. The 5-digit scheme sort is required for Standard Mail flats. The 5-digit scheme sort may not be used for other mail prepared on pallets, except for 5-digit bundles of Standard Mail irregular parcels that are part of a*

mailing job that is prepared in part as palletized flats at automation prices. Preparation of 5-digit scheme pallets must be done for all 5-digit scheme destinations.

- j. *A merged 5-digit sort for Standard Mail flats prepared in sacks yields merged 5-digit sacks that contain carrier route bundles and/or automation price 5-digit bundles, and/or Presorted price 5-digit bundles that are all for a 5-digit ZIP Code that has an “A” or “C” indicator in the Carrier Route Indicators field in the City State Product that allows combining carrier route bundles, automation price 5-digit bundles, and Presorted price 5-digit bundles in the same 5-digit sack or pallet. The merged 5-digit sort is optional for Standard Mail flats prepared in sacks. Sacks prepared for a merged 5-digit destination that contain only a single price level of bundle(s) (only carrier route bundle(s) or only automation price 5-digit bundle(s) or only Presorted price 5-digit bundle(s)) or that contain only two price levels of bundle(s) are still considered to be merged 5-digit sorted and are labeled accordingly. If preparation of merged 5-digit sacks is performed, it must be done for all 5-digit ZIP Code destinations with an “A” or “C” indicator in the Carrier Route Indicators field in the City State Product that allows combining carrier route bundles, automation price 5-digit bundles, and Presorted price 5-digit bundles in the same 5-digit container.*
- k. *A merged 5-digit sort for Standard Mail flats prepared as bundles on pallets yields merged 5-digit pallets that contain carrier route bundles and noncarrier route 5-digit bundles (automation price 5-digit bundles and/or Presorted price 5-digit bundles). The merged 5-digit sort is optional for Standard Mail flats prepared in sacks under [705.10.0](#). Sacks or pallets prepared for a merged 5-digit destination that contain only a single price level of bundle(s) (only carrier route bundle(s) or only automation price 5-digit bundle(s) or only Presorted price 5-digit bundle(s)) or only two price levels of bundle(s) are still considered to be merged 5-digit sorted and must be labeled accordingly.*
- l. *A merged 5-digit scheme sort for Standard Mail flats prepared in sacks under [705.10.0](#) yields merged 5-digit scheme sacks that contain carrier route bundles and noncarrier route 5-digit bundles (automation price 5-digit bundles and/or Presorted price 5-digit bundles) for those 5-digit ZIP Codes that are part of a single scheme as shown in [L001](#). Sacks prepared for a merged 5-digit scheme destination that contain only a single price level of bundle(s) (only carrier route bundle(s) or only automation price 5-digit bundle(s) or only presorted price 5-digit bundle(s)), or only two price levels of bundle(s), or bundles for only one of the schemed 5-digit ZIP Codes are still considered to be merged 5-digit scheme sorted and must be labeled accordingly. If preparation of merged 5-digit scheme sacks is performed, it must be done for all 5-digit scheme destinations in [L001](#).*
- m. *A merged 5-digit scheme sort for Standard Mail flats prepared as bundles on pallets under [705.8.0](#), [705.10.0](#), [705.12.0](#), or [705.13.0](#) yields merged 5-digit scheme pallets that contain carrier route bundles and noncarrier route 5-digit bundles (automation price and/or Presorted price 5-digit bundles) for those 5-digit ZIP Codes that are part of a single scheme as shown in [L001](#). Pallets prepared for a merged 5-digit scheme destination that contain only a single price level of bundle(s) (only carrier route bundle(s) or only automation price*



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5-digit bundle(s) or only Presorted price 5-digit bundle(s)), or only two price levels of bundle(s), or bundles for only one of the schemed 5-digit ZIP Codes are still considered to be merged 5-digit scheme sorted and must be labeled accordingly. If preparation of merged 5-digit scheme pallets is performed, it must be done for all 5-digit scheme destinations in [L001](#).

- n. A *5-digit/scheme sort for Standard Mail parcels* yields 5-digit scheme sacks or pallets for those 5-digit ZIP Codes listed in [L606](#) and 5-digit sacks or pallets for other ZIP Codes. The 5-digit ZIP Codes in each scheme are treated as a single presort destination subject to a single minimum volume (if required), with no further separation by 5-digit ZIP Code required. Sacks or pallets prepared for a 5-digit scheme destination that contain pieces for only one of the schemed 5-digit ZIP Codes are still considered 5-digit scheme sorted and are labeled accordingly.
- o. A *3-digit scheme sort for letters* yields 3-digit scheme trays for those 3-digit ZIP Code prefixes listed in [L003](#) and 3-digit trays for other areas. The 3-digit ZIP Code prefixes in each scheme are treated as a single presort destination subject to a single minimum tray volume, with no further separation by 3-digit prefix required. Trays prepared for a 3-digit scheme destination that contain pieces for only one of the schemed 3-digit areas are still considered 3-digit scheme sorted and are labeled accordingly. When standards require 3-digit/scheme sort, mailers must prepare all possible 3-digit scheme trays, then prepare all possible 3-digit trays.
- p. A *3-digit scheme sort for flats meeting the automation-compatibility standards in 201.6.0* yields 3-digit scheme bundles for those 3-digit ZIP Codes identified in [L008](#). When standards require 3-digit/scheme sort, mailers must prepare all possible 3-digit scheme bundles of flats, then prepare all possible 3-digit bundles. The 3-digit ZIP Codes in each scheme are treated as a single presort destination subject to a single minimum volume, with no further separation by 3-digit ZIP Code required. Bundles prepared for a 3-digit scheme destination that contain pieces for only one of the schemed 3-digit ZIP Codes are still considered 3-digit scheme sorted and are labeled accordingly. Bundles must be labeled using an optional endorsement line (OEL) under [708.7.0](#) or with a green “3 SCH” bundle label. Bundles are placed in appropriate containers using the OEL “label to” 3-digit ZIP Code or using [L008](#) column B.
- q. An *origin 3-digit (or origin 3-digit scheme)* tray for letters and flats contains all mail (regardless of quantity) for a 3-digit ZIP Code (or 3-digit scheme) area processed by the SCF in whose service area the mail is verified. A separate tray may be prepared for each 3-digit ZIP Code (or 3-digit scheme) area. A tray may be prepared for each 3-digit (or 3-digit scheme) area served by the SCF/plant where mail is entered (if that is different from the SCF/plant serving the Post Office where the mail is verified). In all cases, only one less-than-full tray may be prepared for each 3-digit (or 3-digit scheme) area.
- r. The *required at [quantity]* instruction (e.g., “required at 10 pieces”) means that the particular unit *must* be prepared for the corresponding presort level whenever the specified quantity of mail is reached or exceeded. Bundles and containers may contain more than the specified *required at* quantity up to the



- applicable maximum physical size. Subject to applicable price eligibility standards, smaller quantities may be prepared only if permitted. Where specified by standard, required preparation applies only if the mailer chooses to qualify for the corresponding price.
- s. The *optional at [quantity]* instruction means that the particular unit *may* be prepared for the corresponding presort level whenever the specified quantity of mail is reached or exceeded. Bundles or containers may contain more than the specified *optional at* quantity up to the applicable maximum physical size. Smaller quantities may be prepared only if permitted by applicable price eligibility standards. Standards for quantities with which preparation is optional are often followed by standards for larger quantities with which preparation is required.
  - t. *Entry [facility]* (or *origin [facility]*) refers to the USPS mail processing facility (e.g., “entry NDC”) that serves the Post Office at which the mail is entered by the mailer. If the Post Office where the mail is entered is not the one serving the mailer’s location (e.g., for plant-verified drop shipment), the Post Office of entry determines the *entry* facility. *Entry SCF* includes both single-3-digit and multi-3-digit SCFs. *Entry NDC* includes subordinate ASFs unless otherwise specified.
  - u. The *group pieces* instruction means the pieces are to be sorted together but not secured into a bundle.
  - v. A *bundle* is a group of addressed pieces secured together as a unit. Bundle preparation is described in [2.0](#).
  - w. A “*logical*” *presort destination* represents the total number of pieces that are eligible for a specific presort level based on the required sortation, but which might not be contained in a single bundle or in a single container (sack or pallet) due to applicable preparation requirements or the size of the individual pieces. For example, there may be 42 mailpieces for ZIP Code 43112 forming a Standard Mail “logical” 5-digit bundle, and they are prepared in three physical 5-digit bundles because of the applicable weight and height restrictions on bundles. For pallets, 2,800 pounds of mail may be destined to an SCF destination, and these would form the “logical” SCF pallet, but the mail is placed on two physical SCF pallets each weighing 1,400 pounds because of the 2,200 pound maximum pallet weight requirement.
  - x. *Cobundling* is an alternate preparation method available under [705.11.0](#) for Standard Mail that allows the combining of flat-size automation price and Presorted price pieces within the same bundle under the single minimum bundle size requirement. Regardless of the class of mail, pieces may not be combined in more than one physical bundle for each logical presort destination unless presented using an approved manifest mailing system under [705.2.0](#).

### 1.5 Optional Containerization for Flats

Mailers may prepare pallets or other USPS-approved containers as described in [705.8.10.2](#) or according to local customer/supplier agreements.



### 1.6 FSS Preparation

[5-31-15] Except for Standard Mail flats mailed at Saturation, High Density, or High-Density Plus prices, all Standard Mail flats destinating to a FSS scheme in accordance with labeling list [L006](#) must be prepared under [705.14.0](#).

## 2.0 Bundles

### 2.1 General

A *bundle* is a group of addressed pieces, for a presort destination, secured together as a unit. See [203.3.0](#) for bundling standards.

### 2.2 Marketing Parcels

#### 2.2.1 Bundling

Bundling is permitted only for Marketing parcels mailed at Product Sample prices and for related DALs when used. Bundles must be in equal quantities of up to 50 parcels per bundles, with quantities of other than 50 indicated on a bundle facing slip. Bundles of parcels must be either banded or shrinkwrapped, and bundles of parcels more than 8 ounces each must be banded and shrinkwrapped. See [203.3.0](#) for other bundling standards.

#### 2.2.2 Facing Slips

Facing slips used on bundles of DALs must show the carrier route designation, the 5-digit destination ZIP Code, and the number of DALs for that carrier route. Facing slips used on bundles of Product Sample parcels must show the quantity in the bundle if less than 50 and this information:

- a. Line 1: Destination city, two-letter state abbreviation, and 5-digit ZIP Code.
- b. Line 2: Content (e.g., "STD MKTG SAMPLE) if accompanied by DALs bundled by carrier route, or contents followed by carrier route type and route number when not accompanied by DALs (e.g., "STD MKTG SAMPLE CR R 012").
- c. Line 3: City and two-letter state abbreviation of the origin Post Office.

## 3.0 Letter Trays and Sacks

Letter mailings must be prepared in letter trays with sleeves. Flat mailings must be prepared in sacks except when permitted to be prepared in letter trays under other applicable standards in this section. Parcel mailings must be prepared in sacks, except for Product Samples, which may be in cartons, sacks, or bundles directly on pallets. Also, see [602.4.0](#) when Product Samples are mailed with DALs. Containers for Customized MarketMail are specified in [245.13.5](#). See [203.4.0](#) and [203.5.0](#) for tray and sack standards.

## 4.0 Tray and Sack Labels

Tray and sack labels are subject to the standards in [203.4.0](#) and [203.5.0](#).

## 5.0 Preparing Nonautomation Letters

### 5.1 Basic Standards

All mailings and all pieces in each mailing at Regular Standard Mail and Nonprofit Standard Mail nonautomation prices are subject to specific preparation standards in [5.0](#) and to these general standards (automation price mailings must be prepared under [10.0](#)):

- a. All pieces must meet the eligibility standards in [243.2.0](#) through [243.5.0](#). Nonprofit Standard Mail must meet the additional eligibility standards in [703.1.0](#).
- b. All pieces in each mailing must be in the letter-size processing category. Unless excepted by standard, letter-size pieces must be prepared in letter trays.
- c. All pieces must meet the applicable general preparation standards in [202](#).
- d. All pieces in the mailing must meet the specific sortation and preparation standards in [5.0](#).
- e. Sortation determines price eligibility as specified in [243.5.0](#).

### 5.2 Marking

All regular and Nonprofit Standard Mail pieces must be marked under [202.3.5](#). Regular and Nonprofit Standard Mail pieces must not be marked “ECRLOT,” “ECRWSH,” “ECRWSS,” “AUTO,” or “Single-Piece” (or “SNGLP”).

### 5.3 Machinable Preparation

#### 5.3.1 Machinable Bundling

Machinable pieces are not bundled, except for the following (see [203.3.0](#)):

- a. Card-size pieces.
- b. All pieces in a less-than-full mixed AADC tray.

#### 5.3.2 Traying and Labeling

Instead of preparing overflow AADC trays with fewer than 150 pieces, mailers may include these pieces in mixed AADC trays when a tray of 150 or more pieces can be made. Mailers must note these trays on standardized documentation (see [708.1.2](#)). Pieces that are placed in the next tray level must be grouped by destination and placed in the front or back of that tray. Preparation sequence, tray size, and labeling:

- a. Origin/entry 3-digit (optional, no minimum); labeling:
  1. Line 1: [L002](#), Column A.
  2. Line 2: “STD LTR 3D MACH.”
- b. AADC (optional, but required for AADC price); 150-piece minimum (overflow allowed); group pieces by AADC when overflow pieces from AADC trays are placed in mixed AADC trays; labeling:
  1. Line 1: [L801](#), Column B.
  2. Line 2: “STD LTR AADC MACH.”
- c. Mixed AADC (required); no minimum; labeling:



1. Line 1: [L011](#), Column B. Use [L010](#), Column B, if entered at an ASF or NDC or for mail placed on an ASF, NDC, or SCF pallet under the option in [705.8.10.3](#).
2. Line 2: “STD LTR MACH WKG.”

### 5.4 Nonmachinable Preparation

#### 5.4.1 Nonmachinable Bundling

Except as provided in [203.3.4](#), bundling is required before traying. A bundle must be prepared when the quantity of addressed pieces for a required presort level reaches a minimum of 10 pieces. Smaller volumes are not permitted except for mixed ADC bundles. Preparation sequence, bundle size, and labeling:

- a. 5-digit (required); 10-piece minimum; red Label 5 or optional endorsement line (OEL); labeling not required for pieces in full 5-digit trays.
- 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.

#### 5.4.2 Traying and Labeling

When all full trays for a destination have been prepared, mailers may include a group of 10 or more overflow pieces for that destination in a qualified tray at either of the next two tray levels. For example, overflow pieces for a 5-digit destination may be placed into an existing correct 3-digit tray; if a 3-digit tray that includes the 5-digit destination does not exist, the overflow pieces may be placed into the correct existing ADC tray. Bundle the overflow pieces separately with the correct presort bundle label or OEL; the pieces will still qualify for the 5-digit price. Mailers must note these trays on standardized documentation (see [708.1.2](#)). Preparation sequence, tray size, and labeling:

- a. 5-digit (required); 150-piece minimum; labeling
  1. Line 1: city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code on mail (see [203.4.11](#) for overseas military mail).
  2. Line 2: “STD LTR 5D MANUAL.”
- b. 3-digit (required); 150-piece minimum (mailers may prepare 3-digit origin/entry trays with as few as 10 pieces per tray); labeling:
  1. Line 1: [L002](#), Column A.
  2. Line 2: “STD LTR 3D MANUAL.”
- c. ADC (required); 150-piece minimum; labeling:
  1. Line 1: [L004](#), Column B.
  2. Line 2: “STD LTR ADC MANUAL.”
- d. Mixed ADC (required); no minimum; labeling:
  1. Line 1: [L011](#), Column B. Use [L010](#), Column B, if entered at an ASF or NDC or for mail placed on an ASF, NDC, or SCF pallet under the option in [705.8.10.3](#).

2. Line 2: "STD LTR MANUAL WKG."

### 5.5 Residual Pieces

Mailers entering Standard Mail residual pieces that do not qualify for Standard Mail prices, and paying the First-Class Mail prices (but prepared "as is" under [244.5.0](#)), must prepare these pieces in separate trays from the automation and presort pieces. Mailers must label the trays under [708.6.0](#) using CIN code 560 on residual trays. Label trays as follows:

- a. Line 1: Use [L011](#), Column B.
- b. Line 2: Use the human-readable content line corresponding to content identifier number 560 (see [Exhibit 708.6.2.4](#)).
- c. Line 3: Office of mailing or mailer information.

## 6.0 Preparing Enhanced Carrier Route Letters

### 6.1 Basic Standards

All mailings and all pieces in each mailing at Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail and Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail nonautomation prices are subject to specific preparation standards in [6.0](#) and to these general standards:

- a. All pieces must meet the standards for basic eligibility in [243.2.0](#) through [243.4.0](#) and specific eligibility in [243.6.0](#). Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail must meet the additional eligibility standards in [703.1.0](#).
- b. All pieces in each mailing must be in the letter-size processing category. Unless excepted by standard, letter-size pieces must be prepared in letter trays.
- c. All pieces must meet the applicable general preparation standards in [2.0](#) through [4.0](#) and [202](#), and the following:
  1. Pieces must be sequenced according to [6.8](#).
  2. Pieces with a simplified address format must meet the standards in [602.3.0](#).
- d. All pieces in the mailing must meet the specific sortation and preparation standards in [6.0](#) or the palletization standards in [705.8.0](#).
- e. Sortation determines price eligibility as specified in [243.6.0](#).

### 6.2 Marking

All regular and Nonprofit Standard Mail Enhanced Carrier Route pieces must be marked under [202.3.0](#). All pieces must also be marked "ECRL0T" for basic price, "ECRWSH" for high density or high density plus price, or "ECRWSS" for saturation price. Pieces in carrier route mailings under [6.7](#) must bear carrier route information lines under [708.8.0](#).

### 6.3 Residual Pieces

Pieces not sorted as a carrier route mailing must be prepared as a separate mailing at Standard Mail automation or Presorted prices or at single-piece First-Class Mail or Priority Mail prices.



### 6.4 Carrier Route Bundle Preparation

Prepare carrier route bundles of letter-size mail as follows:

- a. Mailers must prepare only carrier route bundles, except under [6.7](#). Carrier route bundles are not permitted in full carrier route trays, except for card-size pieces.
- b. Except under [203.3.12](#) or [6.5](#), carrier route bundles must contain at least 10 pieces.
- c. The method of labeling a carrier route bundle is based on the following tray levels:
  1. Carrier route tray: No bundle labeling is required.
  2. 5-digit or 3-digit carrier routes tray: Bundles must have a facing slip unless the pieces in the bundle have a carrier information line or an optional endorsement line (OEL).

### 6.5 Bundles and Trays With Fewer Than the Minimum Number of Pieces Required

As a general exception to [6.4](#), a mailer may prepare a bundle with fewer than 10 pieces and a less-than-full carrier route tray when they are claiming the saturation price for the contents and the applicable density standard is met.

### 6.6 General Traying and Labeling

For all ECR letters over 3 ounces and all ECR letters that are not automation-compatible or delivery-point barcoded, prepare trays as explained below. Also prepare trays as explained below when a mailing contains some pieces over 3 ounces and some pieces up to 3 ounces. Pieces with simplified addresses must be prepared in separate trays from pieces with other forms of addressing. For ECR automation-compatible letters that are delivery-point barcoded and weigh up to 3 ounces, prepare trays under [6.7](#). Preparation sequence, tray size, and labeling:

- a. Carrier route: required; full trays only, no overflow.
  1. Line 1: city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code on mail (see [203.4.11](#) for overseas military mail).
  2. Line 2: for saturation, "STD LTR MACH WSS," followed by route type and number; for high-density or high density plus, "STD LTR MACH WSH," followed by route type and number; for basic, "STD LTR MACH LOT," followed by route type and number.
- b. 5-digit carrier routes: required if full tray, optional with minimum one 10-piece bundle.
  1. Line 1: city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code on mail (see [203.4.11](#) for overseas military mail).
  2. Line 2: "STD LTR 5D CR-RT MACH."
- c. 3-digit carrier routes: optional with minimum one 10-piece bundle for each of two or more 5-digit areas.
  1. Line 1: city, state, and 3-digit ZIP Code prefix shown in [L002](#), Column A, that corresponds to 3-digit ZIP Code prefix on mail.
  2. Line 2: "STD LTR 3D CR-RT MACH."

- d. For trays containing barcoded automation-compatible letter-size pieces over 3 ounces or nonmachinable letter-size pieces, use these Line 2 label designations in place of “MACH”:
  1. Trays containing barcoded, automation-compatible pieces over 3 ounces: “BC.”
  2. Trays containing nonmachinable pieces: “MAN.”
  3. Trays containing simplified address pieces: “MAN.”

## 6.7 Traying and Labeling for Automation-Compatible ECR Letters

Mailers must make full carrier route and 5-digit carrier routes trays, when possible, for automation-compatible, delivery-point barcoded ECR letters that weigh up to 3 ounces. Except for card-size pieces, pieces must not be bundled. Group pieces together by carrier route in 5-digit and 3-digit carrier routes trays. If pieces for one carrier route do not result in a full tray, mailers must combine pieces from at least two routes to make full 5-digit carrier routes trays, grouping pieces together by carrier route. If pieces for multiple carrier routes do not result in a full 5-digit tray, mailers must combine pieces from at least two 5-digit ZIP Codes to make 3-digit carrier routes trays, grouping pieces together by carrier route. If pieces fill more than one tray but do not fill an additional tray, mailers must place excess pieces in a tray at the next sortation level. Preparation sequence, tray size, and labeling:

- a. Carrier route: required; full trays only, no overflow.
  1. Line 1: city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code on mail (see [203.4.11](#) for overseas military mail).
  2. Line 2: for saturation, “STD LTR BC WSS,” followed by route type and number; for high-density, “STD LTR BC WSH,” followed by route type and number; for basic, “STD LTR BC LOT,” followed by route type and number.
- b. 5-digit carrier routes: required; no overflow, no bundling.
  1. Line 1: city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code on mail (see [203.4.11](#) for overseas military mail).
  2. Line 2: “STD LTR 5D CR-RT BC.”
- c. 3-digit carrier routes: required; bundling required in less-than-full trays.
  1. Line 1: city, state, and 3-digit ZIP Code prefix shown in [L002](#), Column A, that corresponds to 3-digit ZIP Code prefix on mail.
  2. Line 2: “STD LTR 3D CR-RT BC.”

## 6.8 Delivery Sequence Standards

### 6.8.1 Basic Standards

Mailpieces for which a walk-sequence discount is claimed must be organized in the delivery sequence determined by the USPS and prepared as a carrier route mailing under [6.1](#) through [6.7](#) and the standards below. Pieces prepared with a simplified address must also meet the corresponding standards.



#### **6.8.2 Missing Addresses**

Some mailpieces cannot be sequenced because an exact match for a name or address cannot be obtained. These pieces may be included in a sequenced mailing only if they are placed behind or after the sequenced mail. Arrange these pieces:

- a. Alphabetically by complete street name, then either in ascending order by ZIP+4 code sector segments or numerically in ascending order by primary address.
- b. Numerically for numbered streets, then either in ascending order by ZIP+4 code sector segments or numerically in ascending order by primary address.

#### **6.8.3 Updating Walk Sequence Information—General**

Walk-sequence price pieces prepared with other than a simplified address format under [6.8.4](#) must be sequenced using USPS data from one of the following sources, issued within 90 days before the mailing date:

- a. The Computerized Delivery Sequence (CDS) file.
- b. The Delivery Sequence File (DSF) or Delivery Sequence File, Second Generation (DSF2).
- c. Delivery sequence information from USPS address sequencing services, as requested by the customer.

#### **6.8.4 Updating Delivery Statistics Information for Simplified Addressing**

Mailpieces prepared with a simplified address must be based on delivery stop information obtained within 90 days before the mailing date, either from the Delivery Statistics File, in accordance with [509.1.1](#), or from the postmaster of the destination office (when authorized under [509.1.4](#)).

#### **6.8.5 Out-of-Date Walk Sequence Information**

Mailings prepared with out-of-date walk-sequencing or delivery statistics information are not eligible for prices requiring walk-sequence preparation.

#### **6.8.6 Updating Line-of-Travel Sequence Information**

Unless the mail is prepared in carrier walk sequence, line-of-travel (LOT) sequence is required for mailings at Standard Mail Enhanced Carrier Route basic prices. LOT sequence is not an exact walk sequence but a sequence of ZIP+4 codes arranged in the order that the route is served by a carrier. (First the ZIP+4 groups are sequenced, then the addresses within each are identified as being in ascending or descending order.) The USPS eLOT product provides a list of the ZIP+4 codes each carrier route serves, identifies the order in which they are delivered, and provides an indicator specifying whether the addresses that share the same ZIP+4 code must be sorted in ascending or descending order. When a range of ZIP+4 codes on the same carrier route are assigned the same sequence number, the addresses bearing those ZIP+4 codes must be arranged in ascending ZIP+4 code order before the sequence number is assigned. LOT information must be updated within 90 days before the date of mailing.



## 6.9 Delivery Sequence Documentation

### 6.9.1 Basic Standards

The postage statement must be annotated in the “Carrier Route Sequencing Date” block on page 1. The mailer must annotate the postage statement to show the earliest (oldest) date of the method used to obtain sequencing information for the mailing. The mailer’s signature on the postage statement certifies that this standard has been met when the corresponding mail is presented to the USPS. The mailer must maintain documentation to substantiate compliance with the standards for carrier route sequencing. Unless submitted with each corresponding mailing, the mailer must be able to provide the USPS with documentation (if requested) of accurate sequencing or delivery statistics for each carrier route to which pieces are mailed. Acceptable forms of documentation are:

- a. The invoice showing that the addresses came from CDS.
- b. DSF2 invoice or documentation.
- c. Copies of the delivery unit summaries that served as the mailer’s bills for address sequencing service charges.
- d. Evidence of receipt of information from postmasters for simplified address mailings (see [509.1.0](#)).
- e. Form 3553 showing the date of the eLOT product used, or the date from the USPS Qualification report produced by presort software.

### 6.9.2 High Density and High Density Plus

For each carrier route to which high density or high density plus mail is addressed, the mailer must document the total number of addressed pieces to the route.

### 6.9.3 Saturation Density—Simplified Address Mail

For each carrier route to which mail with a simplified address is sent at the saturation price, the mailer must be able to document that the mailing meets the applicable density standard. This documentation must show the total number of active possible deliveries and the total number to which mailpieces in the mailing are being addressed, by 5-digit ZIP Code and, within each, by carrier route. It must be submitted with each applicable mailing.

### 6.9.4 Saturation Density—Other Mail

For each carrier route to which mail without a simplified address is sent at the saturation price, the mailer must be able to document that the mailing meets the applicable density standards. This documentation must show either the total number of active possible residential deliveries and the number and percentage to which mailpieces are addressed, or the total number of all active possible deliveries and the number and percentage to which mailpieces are addressed, depending on whether qualification is based on the 90% or 75% criterion, respectively. The documentation must be listed by 5-digit ZIP Code and, within each, by carrier route. It must be submitted with each applicable mailing.

### 6.9.5 Both Prices

If a mailing contains pieces qualifying for more than one walk-sequence price, the documentation required by [6.9.2](#), [6.9.3](#), or [6.9.4](#) may be combined. Entries for pieces at the high density or high density plus prices must be so annotated on the



documentation. For the entire mailing, a summary of the total number of pieces at each price must be provided. This documentation must be submitted with each mailing.

#### **6.9.6 Carrier Route Price**

If a mailing includes walk-sequence price and basic carrier route price pieces, in addition to the information required by [6.9.2](#) through [6.9.5](#), the documentation for the basic carrier route price mail must show, by 5-digit ZIP Code and, within each, by carrier route, the total number of addressed pieces at each price for each carrier route to which pieces are addressed. Pieces qualifying for the basic carrier route price must be so annotated. For the entire mailing, a summary by 5-digit ZIP Code of the total number of pieces at each price must be provided. This documentation must be submitted with each mailing.

## 7.0 Preparing Automation Letters

### **7.1 Basic Standards**

Letter-size automation price Standard Mail must be prepared under [7.0](#) and the eligibility standards for the price claimed. Trays must bear barcoded tray labels under [203.4.0](#).

### **7.2 Mailings**

All pieces in a mailing must meet the standards in [201.1.0](#), and [201.3.0](#), and must be sorted together to the finest extent required for the price claimed. The definitions of a mailing and permissible combinations are in [1.0](#).

### **7.3 Marking**

All Standard Mail automation price pieces must be marked under [202.3.0](#). Pieces claimed at an automation price must bear the appropriate class marking and “AUTO,” except as provided in [202.3.0](#). Pieces not claimed at an automation price must not bear “AUTO” unless First-Class Mail single-piece price postage is affixed or a corrective single-piece price marking (“Single-Piece” or “SNGLP”) is applied.

### **7.4 General Preparation**

Grouping, bundling, and labeling are not generally required or permitted, except bundling is required in any mailing consisting entirely of card-size pieces and for pieces in overflow and less-than-full trays, and grouping is required under [7.5](#).

### **7.5 Tray Preparation**

Instead of preparing overflow trays with fewer than 150 pieces, mailers may include these pieces in an existing qualified tray of at least 150 or more pieces at the next tray level. (For example, if a mailer has 30 overflow 5-digit pieces for ZIP Code 20260, these pieces may be added to an existing qualified 3-digit tray for the correct destination (ZIP Code prefix 202) and the overflow 5-digit pieces will still qualify for the 5-digit price). Mailers must note these trays on standardized documentation (see [708.1.2](#)). Pieces that are placed in the next tray level must be grouped by destination and placed in the front or back of that tray. Mailers may use this option selectively for 3-digit and AADC ZIP Codes. This option does not apply to origin/entry 3-digit/scheme trays. Preparation sequence, tray size, and Line 1 labeling:

- a. 5-digit/scheme: optional, but required for 5-digit price (150-piece minimum); overflow allowed. Make 5-digit scheme trays first, then 5-digit trays; see [1.4f](#). For Line 1, label as follows:
  1. For 5-digit scheme trays, use destination shown in labeling list [L012](#).
  2. For 5-digit trays, use city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code destination on pieces (see [203.4.11](#) for overseas military mail).
- b. 3-digit/scheme: optional, but required for 3-digit price (150-piece minimum except no minimum for origin or entry 3-digit/scheme); overflow allowed. Make 3-digit scheme trays first, then 3-digit trays; see [1.4g](#). For Line 1, use [L002](#), Column B.
- c. AADC: optional, but required for AADC price (150-piece minimum); overflow allowed; group pieces by 3-digit (or 3-digit scheme) ZIP Code prefix when overflow pieces from 3-digit/scheme trays are placed in AADC trays. For Line 1, use [L801](#), Column B.
- d. Mixed AADC: required (no minimum); group pieces by AADC when overflow pieces from AADC trays are placed in mixed AADC trays. For Line 1 labeling: use [L011](#), Column B. Use [L010](#), Column B if entered at an ASF or NDC or for mail placed on an ASF, NDC, or SCF pallet under the option in [705.8.10.3](#).

## 7.6 Tray Line 2

Line 2: “STD LTR” and:

- a. 5-digit scheme: “BC 5D SCHEME.”
- b. 5-digit: “5D BC.”
- c. 3-digit scheme: “BC 3D SCHEME” and, if applicable, as shown in [L002](#), Column B, followed by the letter “A,” “B,” or “C.”
- d. 3-digit: “3D BC.”
- e. AADC: “AADC BC.”
- f. Mixed AADC: “BC WKG.”

## 7.7 Presentation

Upon presentation of letter-size automation price Standard Mail mailings to USPS for verification, mailers must present all mixed AADC trays together, and such trays must either be adjacent to one another or side by side, and must be placed as the top layer(s) on any given container.

## 8.0 Preparing Nonautomation Flats

### 8.1 Basic Standards

All mailings and all pieces in each mailing at Regular Standard Mail and Nonprofit Standard Mail nonautomation prices are subject to specific preparation standards in [8.2](#) through [8.9](#) and to these general standards (automation price mailings must be prepared under [10.0](#)):

- a. All pieces must be in the flat-size processing category.



- b. All pieces must meet the applicable general preparation standards in [1.0](#) through [4.0](#) and the following:
  - 1. All regular and Nonprofit Standard Mail pieces must be marked under [202.3.0](#). Regular and Nonprofit Standard Mail pieces must not be marked “ECRLOT,” “ECRWSH,” “ECRWSS,” “AUTO,” or “Single-Piece” (or “SNGLP”).
  - 2. Unless excepted by standard, all pieces must be in the flat-size processing category and must be prepared in sacks or on pallets. Certain flat-size pieces may be prepared in letter trays under [3.0](#).
- c. All pieces in the mailing must meet the specific sortation and preparation standards in [8.0](#) or the palletization standards in [705.8.0](#). Flat-size pieces may be prepared under [705.9.0](#) through [705.13.0](#).
- d. Sortation determines price eligibility as specified in [243.5.0](#).

### 8.2 Required Bundling

Except as provided in [8.4](#), bundling is required before sacking. A bundle must be prepared when the quantity of addressed pieces for a required presort level reaches the required minimum bundle size in [8.3](#). Smaller volumes are not permitted except under [203.3.0](#) and for mixed ADC bundles.

### 8.3 Bundling and Labeling

Mailings consisting entirely of pieces meeting the automation-compatibility criteria in [201.6.0](#) must be prepared in 5-digit scheme bundles for those 5-digit ZIP Codes identified in [L007](#) and in 3-digit scheme bundles for those 3-digit ZIP Codes identified in [L008](#). Preparation sequence, bundle size except as allowed under [203.3.12](#), and labeling:

- a. 5-digit scheme (required for flats meeting the automation-compatibility standards in [201.6.0](#)), see definition in [1.4j](#):
  - 1. For mailings containing only pieces weighing 5 ounces (0.3125 pound) or less: 15-piece minimum; red Label 5 SCH, or OEL.
  - 2. For mailings containing any pieces weighing more than 5 ounces (0.3125 pound): 10-piece minimum; red Label 5 SCH, or OEL.
- b. 5-digit (required), see definition in [1.4j](#):
  - 1. For mailings containing only pieces weighing 5 ounces (0.3125 pound) or less: 15-piece minimum; red Label 5 or OEL.
  - 2. For mailings containing any pieces weighing more than 5 ounces (0.3125 pound): 10-piece minimum; red Label 5 or OEL.
- c. 3-digit scheme (required for flats meeting the automation-compatibility standards in [201.6.0](#)), see definition in [1.4o](#); 10-piece minimum; green Label 3 SCH, or OEL.
- d. 3-digit (required), see definition in [1.4o](#); 10-piece minimum; green Label 3 or OEL.
- e. ADC (required); 10-piece minimum; pink Label A or OEL.
- f. Mixed ADC (required); no minimum; tan Label X or OEL.

**8.4 Loose Packing**

District managers may authorize loose packing of unbundled pieces to fill Number 3 sacks if no pieces in a sack would be more finely sorted if bundled. Pieces must be faced and packed to remain oriented in transit. The total weight of sacks containing such pieces may not exceed 70 pounds. Requests for loose packing must be made in advance through the Post Office of mailing.

**8.5 Required Sacking or Traying**

Except as provided in 8.6, a sack, or a letter tray under 3.0, 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, mailers must apply these methods:
  1. Pieces weighing 1.92 ounces (0.12 pound) or less must be prepared using the 125-piece minimum.
  2. Pieces weighing more than 1.92 ounces must be prepared using the 15-pound minimum.
- b. For nonidentical-weight pieces, mailers must apply either one of these methods:
  1. The minimum that applies to the average piece weight for the entire mailing is used. The net weight of the mailing is divided by the number of pieces, and the resulting average single-piece weight is used to determine whether the 125-piece or 15-pound minimum applies.
  2. The actual piece count or mail weight for each sack is used, if documentation can be provided with the mailing that shows for each sack the number of pieces and the total weight.

**8.6 Drop Shipment**

A mailer using Priority Mail or Priority Mail Express to drop ship Standard Mail flat-size pieces may prepare sacks containing fewer than 125 pieces or less than 15 pounds of mail.

**8.7 Sacking and Labeling**

Preparation sequence, sack size, and labeling:

- a. 5-digit/scheme (required); scheme sort required (before 5-digit sort), only for pieces meeting the automation flats criteria in 201.6.0, see definition in 1.4j; 125-piece or 15-pound minimum; labeling:
  1. Line 1: For 5-digit scheme sacks use L007, Column B. For 5-digit sacks, use city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code destination on pieces. (See 203.4.11 for overseas military mail).
  2. Line 2: For 5-digit scheme sacks, "STD FLT 5D SCH NON BC." For 5-digit sacks, "STD FLTS 5D NON BC."
- b. 3-digit (required); 125-piece or 15-pound minimum; labeling:
  1. Line 1: L002, Column A.
  2. Line 2: "STD FLTS 3D NON BC."



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- c. Origin/entry 3-digits(s) (optional); one-bundle minimum; labeling:
  - 1. Line 1: [L002](#), Column A.
  - 2. Line 2: "STD FLTS 3D NON BC."
- d. ADC (required); 125-piece or 15-pound minimum; labeling:
  - 1. Line 1: [L004](#), Column B.
  - 2. Line 2: "STD FLTS ADC NON BC."
- e. Mixed ADC (required); no minimum; labeling:
  - 1. Line 1: Use [L009](#), Column B.
  - 2. Line 2: "STD FLTS NON BC WKG."

### 8.8 Cotraining and Cobundling Flats With Automation Mail

The following standards apply:

- a. If the mailing job contains a carrier route mailing, an automation mailing, and a nonautomation mailing, then it must be prepared under one of the following options: 1) the carrier route mailing must be prepared under [9.0](#) and the automation and nonautomation mailings must be prepared under [705.9.0](#); or 2) all three mailings in the mailing job must be prepared under [705.10.0](#).
- b. If the mailing job contains an automation mailing and a nonautomation mailing, then it must be prepared under the cosacking standards in [705.9.0](#).
- c. If the mailing job contains a carrier route mailing and a nonautomation mailing, then it must be separately sacked under [5.0](#) and [9.0](#) or prepared using the merged sacking option in [705.10.0](#).
- d. If the mailing job contains a carrier route mailing and an automation mailing, then it must be separately sacked under [9.0](#) and [10.0](#) or prepared using the merged sacking option in [705.10.0](#).
- e. Nonautomation pieces may be cobundled with automation pieces under the standards in [705.11.0](#).

### 8.9 Merged Containerization of Carrier Route, Automation, and Nonautomation Flats

Under the optional preparation in [705.10.0](#), nonautomation 5-digit bundles prepared under [5.2](#) through [8.8](#) are cosacked with carrier route bundles prepared under [9.0](#) and with automation 5-digit bundles prepared under [10.0](#) in merged 5-digit scheme sacks and merged 5-digit sacks. Under the optional preparation in [705.10.0](#), [705.12.0](#), or [705.13.0](#), nonautomation 5-digit bundles are copalletized with carrier route bundles prepared under [9.0](#) and with automation 5-digit bundles prepared under [10.0](#) on merged 5-digit scheme pallets and merged 5-digit pallets. See [8.8a](#) for information on when preparation under [705.10.0](#) may be required.

**8.10 Residual Pieces**

Mailers entering Standard Mail residual pieces that do not qualify for Standard Mail prices, and paying the First-Class Mail prices (but prepared “as is” under [244.5.0](#)), must separately bundle and sack residual pieces from the automation and presort pieces. Mailers must label sacks under [708.6.0](#) using the CIN code 582 for use with residual sacks. Label sacks as follows:

- a. Line 1: Use [L009](#), Column B.
- b. Line 2: Use the human-readable content line corresponding to content identifier number 582 (see [Exhibit 708.6.2.4](#)).
- c. Line 3: Office of mailing or mailer information.

**9.0 Preparing Enhanced Carrier Route Flats****9.1 Basic Standards**

All mailings and all pieces in each mailing at Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail and Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail nonautomation prices are subject to specific preparation standards in [9.2](#) through [9.7](#) and to these general standards:

- a. All pieces must meet the standards for basic eligibility in [243.2.0](#) through [243.4.0](#) and specific eligibility in [243.6.0](#). Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail must meet the additional eligibility standards in [703.1.0](#).
- b. All pieces must be in the flat-size processing category.
- c. All pieces must meet the applicable general preparation standards in [2.0](#) through [4.0](#) and [202](#), and the following:
  1. All regular and Nonprofit Standard Mail Enhanced Carrier Route pieces must be marked under [202.3.0](#). All pieces also must be marked “ECRLOT” for basic price, “ECRWSH” for high density or high density plus prices, or “ECRWSS” for saturation price.
  2. Generally, flat-size pieces must be in sacks or in bundles on pallets. Certain flat-size pieces may be in letter trays under [3.0](#). When entering flat-size pieces at DDUs, mailers may prepare and transport unsacked, nonpalletized bundles according to standards in [203.3.0](#).
  3. Pieces must be sequenced according to [9.9](#).
  4. Pieces with a simplified address format must meet the standards in [602.3.0](#).
- d. All pieces in the mailing must meet the specific sortation and preparation standards in [9.0](#) or the palletization standards in [705.8.0](#). Flat-size pieces may be prepared under [705.9.0](#) through [705.13.0](#).
- e. Sortation determines price eligibility as specified in [243.5.0](#).



### 9.2 Residual Pieces

Pieces not sorted as a carrier route mailing must be prepared as a separate mailing at Standard Mail automation or Presorted prices or at single-piece First-Class Mail or Priority Mail prices.

### 9.3 Carrier Route Bundle Preparation

Prepare carrier route bundles of flat-size mail as follows:

- a. Mailers must prepare only carrier route bundles. Carrier route bundles are not required in full carrier route trays.
- b. Except under [9.4](#), carrier route bundles must contain at least 10 pieces.
- c. The method of labeling a carrier route bundle is based on the following sack or tray levels:
  1. Carrier route tray or sack: No bundle labeling is required.
  2. 5-digit scheme or 5-digit carrier routes tray or sacks: Bundles must have a facing slip unless the pieces in the bundle have a carrier information line or an optional endorsement line (OEL).

### 9.4 Bundles, Trays, and Sacks With Fewer Than the Minimum Number of Pieces Required

As a general exception to [9.2](#) through [9.7](#), a mailer may prepare a bundle, tray, or sack with fewer than the minimum number of pieces required for a carrier route when they are claiming the saturation price for the contents and meet the applicable density standard.

### 9.5 Multi Carrier Routes Bundle

A mailer may combine individual eligible bundles of Standard Mail Enhanced Carrier Route basic price mail into a multi carrier routes bundle of the same 5-digit ZIP Code under these conditions:

- a. Individual carrier route bundles cannot exceed 1 inch (except for a multi carrier routes bundle under [9.5b](#)) and must be secured with two bands, one around the length and one around the girth.
- b. A multi carrier routes bundle can contain one individual bundle that exceeds 1 inch to serve as an anchor.
- c. The multi carrier routes bundle must meet the standards in [203.3.0](#).
- d. The multi carrier routes bundle must be secured with at least two bands, one around the length and one around the girth; or with shrinkwrap; or with shrinkwrap plus one or more bands.
- e. The multi carrier routes bundle must be labeled with an optional endorsement line (OEL). The top bundle must contain the carrier route information for the individual bundle preceded by the endorsement "Multi" and two asterisks (e.g., \*\*\*\*\*Multi\*\*C-001).
- f. A multi carrier routes bundle that exceeds the maximum heights in [203.3.0](#) by less than the thickness of an individual carrier route bundle (e.g., 1 inch or less) meets the standards.



## 9.6 Required Sack Minimums

When sacking is required, mailers must prepare a sack when the quantity of mail for a required presort destination reaches either 125 pieces or 15 pounds of pieces, whichever occurs first. The following conditions apply:

- 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. Sacks with fewer than 125 pieces or less than 15 pounds of pieces may be prepared to a carrier route when the saturation price is claimed for the contents and the applicable density standard is met.

## 9.7 Sack Preparation

Preparation sequence, sack size, and labeling:

- a. Carrier route: required (minimum of 125 pieces/15 pounds).
  1. Line 1: city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code on mail (see [203.4.11](#) for overseas military mail).
  2. Line 2: “STD FLTS ECRWSS” or “STD FLTS ECRWSH” or “STD FLTS ECRLOT” as applicable, followed by the route type and number.
- b. 5-digit scheme carrier routes: required (no minimum).
  1. Line 1: use [L001](#), column B.
  2. Line 2: “STD FLTS CR-RTS SCH.”
- c. 5-digit carrier routes: required (no minimum).
  1. Line 1: city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code on mail (see [203.4.11](#) for overseas military mail).
  2. Line 2: “STD FLTS CR-RTS.”

## 9.8 Merged Containerization of Carrier Route, Automation, and Presorted Price Flats

Under the optional preparation in [705.10.0](#), carrier route price bundles are cosacked with Presorted price 5-digit bundles prepared under [5.0](#) and with automation price 5-digit bundles prepared under [10.0](#) in merged 5-digit scheme sacks and merged 5-digit sacks. Under the optional preparation in [705.10.0](#), [705.12.0](#), or [705.13.0](#), carrier route price bundles prepared under [9.3](#) and [9.3](#) are copalletized with Presorted price 5-digit bundles prepared under [5.0](#) and with automation price



5-digit bundles prepared under [10.0](#) on merged 5-digit scheme pallets and merged 5-digit pallets. Presorted price pieces may be cobundled with automation price pieces under [705.11.0](#).

## 9.9 Delivery Sequence Standards

### 9.9.1 Basic Standards

Mailpieces for which a walk-sequence discount is claimed must be organized in the delivery sequence determined by the USPS and prepared as a carrier route mailing under [9.0](#) and the standards below. Pieces prepared with a simplified address must also meet the corresponding standards.

### 9.9.2 Missing Addresses

Some mailpieces cannot be sequenced because an exact match for a name or address cannot be obtained. These pieces may be included in a sequenced mailing only if they are placed behind or after the sequenced mail. Arrange these pieces:

- a. Alphabetically by complete street name, then either in ascending order by ZIP+4 code sector segments or numerically in ascending order by primary address.
- b. Numerically for numbered streets, then either in ascending order by ZIP+4 code sector segments or numerically in ascending order by primary address.

### 9.9.3 Updating Walk Sequence Information—General

Walk-sequence price pieces prepared with other than a simplified address format under [9.9.4](#) must be sequenced using USPS data from one of the following sources, issued within 90 days before the mailing date:

- a. The Computerized Delivery Sequence (CDS) file.
- b. The Delivery Sequence File, Second Generation (DSF<sup>2</sup>).
- c. Delivery sequence information from USPS address sequencing services, as requested by the customer.

### 9.9.4 Updating Delivery Statistics Information for Simplified Addressing

Mailpieces with a simplified address, prepared for distribution to rural or highway contract routes or to PO boxes in a Post Office without city delivery, must be based on delivery stop information obtained within 90 days before the mailing date, either from the Delivery Statistics File, in accordance with [509.1.1](#), or from the postmaster of the destination office. Mailpieces with a simplified address, prepared for distribution to city routes or to PO boxes in a Post Office with city delivery, must be based only on delivery stop information obtained from the Delivery Statistics File, in accordance with [509.1.1](#), within 90 days before the mailing date.

### 9.9.5 Out-of-Date Walk Sequence Information

Mailings prepared with out-of-date walk-sequencing or delivery statistics information are not eligible for prices requiring walk-sequence preparation.

### 9.9.6 Updating Line-of-Travel Sequence Information

Unless the mail is prepared in carrier walk sequence, line-of-travel (LOT) sequence is required for mailings at Standard Mail Enhanced Carrier Route basic prices. LOT sequence is not an exact walk sequence but a sequence of ZIP+4 codes arranged

in the order that the route is served by a carrier. (First the ZIP+4 groups are sequenced, then the addresses within each are identified as being in ascending or descending order.) The USPS eLOT product provides a list of the ZIP+4 codes each carrier route serves, identifies the order in which they are delivered, and provides an indicator specifying whether the addresses that share the same ZIP+4 code must be sorted in ascending or descending order. When a range of ZIP+4 codes on the same carrier route are assigned the same sequence number, the addresses bearing those ZIP+4 codes must be arranged in ascending ZIP+4 code order before the sequence number is assigned. LOT information must be updated within 90 days before the date of mailing.

## 9.10 Delivery Sequence Documentation

### 9.10.1 Basic Standards

The postage statement must be annotated in the “Carrier Route Sequencing Date” block on page 1. The mailer must annotate the postage statement to show the earliest (oldest) date of the method used to obtain sequencing information for the mailing. The mailer’s signature on the postage statement certifies that this standard has been met when the corresponding mail is presented to the USPS. The mailer must maintain documentation to substantiate compliance with the standards for carrier route sequencing. Unless submitted with each corresponding mailing, the mailer must be able to provide the USPS with documentation (if requested) of accurate sequencing or delivery statistics for each carrier route to which pieces are mailed. Acceptable forms of documentation are:

- a. The invoice showing that the addresses came from CDS.
- b. DSF<sup>2</sup> invoice or documentation.
- c. Copies of the delivery unit summaries that served as the mailer’s bills for address sequencing service charges.
- d. Evidence of receipt of information from postmasters for simplified address mailings (see [509.1.0](#)).
- e. Form 3553 showing the date of the eLOT product used, or the date from the USPS Qualification report produced by presort software.

### 9.10.2 High Density and High Density Plus

For each carrier route to which high density or high density plus mail is addressed, the mailer must document the total number of addressed pieces to the route.

### 9.10.3 Saturation Density—Simplified Address Mail

For each carrier route to which mail with a simplified address is sent at the saturation price, the mailer must be able to document that the mailing meets the applicable density standard. This documentation must show the total number of active possible deliveries and the total number to which mailpieces in the mailing are being addressed, by 5-digit ZIP Code and, within each, by carrier route. It must be submitted with each applicable mailing.

### 9.10.4 Saturation Density—Other Mail

For each carrier route to which mail without a simplified address is sent at the saturation price, the mailer must be able to document that the mailing meets the applicable density standards. This documentation must show either the total



number of active possible *residential* deliveries and the number and percentage to which mailpieces are addressed, or the total number of *all* active possible deliveries and the number and percentage to which mailpieces are addressed, depending on whether qualification is based on the 90% or 75% criterion, respectively. The documentation must be listed by 5-digit ZIP Code and, within each, by carrier route. It must be submitted with each applicable mailing.

### 9.10.5 Both Prices

If a mailing contains pieces qualifying for more than one walk-sequence price, the documentation required by [9.10.2](#), [9.10.3](#), or [9.10.4](#) may be combined. Entries for pieces at the high density or high density plus prices must be so annotated on the documentation. For the entire mailing, a summary of the total number of pieces at each price must be provided. This documentation must be submitted with each mailing.

### 9.10.6 Carrier Route Price

If a mailing includes walk-sequence price and basic carrier route price pieces, in addition to the information required by [9.10.2](#) through [9.10.5](#), the documentation for the basic carrier route price mail must show, by 5-digit ZIP Code and, within each, by carrier route, the total number of addressed pieces at each price for each carrier route to which pieces are addressed. Pieces qualifying for the basic carrier route price must be so annotated. For the entire mailing, a summary by 5-digit ZIP Code of the total number of pieces at each price must be provided. This documentation must be submitted with each mailing.

## 10.0 Preparing Automation Flats

### 10.1 Basic Standards

Flat-size automation Standard Mail must be prepared under [10.0](#) and the eligibility standards for the price claimed. Trays and sacks must bear the appropriate barcoded container labels under [4.0](#).

### 10.2 Mailings

All pieces in a mailing must meet the standards in [201.3.0](#), and be sorted together to the finest extent required. Standard Mail mailings may include pieces prepared at automation 3/5 and basic prices. The definitions of a mailing and permissible combinations are in [1.2](#).

### 10.3 Marking

All Standard Mail automation pieces must be marked under [202](#). Pieces claimed at an automation price must bear the appropriate class marking and, except as provided in [202.3.0](#), "AUTO." Pieces not claimed at an automation price must not bear "AUTO" unless single-piece postage is affixed or the corrective single-piece marking "Single-Piece" or "SNGLP" is applied.

### 10.4 Standard Mail Bundle and Sack Preparation

#### 10.4.1 Bundling and Labeling

Preparation sequence, bundle size, except as allowed under [203.3.0](#), and labeling:

- a. 5-digit scheme (required); see definition in [1.4g](#):

1. For mailings containing only pieces weighing 5 ounces (0.3125 pound) or less: 15-piece minimum; red Label 5 SCH or OEL.
  2. For mailings containing any pieces weighing more than 5 ounces (0.3125 pound): 10-piece minimum; red Label 5 SCH or OEL.
- b. 5-digit presort (required); see definition in [1.4g](#):
1. For mailings containing only pieces weighing 5 ounces (0.3125 pound) or less: 15-piece minimum; red Label 5 or OEL.
  2. For mailings containing any pieces weighing more than 5 ounces (0.3125 pound): 10-piece minimum; red Label 5 or OEL.
- c. 3-digit scheme (required); see definition in [1.4n](#); 10-piece minimum; green Label 3 SCH or OEL.
- d. 3-digit presort (required); see definition in [1.4n](#); 10-piece minimum; green Label 3 or OEL.
- e. ADC (required); 10-piece minimum; pink Label A or OEL.
- f. Mixed ADC (required); no minimum; tan Label X or OEL.

#### 10.4.2 Required Sacking

A sack, or a letter tray under [3.0](#), 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.

#### 10.4.3 Sacking and Labeling

Preparation sequence, sack size, and labeling:

- a. 5-digit/scheme (required); scheme sort required before 5-digit sort; see definition in [1.4g](#); 125-piece or 15-pound minimum, labeling:
  1. Line 1: For 5-digit scheme sacks use [L007](#), Column B. For 5-digit sacks use city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code on mail (see [203.4.11](#) for overseas military mail).
  2. Line 2: For 5-digit scheme sacks, "STD FLTS 5D SCH BC." For 5-digit sacks, "STD FLTS 5D BC."
- b. 3-digit (required); 125-piece/15-pound minimum; labeling:



245.11.1

1. Line 1: [L002](#), Column A.
  2. Line 2: "STD FLTS 3D BC."
- c. 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."
- d. ADC (required); 125-piece/15-pound minimum; labeling:
1. Line 1: [L004](#), Column B.
  2. Line 2: "STD FLTS ADC BC."
- e. Mixed ADC (required); no minimum; labeling:
1. Line 1: Use [L009](#), Column B.
  2. Line 2: "STD FLTS BC WKG."

## 11.0 Preparing Presorted Parcels

### 11.1 Basic Standards

All mailings and all pieces in each mailing at Standard Mail and Nonprofit Standard Mail parcel prices are subject to preparation standards in [11.3](#) or [11.4](#), and to these general standards:

- a. All pieces must meet the standards for basic eligibility in [243.2.0](#) through [243.4.0](#) and specific eligibility in [243.5.0](#). Nonprofit Standard Mail must meet the additional eligibility standards in [703.1.0](#).
- b. Marketing parcels, Nonprofit machinable parcels, and Nonprofit irregular parcels must each be prepared as separate mailings, except under [11.3.1](#).
- c. All pieces must meet the applicable general preparation standards in [1.0](#) through [4.0](#); [708.7.0](#); and [708.6.0](#).
- d. All pieces in the mailing must meet the specific sortation and preparation standards in [11.0](#) or the palletization standards in [705.8.0](#).
- e. Sortation determines price eligibility as specified in [243.5.0](#).

### 11.2 Markings

All parcels must be marked according to [202.3.0](#).

### 11.3 Preparing Marketing Parcels (6 Ounces or More) and Machinable Parcels

#### 11.3.1 Sacking

Prepare mailings of Marketing parcels weighing 6 ounces or more and mailings of machinable parcels under [11.3](#). Prepare 5-digit sacks only for parcels dropshipped to a DNDC (or ASF when claiming DNDC prices), DSCF, or DDU. Prepare ASF or NDC sacks only for parcels dropshipped to a DNDC (or ASF when claiming DNDC prices). There is no minimum for parcels in 5-digit/scheme sacks entered at a DDU. Mailers combining irregular parcels with machinable parcels placed in

5-digit/scheme sacks must prepare those sacks under [11.3.2a](#). Mailers combining Marketing parcels weighing 6 ounces or more with machinable parcels placed in ASF, NDC, or mixed NDC sacks must prepare the sacks under [11.3.2](#).

### 11.3.2 Sacking and Labeling

Preparation sequence, sack size, and labeling:

- a. 5-digit/scheme (optional, but required for 5-digit price), see definition in 1.4n.; allowed only for mail deposited at DNDC (or ASF when claiming DNDC prices), DSCF, or DDU. Sacks must contain a 10-pound minimum except at DDU entry which has no minimum; labeling:
  1. Line 1: For 5-digit scheme sacks, use [L606](#), Column B. For 5-digit sacks, use city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code destination on pieces (see [203.4.11](#) for overseas military mail).
  2. Line 2: For 5-digit scheme sacks, "STD MACH 5D SCH." For 5-digit sacks, "STD MACH 5D."
- b. ASF (optional), allowed only for mail deposited at an ASF to claim DNDC price; 10-pound minimum; labeling:
  1. Line 1: [L602](#), Column B.
  2. Line 2: "STD MACH ASF."
- c. NDC, allowed only for mail deposited at a DNDC to claim the NDC price; 10-pound minimum; labeling:
  1. Line 1: [L601](#), Column B.
  2. Line 2: "STD MACH NDC."
- d. Origin NDC (required); no minimum; labeling:
  1. Line 1: [L601](#), Column B.
  2. Line 2: "STD MACH NDC."
- e. Mixed NDC (required); no minimum; labeling:
  1. Line 1: "MXD" followed by [L601](#), Column B information for NDC serving 3-digit ZIP Code prefix of entry Post Office.
  2. Line 2: "STD MACH WKG."

## 11.4 Preparing Marketing Parcels (Less Than 6 Ounces) and Irregular Parcels

### 11.4.1 Bundling

Bundling is permitted only for bundles of Product Sample parcels (and associated DALs) under [12.0](#).

### 11.4.2 Sacking

Prepare mailings of Marketing parcels weighing less than 6 ounces and mailings of irregular parcels under [11.4](#). Prepare 5-digit sacks only for parcels dropshipped to a DNDC (or ASF when claiming DNDC prices), DSCF, or DDU. See [11.4.3](#) for restrictions on SCF, ASF, and NDC sacks. Mailers must prepare a sack when the mail for a required presort destination reaches 10 pounds of pieces. There is no minimum for parcels prepared in 5-digit/scheme sacks entered at a DDU. Mailers



combining irregular parcels with machinable parcels and Marketing parcels weighing 6 ounces or more in 5-digit/scheme sacks must prepare those sacks under [11.3.2](#). Mailers may not prepare sacks containing irregular and machinable parcels to other presort levels. Mailers may combine irregular parcels with Marketing parcels weighing less than 6 ounces in sacks under [11.4.3](#).

#### **11.4.3 Sacking and Labeling**

Preparation sequence, sack size, and labeling:

- a. 5-digit/scheme (optional, but required for 5-digit price), see definition in [1.4n](#); allowed only for mail deposited at DNDC (or ASF when claiming DNDC prices), DSCF, or DDU. Sacks must contain a 10-pound minimum except at DDU entry which has no minimum; labeling:
  1. Line 1: For 5-digit scheme sacks, use [L606](#), Column B. For 5-digit sacks, use city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code destination on pieces (see [203.4.11](#) for overseas military mail).
  2. Line 2: For 5-digit scheme sacks, “STD IRREG 5D SCH.” For 5-digit sacks, “STD IRREG 5D.”
- b. SCF, allowed only for mail deposited at a DSCF or a DNDC to claim SCF price; 10-pound minimum; labeling:
  1. For Line 1, [L002](#), Column C.
  2. For Line 2, “STD IRREG SCF.”
- c. ASF (optional), allowed only for mail deposited at an ASF to claim DNDC price; 10-pound minimum; labeling:
  1. Line 1: [L602](#), Column B. DNDC price eligibility determined by [246.3.0](#), NDC/ASF—DNDC Price Eligibility.
  2. Line 2: “STD IRREG ASF.”
- d. NDC, allowed only for mail deposited at a DNDC to claim the NDC price; 10-pound minimum; labeling:
  1. Line 1: [L601](#), Column B.
  2. Line 2: “STD IRREG NDC.”
- e. Origin NDC (required); no minimum; labeling:
  1. Line 1: [L601](#), Column B.
  2. Line 2: “STD IRREG NDC.”
- f. Mixed NDC (required); no minimum; labeling:
  1. Line 1: “MXD” followed by [L601](#), Column B information for NDC serving 3-digit ZIP Code prefix of entry Post Office.
  2. Line 2: “STD IRREG WKG.”



## 12.0 Preparing Enhanced Carrier Route Product Sample Parcels

### 12.1 Basic Standards

All mailings and all pieces in each mailing at an Enhanced Carrier Route (ECR) parcel price are subject to specific preparation standards in [12.4](#) and [12.5](#), entry standards in [246](#), and to these general standards:

- a. All pieces must meet the standards for basic eligibility in [243.2.0](#) through [243.4.0](#) and specific eligibility in [243.8.0](#). Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail must meet the additional eligibility standards in [703.1.0](#).
- b. All pieces in each mailing must be Product Sample parcels as defined in [243.3.2.2](#).
- c. All pieces must meet the applicable general preparation standards in [1.0](#) through [1.0](#), and the following:
  1. Pieces must be sequenced according to [12.6](#) and [12.7](#).
  2. Pieces with a simplified address format must meet the standards in [602.3.0](#).
- d. All pieces in the mailing must meet the specific sortation and preparation standards in [12.0](#) or the palletization standards in [705.8.0](#).
- e. Sortation, size, and preparation determine price eligibility as specified in [243.8.0](#).

### 12.2 Marking

All Enhanced Carrier Route pieces (or DALs) must be marked under [202.3.0](#). All pieces must be marked “ECRLOT” for pieces claiming a targeted price, or “ECRWSS” for pieces claiming a saturation (Every Door) price.

### 12.3 Residual Pieces

Parcels not prepared or sorted as a carrier route mailing at Product Sample prices must be prepared as a separate mailing at Standard Mail Presorted prices.

### 12.4 Bundling

#### 12.4.1 Bundle Preparation

Carrier route preparation and bundling of DALs is required; Product Samples must be bundled by either carrier route or by 5-digit/[L606](#) destinations. Prepare bundles as follows:

- a. Sacks must contain at least 15 pounds or 125 pieces of mail, except under [12.4.2](#). Cartons may be used instead of sacks. Cartons have no minimum weight, must not weigh more than 40 pounds, and must not exceed 108 inches in combined length and girth.
- b. DALs are required for parcels mailed at targeted prices; mailers must prepare carrier route bundles of DALs. Bundles of DALs must have a facing slip with the number of DALs for that carrier route indicated. Bundles of parcels must be prepared in sacks or cartons labeled to the correct 5-digit/[L606](#) destination, and bundled under [2.0](#) and the same bundling standards as for saturation parcels under [12.4.1c](#). Optionally, parcels may be prepared in carrier route bundles, with a facing slip on the top of each bundles noting the carrier route.



### 245.12.4.2

Prepare bundles of DALs and bundles of samples in the same carton or sack, with the bundles of DALs on the top. See [602.4.0](#) for additional preparation standards for parcels and accompanying DALs, including optional pallet preparation.

- c. DALs are optional for parcels mailed at saturation prices. Bundles of parcels must be prepared in sacks or cartons labeled to carrier routes or to 5-digit (or [L606](#)) destination ZIP Codes, and bundled in similar quantities per bundle up to 50 pieces per carrier route bundle or 5-digit/[L606](#) bundle. When DALs are used, the DALs must be prepared in carrier route bundles and placed in the same carton or sack as the samples for the corresponding route or routes within the same delivery ZIP Code. Bundles of DALs must have a facing slip with the number of DALs for that carrier route indicated. If not placed in a sack or carton, saturation parcels must be bundled in quantities of 50 or less under [2.0](#), and the bundles placed on 5-digit/[L606](#) pallets in a stable manner. As an option, bundled saturation parcels without accompanying DALs may be prepared in sacks or cartons labeled to carrier routes or 5-digit destination ZIP Codes, then placed on pallets. A manifest report showing the total number of samples per carrier route is required when the samples are not prepared with DALs.

#### **12.4.2 Fewer than the Minimum Number of Pieces Per Route**

As a general exception to [12.4.1](#) and [12.5.1](#), mailers may prepare pieces and DALs with fewer than 125 pieces or less than 15 pounds of mail to a carrier route or a 5-digit destination when the mail is in a carton. Also, there may be less than 125 pieces or 15 pounds of mail to a sack when the saturation price for the contents is correctly claimed. Mailers using Priority Mail Express Open and Distribute or Priority Mail Open and Distribute to dropship ECR parcels also may prepare sacks of fewer than 125 pieces or less than 15 pounds of mail.

## **12.5 Preparing Product Samples**

### **12.5.1 Sack Minimums**

Except for bundled saturation parcels and except under [12.4.2](#), a sack or carton must be prepared when the quantity of mail for a required presort destination reaches either 125 pieces or 15 pounds of mail.

### **12.5.2 Sacking and Labeling**

Preparation sequence, sack or carton size, and labeling:

- a. Carrier route: optional with no minimum per carton; see [12.5.1](#) for sack minimums.
  1. Line 1: city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code on mail (see [203.4.11](#) for overseas military mail).
  2. Line 2: "STD MKTG WSS" (for saturation samples) or "STD MKTG LOT" (for targeted samples), followed by the route type and number.
- b. 5-digit carrier routes: required (no minimum).
  1. Line 1: city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code on mail (see [203.4.11](#) for overseas military mail).

2. Line 2: "STD MKTG CR-RTS."

### 12.5.3 Required Palletization

All Product Sample mailings must be destination entered at one or more DDUs, DSCFs, or DNDCs. Except for sacks or cartons of Product Samples entered directly at a DDU, all mailings of Product Samples must be palletized. Pallets (under [705.8.10.3](#)) must be used for sacks or cartons (or bundles of saturation samples only) of Product Samples for mail entered at DNDCs and DSCFs.

## 12.6 Delivery Sequence Standards

### 12.6.1 Basic Standards

Mailpieces for which a walk-sequence discount is claimed must be organized in the delivery sequence determined by the USPS and prepared as a carrier route mailing under [12.0](#) and the standards below. Pieces prepared with a simplified address must also meet the corresponding standards.

### 12.6.2 Missing Addresses

Some mailpieces cannot be sequenced because an exact match for a name or address cannot be obtained. These pieces may be included in a sequenced mailing only if they are placed behind or after the sequenced mail. Arrange these pieces:

- a. Alphabetically by complete street name, then either in ascending order by ZIP+4 code sector segments or numerically in ascending order by primary address.
- b. Numerically for numbered streets, then either in ascending order by ZIP+4 code sector segments or numerically in ascending order by primary address.

### 12.6.3 Updating Walk Sequence Information—General

Walk-sequence price pieces prepared with other than a simplified address format under [12.6.4](#) must be sequenced using USPS data from one of the following sources, issued within 90 days before the mailing date:

- a. The Computerized Delivery Sequence (CDS) file.
- b. The Delivery Sequence File, Second Generation (DSF2).
- c. Delivery sequence information from USPS address sequencing services, as requested by the customer.

### 12.6.4 Updating Walk Sequence Information for Simplified Addressing

Mailpieces with a simplified address, prepared for distribution to rural or highway contract routes or to PO boxes in a Post Office without city delivery, must be based on delivery stop information obtained within 90 days before the mailing date, either from the Delivery Statistics File, in accordance with [509.1.1](#), or from the postmaster of the destination office. Mailpieces with a simplified address, prepared for distribution to city routes or to PO boxes in a Post Office with city delivery, must be based only on delivery stop information obtained from the Delivery Statistics File, in accordance with [509.1.1](#), within 90 days before the mailing date.

### 12.6.5 Out-of-Date Walk Sequence Information

Mailings prepared with out-of-date walk-sequencing information are not eligible for walk-sequence prices.



### 12.6.6 Updating Line-of-Travel Sequence Information

Unless the mail is prepared in carrier walk sequence, line-of-travel (LOT) sequence is required for mailings at Standard Mail Enhanced Carrier Route basic prices. LOT sequence is not an exact walk sequence but a sequence of ZIP+4 codes arranged in the order that the route is served by a carrier. (First the ZIP+4 groups are sequenced, then the addresses within each are identified as being in ascending or descending order.) The USPS eLOT product provides a list of the ZIP+4 codes each carrier route serves, identifies the order in which they are delivered, and provides an indicator specifying whether the addresses that share the same ZIP+4 code must be sorted in ascending or descending order. When a range of ZIP+4 codes on the same carrier route are assigned the same sequence number, the addresses bearing those ZIP+4 codes must be arranged in ascending ZIP+4 code order before the sequence number is assigned. LOT information must be updated within 90 days before the date of mailing.

## 12.7 Delivery Sequence Documentation

### 12.7.1 General Standards

The postage statement must be annotated in the “Carrier Route Sequencing Date” block on page 1. The mailer must annotate the postage statement to show the earliest (oldest) date of the method used to obtain sequencing information for the mailing. The mailer’s signature on the postage statement certifies that this standard has been met when the corresponding mail is presented to the USPS. The mailer must maintain documentation to substantiate compliance with the standards for carrier route sequencing. Unless submitted with each corresponding mailing, the mailer must be able to provide the USPS with documentation (if requested) of accurate sequencing or delivery statistics for each carrier route to which pieces are mailed. Acceptable forms of documentation are:

- a. The invoice showing that the addresses came from CDS.
- b. DSF2 invoice or documentation.
- c. Copies of the delivery unit summaries that served as the mailer’s bills for address sequencing service charges.
- d. Evidence of receipt of information from postmasters for simplified address mailings (see [509.1.0](#)).
- e. Form 3553 showing the date of the eLOT product used, or the date from the USPS Qualification report produced by presort software.

### 12.7.2 Product Samples—Targeted

For each mailing of Product Samples at targeted carrier route prices, the mailer must document the total number of pieces mailed to each carrier route.

### 12.7.3 Saturation Density—Simplified Address Mail

For each carrier route to which mail with a simplified address is sent at the saturation price, the mailer must be able to document that the mailing meets the applicable density standard. This documentation must show the total number of active possible deliveries and the total number to which mailpieces in the mailing are being addressed, by 5-digit ZIP Code and, within each, by carrier route. It must be submitted with each applicable mailing.

**12.7.4 Both Prices**

If a mailing contains pieces qualifying for targeted and saturation prices, the documentation required may be combined. Entries for pieces at the targeted price must be so annotated on the documentation. For the entire mailing, a summary of the total number of pieces at each price must be provided. This documentation must be submitted with each mailing.

**13.0 Preparing Customized MarketMail****13.1 All Mailings**

[1-25-15] All CMM pieces are subject to the preparation standards in 1.4 and to these general standards:

- a. CMM pieces must not be part of a mailing containing any other type of Standard Mail pieces.
- b. Each mailing must meet the applicable standards for mail preparation in 245.1.0 and 245.2.0 and the following:
  1. Regular Standard Mail pieces must be marked “Presorted Standard” and Nonprofit Standard Mail pieces must be marked “Nonprofit Organization” or with applicable abbreviations under 202 . All pieces also must be marked “Customized MarketMail,” “CUST MKTMAIL,” or “CMM.”
  2. At the mailer's option, a carrier route information line under 708.8.0 may be added. If used, a carrier route code must be applied to every piece in the mailing using CASS-certified software and the current USPS Carrier Route File scheme, printed Carrier Route Files, or another AIS product containing carrier route information, subject to 509.1.0 and 708.3.0 . Carrier route information must be updated within 90 days before the mailing date.

**13.2 Required Endorsement**

Customized MarketMail pieces must bear the endorsement “Carrier—Leave If No Response” placed directly below the return address under 508.1.0. If any other endorsement is used, the carrier route release endorsement must be separated by the equivalent of one blank line of the type size used.

**13.3 Required Bundling**

Bundling is required before sacking, traying, or filling other mailing containers. A bundle must be prepared when two or more pieces are destined to the same 5-digit ZIP Code or to the same carrier route if the optional carrier route presort is used. The maximum weight for a bundle is 20 pounds. Pieces of irregular thickness must be counterstacked under 203.3.7. Facing slips, optional endorsement lines, or pressure-sensitive bundle labels may be used on bundles. CMM pieces in carrier route bundles are subject to 243.6.0 but are not required to meet any minimum number of pieces per route.

**13.4 Bundling and Labeling**

Preparation sequence, bundle size, and labeling:



245.13.5

- a. Carrier route (optional), 2-piece minimum; and carrier route information line (required).
- b. 5-digit (required), 2-piece minimum; and facing slip (optional), red Label 5 (optional), or optional endorsement line (OEL).

### 13.5 Required Containerizing

The following standards apply to containerizing CMM pieces:

- a. Bundles and single pieces to a destination must be prepared in 5-digit (or 5-digit scheme under [L606](#)), carrier route, or 5-digit carrier routes containers, with no minimum volume required for a container.
- b. Bundles in drop shipment mailings under [246.2.0](#) and [246.5.0](#) must be placed in letter trays, flat trays, or sacks. Bundles in Priority Mail and Priority Mail Express Open and Distribute shipments under [705.18.5](#) may be placed in USPS-supplied or mailer-supplied containers.
- c. The container size must be appropriate to the dimensions of the pieces, and the number of containers appropriate to the volume of pieces in the mailing.
- d. If more than three types of containers are used, the mailing must be prepared using an approved manifest mailing system or other postage payment system approved by the manager, Business Mailer Support. Each mailing using mailer-supplied containers must include sample containers for tare weight calculations.

### 13.6 Containerizing and Labeling

Prepare and label containers as follows:

- a. Drop shipments under [246.2.0](#) and [246.5.0](#) must be prepared in 5-digit trays or sacks, or as an option, in 5-digit scheme (under [L606](#), Column B), carrier route, or 5-digit carrier routes trays or sacks, labeled as follows:
  1. Line 1: For 5-digit, carrier route, 5-digit carrier routes, use city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code on mail; for 5-digit scheme (optional), use [L606](#).
  2. Line 2: "DEL LTR STD CMM MAN" (for letter trays); "DEL FLTS STD CMM MAN" (for flat trays); "DEL STD CMM MAN" (for sacks).
  3. Line 3: Office of mailing or mailer information (see [207.21.0](#)).
- b. Priority Mail Express and Priority Mail Open and Distribute shipments must be prepared in USPS-provided Priority Mail Express or Priority Mail containers (pouches, sacks, cartons, or envelopes) or in mailer-supplied containers, labeled under [705.18.5](#).