

Related QSGs [201b, Using Tabs, Wafer Seals, and Glue Strips](#)
[230a, First-Class Mail Move Update](#)

**Physical
Standards**
(201)

Maximum weight: 3.5 ounces.

Heavy letter mail weighing more than 3 ounces must have a barcode in the address block and be prepared in a sealed envelope in [201.3.6](#).

For an overview of the physical standards for commercial letters and cards, see [Quick Service Guide 201](#).

Prices and Fees
(233.1.0)

For a complete listing of commercial First-Class Mail prices, see [Notice 123–Price List](#). Annual presort mailing fee applies.

Content
(233.2.0)

First-Class Mail is required for personal correspondence, handwritten or typewritten material, and bills or statements of account. It also may be used for any mailable item including advertisements and lightweight merchandise.

**Eligibility
Standards**
(233.5.0)

Mailings of 500 or more addressed pieces, 100% delivery point or Intelligent Mail barcoded, sorted, and marked as described below. All pieces must be automation-compatible ([201.3.0](#)). Pieces mailed at card prices and pieces mailed at letter prices must meet separate 500-piece minimums.

Each piece must also include a complete delivery address with correct ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code.

For address standards, see [233.5.5](#); for barcode standards see [708.4.0](#); and for CASS/MASS standards see [708.3.0](#).

Addresses on all pieces must be updated within 95 days before mailing through a USPS-approved address update method (e.g., ACS, NCOA^{Link}, *FASTforward*, or the appropriate ancillary service endorsement except Forwarding Service Requested, under [507.1.5](#)). For an overview of the Move Update standards, see [Quick Service Guide 230a](#).

Addresses must be matched using CASS/MASS-certified process within 180 days before mailing.

All letter-size reply cards and envelopes (Business Reply Mail, Courtesy Reply Mail, and metered reply mail) provided as enclosures must meet the standards in [201.3.18](#).

Mailers can apply Repositionable Notes to letters for an additional charge. See [705.23.0](#).

**Postage
Payment and
Documentation**
(234)

Precanceled stamp ([604.3.0](#)), meter ([604.4.0](#)), or permit imprint ([604.5.0](#)).

Additional standards apply to mailings of nonidentical-weight pieces.

Documentation:

- Postage statement: [PS Form 3600-R](#) or approved facsimile.
- [PS Form 3553](#) must be retained for 1 year ([708.3.5.2](#)).
- Supporting documentation: required unless correct price affixed to each piece or unless each piece is of identical weight and separated by price when presented for acceptance; documentation generated by PAVE-certified software (or printed in standardized format).

Mail Preparation
(235)

Mark each piece: “First-Class Mail,” and “AUTO” in the postage area. For optional marking location, see [202.3.0](#). Pieces bearing a delivery point POSTNET or Intelligent Mail barcode in the address block or on an insert visible through a window do not require the additional “AUTO” marking. Pieces not marked “AUTO” must bear both the “Presorted” or “PRSRT” and “First-Class Mail” markings. For price markings applied by MLOCs, see [202.3.6](#). Pieces not claimed at an automation price must not be marked “AUTO” unless single-piece postage is affixed or a corrective single-piece price marking is applied under [235.5.1.2](#).

When preparing full trays, mailers must fill all possible 2-foot trays first; if there is mail remaining for the presort destination, mailers must use a combination of 1-foot and 2-foot trays that result in the fewest total number of trays for that presort level.

Barcoded tray labels required ([235.4.9](#)).

Trays sleeved and strapped ([235.3.4](#)). See [235.3.5](#) for exceptions to strapping for mixed AADC trays and mailings that originate and destinate in delivery area of same SCF.

**Enter and
Deposit**
(236)

Mailing entered at an acceptance point designated by USPS.

Traying Sequence (235.6.0)

5-Digit/Scheme¹

Trays: Optional, but required for 5-digit price. 150-piece minimum to same 5-digit/scheme destination; bundling not permitted except for card-sized pieces; only one overflow tray permitted per destination.²

Barcoded Labels: Line 1: For 5-digit scheme trays, use destination in City State Product. For 5-digit trays, use city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code on mail.

Price: 5-Digit

3-Digit/Scheme

Trays: Optional, but required for 3-digit prices; 150 pieces to same 3-digit/scheme destination; bundling not permitted; only one overflow tray permitted per destination.²

Exception: After all full trays are prepared, one less-than-full tray must be prepared for any remaining pieces for each 3-digit/scheme of SCF serving post office where mail is verified.

Barcoded Labels: For Line 1, use L002, Column B, for destination facility.

Price: 3-Digit or AADC³

AADC

Trays: Optional, but required for AADC price; 150 pieces to same AADC; bundling not permitted; overflow pieces from 3-digit trays grouped by 3-digit/scheme destination; only one overflow tray permitted per destination.²

Barcoded Labels: For Line 1, use L801, Column B for destination facility.

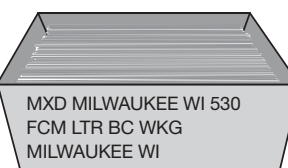
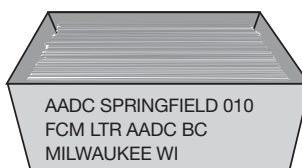
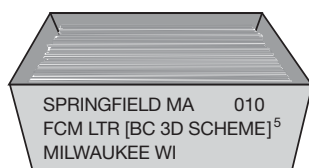
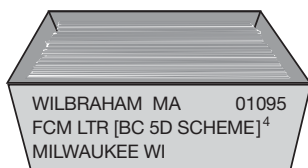
Price: AADC

Mixed AADC

Trays: Required for all remaining pieces placed in mixed AADC trays; overflow pieces from AADC trays grouped by AADC; only one less-than-full mixed AADC tray permitted per mailing.

Barcoded Labels: For Line 1, use L201. For mail originating in 3-digit ZIP Codes in Column A, use "MXD" followed by city/state/3-digit ZIP Code in Column C.

Price: Mixed AADC



Bundling required for mailings consisting entirely of card-size pieces and for pieces in overflow and less-than-full trays. The maximum thickness for a bundle is 6 inches.

1. For the 5-digit price, prepare all possible 5-digit scheme trays, then prepare all possible 5-digit trays.
2. 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. The price is based on the overflow tray that would have been made (i.e., pieces placed in a 3-digit tray in lieu of 5-digit overflow trays are eligible for the 5-digit price). Pieces placed in the next tray level must be grouped by destination and placed in the front or back of the tray. This option may be used selectively for 3-digit/scheme and AADC ZIP Codes. The overflow option does not apply to 3-digit origin trays.
3. AADC price for any 3-digit/scheme tray for the origin SCF area containing fewer than 150 pieces.
4. Use "5D BC" on 5-digit trays; on 5-digit scheme trays, use "BC 5D SCHEME."
5. Use "3D BC" on 3-digit trays; on 3-digit scheme trays, use "BC 3D SCHEME" and, if applicable, as shown in L002, Column B, followed by the letter "A," "B," or "C."