



244 Postage Payment and Documentation

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1.0 Basic Standards for Postage Payment

Postage for USPS Marketing Mail, including Customized Market Mail, must be paid with precanceled stamps, metered postage, or permit imprint as specified in [2.0](#). Unless authorized by USPS under [705.2.0](#) through [705.5.0](#), when precanceled postage or metered postage are used, only one payment method may be used in a mailing. Mail manifested using the Electronic Verification System (eVS) under [705.2.6](#) must be paid with a permit imprint. Permit imprint may be used for mailings of nonidentical-weight pieces only if authorized by the director, Business Acceptance Solutions (see [608.8.0](#) for address).

2.0 Additional Postage Payment Standards

2.1 Identical-Weight Pieces

[1-21-24] Mailings of identical-weight pieces may have, affixed to each piece, the exact numerical value of postage for which the piece qualifies, or postage at the lowest price applicable to pieces in the mailing as stipulated under [3.0](#).

Alternatively, a USPS precanceled stamp (or stamps precanceled with a mailer's precancel postmark), under [604.3.0](#), may be affixed to every piece in the mailing or mailing job, or each piece may bear a permit imprint. If exact postage is not affixed, all additional postage and surcharges must be paid at the time of mailing with an advance-deposit account. If exact postage is not affixed, documentation meeting the standards in [4.0](#) must be submitted to substantiate the additional postage unless the pieces are identical weight and separated by price when presented for acceptance.

2.2 Nonidentical-Weight Pieces

Postage for nonidentical-weight pieces may be paid by precanceled stamps, subject to [4.0](#) and [604.3.0](#). Permit imprint (if authorized by the director, Business Acceptance Solutions) or metered postage (if each piece has the full numerical value of postage affixed) may be used to pay postage to mail nonidentical-weight pieces subject to piece/pound prices.

Alternatively, except for heavy letter mail over three ounces (see [201.3.6](#)), the mailer may affix the numerical per piece price to each piece and pay the pound price for the mailing through an advance deposit account. Under this alternative, the mailer must provide a postage statement for each payment method and mark each piece "Pound Rate Pd via Permit," in the postage meter indicium or



ad plate or other means that ensures a legible endorsement. For mailings of nonidentical-weight pieces, “nonidentical” must be shown as the weight of a single piece on the applicable postage statement; other entries must be completed as directed.

2.3 Combined Price

Metered postage may be used for combined price mailings containing both pieces subject to pound prices and pieces subject to minimum per piece charges. Postage for such mailings may be paid with permit imprint only if authorized by the director, Business Acceptance Solutions.

3.0 Affixing Postage at Less than Full Price

3.1 General

Except as permitted under [3.2](#) or [3.3](#) or authorized by the director, Business Acceptance Solutions, postage-affixed pieces must bear the correct numerical value of postage.

3.2 Lowest Price

A mailer may affix metered postage at the lowest price on identical-weight pieces as follows:

- a. *Pieces weighing 3.5 ounces or less for letters, 4 ounces or less for flats, or 3.3 ounces or less for parcels:* A mailer may affix postage at the lowest eligible presort level in the mailing.
- b. *Pieces weighing more than 4 ounces for flats or more than 3.3 ounces for parcels:* A mailer may affix the computed piece/pound postage (see [243.1.5.5](#)) at the lowest eligible presort level in the mailing.
- c. **[1-21-24] Additional postage:** Additional postage is computed based on the difference between the lowest price affixed to any piece in the mailing and the price for each price level in the mailing. The total additional postage must be paid by advance-deposit account.
- d. *Documentation:* The computation must be documented to meet the basic standards in [4.0](#).

3.3 Mixed Price Alternative for Letters and Flats

[1-21-24] Where it is not practicable for the mailer to affix either the exact numerical value of postage or the lowest postage price to each piece in the mailing, the mailer may compute postage for the mailing as if the lowest numerical price affixed to any piece in the mailing were affixed to all pieces. Additional postage is computed based on the difference between the lowest numerical price affixed to any piece in the mailing and the price for each price level in the mailing. This computation must be documented to meet the basic standards in [4.0](#). No refund is paid for any piece where postage is affixed at a price higher than the lowest price claimed for or affixed to any piece. The total additional postage must be paid by advance-deposit account.



4.0 Mailing Documentation

See [203.1.0](#) and [203.2.0](#) for postage statement and documentation standards. Mailings of Customized MarketMail using more than three different types of containers must also be supported by standardized documentation meeting the standards in [203.3.0](#).

5.0 Residual Pieces

5.1 Residual USPS Marketing Mail Subject to First-Class Mail or USPS Ground Advantage Prices

Mailers with pieces weighing 13 ounces or less that do not qualify for USPS Marketing Mail prices but that are prepared as USPS Marketing Mail must pay single-piece First-Class Mail or USPS Ground Advantage – Retail postage for such pieces. If mailers do not want First-Class Mail or USPS Ground Advantage – Retail service for such pieces they may enter the mailpieces “as is” (i.e., bearing the USPS Marketing Mail markings and endorsements) under the following conditions:

- a. Additional markings and/or postage must not be added to these pieces.
- b. Mailers of mail bearing metered or precanceled stamp postage must pay the difference between the postage affixed at the USPS Marketing Mail prices and the single-piece First-Class Mail or USPS Ground Advantage – Retail prices by means of an advance deposit account or by affixing a meter stamp for the appropriate amount to PS Form 3600-FCM. These pieces are reported in the appropriate part of PS Form 3600-FCM under the heading “From USPS Marketing Mail mailing.”
- c. Mailers of mail bearing permit imprints must pay the appropriate single-piece First-Class Mail or USPS Ground Advantage – Retail prices by completing PS Form 3600-FCM. These pieces are reported in the appropriate part of PS Form 3600-FCM under the heading “From USPS Marketing Mail mailing.” For permit imprint mail there must be at least 200 pieces, except when the pieces are part of a larger mailing job and are submitted for acceptance along with the mail and a USPS Marketing Mail postage statement for the other pieces in the same mailing job.

5.2 Residual USPS Marketing Mail Subject to USPS Ground Advantage – Retail Prices

Mailers of permit imprint pieces weighing more than 13 ounces but less than 16 ounces that do not qualify for USPS Marketing Mail prices but that are prepared as USPS Marketing Mail must pay the USPS Ground Advantage – Retail postage for such pieces. Mailers of mailpieces paid with meters or permit imprints must re-envelope or otherwise prepare the pieces so that when mailed they bear only the appropriate USPS Ground Advantage markings, ancillary service endorsements, and ACS codes and do not bear USPS Marketing Mail markings, endorsements, or ACS codes. Mailers of mailpieces paid with permit imprints for which their mailers do not want USPS Ground Advantage service may enter the mailpieces “as is” (i.e., bearing the USPS Marketing Mail markings and endorsements), under the following conditions:

- a. Additional markings and/or postage must not be added to these pieces.



- b. The appropriate USPS Ground Advantage – Retail prices must be paid by completing the appropriate part of PS Form 3600-FCM on the line titled “Pieces From USPS Marketing Mail mailing” in the postage calculation section. For permit imprint mail there must be at least 200 pieces, except when the pieces are part of a larger mailing job and are submitted for acceptance along with the mail and a USPS Marketing Mail postage statement for the other pieces in the same mailing job.

5.3 Postage Payment for Barcoded Machinable Parcels

5.3.1 100% Eligible

If 100% of the pieces in a mailing are eligible for the machinable parcel prices under [243.5.0](#), then the mailing may be paid with meter stamps, permit imprint, or precanceled postage.

5.3.2 Less Than 100% Eligibility

If less than 100% of the parcels in the mailing are eligible for the machinable prices, then the following standards apply:

- a. Payment with precanceled stamps is not permitted.
- b. Metered postage may be used only if exact postage is affixed to each piece in the mailing.
- c. Payment with permit imprint is permitted only under a manifest mailing system in [705.2.0](#).