

402 Elements on the Face of a Mailpiece

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1.0 All Mailpieces

1.1 Clear Space

A clear space must be available on all mail for the address, postage (permit imprint, postage stamp, or meter stamp), postmarks, and postal endorsements.

1.2 Delivery and Return Address

The delivery address specifies the location to which the USPS is to deliver a mailpiece. Except for mail prepared with detached address labels under [602.4.0](#), the piece must have the address of the intended recipient, visible and legible, only on the side of the piece bearing postage. A return address is required in specific circumstances (see [3.2](#) and [602.1.5](#) for more information about return addresses). See [602](#) for additional information regarding addressing.)

1.3 Postage Payment

The mailer is responsible for proper payment of postage. Standards for postage payment are specified for each shape and class of mail.

2.0 Placement and Content of Markings

2.1 Express Mail and Priority Mail Markings

[11-2-09] Except for pieces paid using a permit imprint or an Express Mail Corporate Account, Express Mail and Priority Mail pieces claiming the commercial base or commercial plus price must bear the appropriate price marking, printed on the piece or produced as part of the meter imprint or PC Postage indicia. Place the marking directly above, directly below, or to the left of the postage. Markings are as follows:

- a. “Commercial Base Price” “Commercial Base Pricing” or “ComBasPrice”
- b. “Commercial Plus Price” “Commercial Plus Pricing” or “ComPlsPrice”

2.2 First-Class Mail and Standard Mail Markings

2.2.1 Placement

Markings must be placed as follows:

- a. Basic Marking. The basic required marking that indicates the class or subclass which must be printed or produced as part of; directly below; or to the left of the permit imprint, meter imprint, or stamp as follows:

1. “First-Class”
2. “Standard” or “STD”



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3. "Presorted Standard" or "PRSRT STD"
4. "Nonprofit Organization," "Nonprofit Org.," or "Nonprofit"
- b. Other Markings. The price-specific markings "ECRLOT," "ECRWSH," "ECRWSS," and "Customized MarketMail" (or "CUST MKTMAIL" or "CMM") (Standard Mail only) may be placed as follows:
 1. In the location specified in [2.2.1a](#).
 2. In the address area on the line directly above or two lines above the address if the marking appears alone or if no other information appears on the line with the marking except optional endorsement line information under [708.7.0](#) or carrier route bundle information under [708.6.0](#).
 3. If preceded by two asterisks (**), the "PRESORTED" (or "PRSRT") or "CUSTOMIZED MARKETMAIL" (or "CUST MKTMAIL" or "CMM") marking also may be placed on the line directly above or two lines above the address in a mailer keyline or a manifest keyline, or it may be placed above the address and below the postage in an MLOCR ink-jet printed date correction/meter drop shipment line.
- c. Mark each Not Flat-Machinable piece "Not Flat-Machinable" or "NFM," either by including the marking in the optional endorsement line or by placing the marking immediately to the left of or below the postage area.
- d. Additional Requirements for Carrier Route. "ECRLOT," "ECRWSH," and "ECRWSS" (Standard Mail only) must appear in their entirety wherever placed, except "ECR" may be placed in the postage area if "LOT," "WSH," or "WSS," as applicable, is placed in the line above or two lines above the address. Pieces not mailed at ECR prices must not bear these markings.

2.2.2 Exceptions to Markings

The following exceptions apply to manifest mailings:

- a. The basic marking must appear in the postage area on each piece. The two-letter price category code required in the keyline on manifest mailing pieces prepared under [705.2.0](#) meets the requirement for other price markings.
- b. Mail manifested using the Electronic Verification System (eVS) under [705.2.9](#) must bear the basic marking and the additional marking "eVS" (or the alternative "e-VS" or "EVS") in two places:
 1. In the required permit imprint as described in [604.5.0](#).
 2. In the human-readable text above the required barcode described in [705.2.9](#) and [708.5.0](#).

2.3 Parcel Select, Bound Printed Matter, Media Mail, and Library Mail Markings

2.3.1 Basic Markings

The basic required marking (e.g., "Parcel Select", "Bound Printed Matter", "Media Mail", "Library Mail") must be printed on each piece claimed at the respective price. The basic required marking must be placed in the postage area (printed or produced as part of, or directly below or to the left of, the permit imprint indicia or

meter stamp or impression). Optionally, the basic required marking may be printed on the shipping address label as service indicators composed of a service icon and service banner (see [Exhibit 2.3.1](#)):

- a. The service icon that identifies the marking will be a 1-inch solid black square. If the service icon is used, it must appear in the upper left corner of the shipping label.
- b. The service banner must appear directly below the postage payment area and the service icon, and it must extend across the shipping label. If the service banner is used, the appropriate marking (e.g., “PARCEL SELECT”, “MEDIA MAIL”) must be preceded by the text “USPS” and must be printed in minimum 20-point bold sans serif typeface, uppercase letters, centered within the banner, and bordered above and below by minimum 1-point separator lines. There must be a 1/16-inch clearance above and below the text.

Exhibit 2.3.1 Marking Indicator Examples



2.3.2 Parcel Select Markings

Each piece in a Parcel Select mailing must bear a price marking. Markings must appear in either the postage area described in [2.3.1](#) or in the address area on the line directly above or two lines above the address if the marking appears alone (when no other information appears on that line). The “Parcel Post” marking is not allowed on any Parcel Select mailpiece. The following product markings are required:

- a. Destination Entry - “Parcel Select”.
- b. BMC Presort - “Parcel Select BMC Presort” or “Parcel Select BMC PRSRT”
- c. OBMC Presort - “Parcel Select OBMC Presort” or “Parcel Select OBMC PRSRT”.



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- d. Barcoded - “Parcel Select Barcoded” or “Parcel Select BC”.

2.3.3 Bound Printed Matter Markings

In addition to the basic marking “Bound Printed Matter” or “BPM,” each piece of Bound Printed Matter mailed at a presorted or carrier route price must bear additional price markings. The additional markings may be placed in the postage area as specified in [2.3.1](#). Alternatively, these markings may be placed in the address area on the line directly above or two lines above the address if the marking appears alone, or if no other information appears on the line with the marking except postal optional endorsement line information under [708.7.0](#) or postal carrier route bundle information under [708.6.0](#). The additional price markings are:

- a. For Presorted price mail, the additional required marking is “Presorted” (or “PRSRT”).
- b. For carrier route price mail, the additional required marking is “Carrier Route Presort” (or “CAR-RT SORT”).

2.3.4 Address and Firm Designation on Bound Printed Matter Machinable Parcels

When a Bound Printed Matter machinable parcel consists of multiple pieces for a single address secured with transparent shrinkwrap, the delivery address information and barcoded pressure-sensitive Label F or firm optional endorsement line must be visible and readable by the naked eye. Mailers must label the parcel using one of the following options:

- a. A firm optional endorsement line under [708.7.0](#), followed by the 5-digit destination ZIP Code of the parcel.
- b. A blue, pressure-sensitive, barcoded Label F on the address side of the parcel.

2.3.5 Media Mail Markings

Each piece of Media Mail mailed at a presorted price must bear the required marking “Presorted” or “PRSRT” in addition to the basic marking “Media Mail.” This additional marking may be placed in the postage area as specified in [2.3.1](#). Alternatively, these markings may be placed in the address area on the line directly above or two lines above the address if the marking appears alone, or if no other information appears on the line with the marking except postal optional endorsement line information under [708.7.0](#).

2.3.6 Exception to Markings

Mail manifested using eVS under [705.2.9](#) must bear the basic marking and the additional marking “eVS” (or the alternative “e-VS” or “EVS”) in two places:

- a. In the required permit imprint as described in [604.5.0](#).
- b. In the human-readable text above the required barcode described in [705.2.9](#) and [708.5.0](#).

2.4 Enclosures

Enclosures, attachments, and mixed price mailpieces must be marked under the applicable standards in [703.9.0, *Mixed Classes*](#).

2.5 Printing and Designs

Required markings may be printed by a postage meter or other means that ensures a legible marking. A marking may not include or be part of a decorative design or advertisement.

2.6 Marking Hazardous Materials

All mailable hazardous materials must be labeled and/or marked as required in [601.10.0](#).

3.0 Placement and Physical Standards for Endorsements**3.1 Endorsements for Delivery Instructions and Ancillary Services**

The mailer must place the correct endorsement on each mailpiece to provide delivery instructions (retention period under [507.4.4.4](#) or carrier release under [508.1.2](#)) or to request an ancillary service (forwarding, return, or address correction under [507.1.0, Treatment of Mail](#)), subject to the corresponding standards for use and availability.

3.2 Return Address

When a printed ancillary service endorsement is used, or a request is embedded within an Intelligent Mail barcode, a domestic return address must be placed in the upper left corner of the address side of the mailpiece or the upper left corner of the addressing area. If the return address is a multiple delivery address, it must show a unit designator (e.g., an apartment number).

3.3 Placement of Endorsements

Placement of the endorsement on the mailpiece is determined as follows:

- a. The carrier release endorsement must be placed directly below the return address. If any other endorsement is used, the carrier release endorsement must be separated by the equivalent of one blank line of the type size used.
- b. A retention period specified by the mailer must be placed directly above the return address.
- c. Any ancillary service endorsement (e.g., Address Service Requested, Forwarding Service Requested, Return Service Requested, Change Service Requested) must be placed in one of these four positions:
 1. Directly below the return address.
 2. Directly above the delivery address area (which includes the delivery address block and any related nonaddress elements such as a barcode, keyline, or optional endorsement line).
 3. Directly to the left of the postage area and below or to the left of any price marking.
 4. Directly below the postage area and below any price marking.

3.4 Physical Standards for Endorsements

Endorsements must meet these physical standards:

- a. The type size of the endorsement must be at least 8 points.



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- b. The read direction of the endorsement and return address must be the same as the read direction of the delivery address.
- c. The color contrast between the endorsement and the mailpiece background must be kept at a reasonable degree. A brilliant colored background or reverse printing is not permitted.
- d. A clear space of at least 1/4 inch around (above, below, and both sides) the total area containing the endorsement(s) is required.

4.0 General Barcode Placement for Parcels

4.1 **GS1-128 Barcode Location**

The address and barcode (see [708.5.0](#)) must be placed squarely onto the largest surface area of the parcel, except when its shape and contents requires specific orientation for stability during processing; then the address and barcode(s) must be placed on the top. The address and barcode label(s) must not overlap any side of the parcel or other label. The barcode should be placed immediately adjacent to the delivery address and at least 1 inch from the edge of the parcel. The delivery address and barcode may be printed on an attachment or enclosure in a window envelope affixed to the parcel, subject to the reflectance standards in [708.5.8](#). The barcode may be placed on a separate label or in an alternate location on the address label, subject to the clearance standards in [4.2](#). Barcodes that are not placed immediately adjacent to the delivery address must not encroach the return address, postage, applicable markings, endorsements, and extra service labels.

4.2 **Clear Zone for GS1-128 Barcode**

The barcode must be located as specified in [4.1](#). No printing may appear in an area 1/8 inch above and below the barcode. A minimum clear (quiet) zone equal to 10 times the average measured narrow element (bars or space) width must be maintained to the left and right of the barcode.

4.3 **POSTNET Barcodes**

First-Class Mail parcels, Standard Mail irregular parcels, and Not Flat-Machinable pieces less than 6 ounces may bear POSTNET barcodes or GS1-128 barcodes. First-Class Mail parcels, Standard Mail irregular parcels, and Not Flat-Machinable parcels less than 6 ounces bearing POSTNET barcodes representing only the postal routing barcode (destination ZIP Code) are eligible to be mailed using eVS. POSTNET barcodes may not be used on eVS parcels bearing concatenated GS1-128 barcodes. Place POSTNET barcodes on First-Class Mail parcels, Standard Mail irregular parcels, or Not Flat-Machinable pieces as described under [4.3.1](#) through [4.3.3](#).

4.3.1 **General Placement of POSTNET Barcodes**

On any First-Class Mail parcel, any Standard Mail irregular parcel, or Standard Mail Not Flat-Machinable piece under 6 ounces, the POSTNET barcode may be anywhere on the address side as long as it is at least 1/8 inch from any edge of the piece. POSTNET barcodes must be printed according to [708.4.0](#). Address block barcodes are subject to the standards in [4.3.2](#).

4.3.2 POSTNET Barcode in Address Block

When the POSTNET barcode is included as part of the address block:

- a. Place the barcode in one of these positions:
 1. Above the address line containing the recipient's name.
 2. Below the city, state, and ZIP Code line.
 3. Above or below the keyline information.
 4. Above or below the optional endorsement line.
- b. Do not print the barcode anywhere between the address line containing the recipient's name and the city, state, and ZIP Code line.
- c. Allow at least 1/25 inch clearance between the barcode and any information line above or below it. Do not separate the barcode more than 5/8 inch from the top or bottom line of the address block. Allow at least 1/8 inch clearance between the leftmost and rightmost bars and any adjacent printing.
- d. If a window envelope is used, allow at least 1/8 inch clearance between the leftmost and rightmost bars and any printing or window edge, and at least 1/25 inch between the barcode and the top and bottom window edges. These clearances must be maintained during the insert's range of movement in the envelope. Covers for address block windows are subject to [4.3.3](#).
- e. If an address label is used, allow a clear space of at least 1/8 inch between the barcode and the left and right edges of the address label, and at least 1/25 inch between the barcode and the top and bottom edges of the address label.

4.3.3 Window Cover

A window cover over the address block must be a nontinted clear or transparent material (e.g., cellophane or polystyrene) that permits the barcode and its background, as viewed through the window material, to meet the reflectance standards in [708.4.4](#). The edges of the window cover must be securely glued to the envelope.

