

302 Elements on the Face of a Mailpiece

Overview

- [1.0 All Mailpieces](#)
- [2.0 Address Placement](#)
- [3.0 Placement and Content of Mail Markings](#)
- [4.0 Placement and Physical Standards for Endorsements](#)
- [5.0 Barcode Placement](#)

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 mailpiece must have the address of the intended recipient, visible and legible, only on the side of the piece bearing postage (Periodicals do not display postage and the address may appear on either side). Use at least 8-point type (each character must be at least 0.080 inch high). A sans-serif font is preferred. Addresses printed in all capital letters are also preferred. See additional standards in 2.0. A return address is required in specific circumstances (see 4.2 and 602.1.5 for more information about return addresses).

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 Address Placement

2.1 Basic Standards

On all Periodicals, Standard Mail, Bound Printed Matter, Media Mail, and Library Mail flats mailed at presorted, automation, or carrier route prices, mailers must place the delivery address at least 1/8 inch from any edge of the mailpiece. For the purposes of these standards, the “delivery address” is the recipient’s name or other identification; the company information line; the street and number, and any necessary secondary information; and the city, state, and ZIP Code. The delivery address may appear on the front or the back of the mailpiece (but must be on the side bearing postage, except for Periodicals), parallel or perpendicular to the top edge, but it cannot be upside down as read in relation to the top edge. See 2.2 for additional standards for enveloped or polywrapped pieces, and card-style pieces; and 2.3 for bound or folded pieces not in envelopes or polywrap. See 601.6.4 for addressing standards when a window envelope is used.

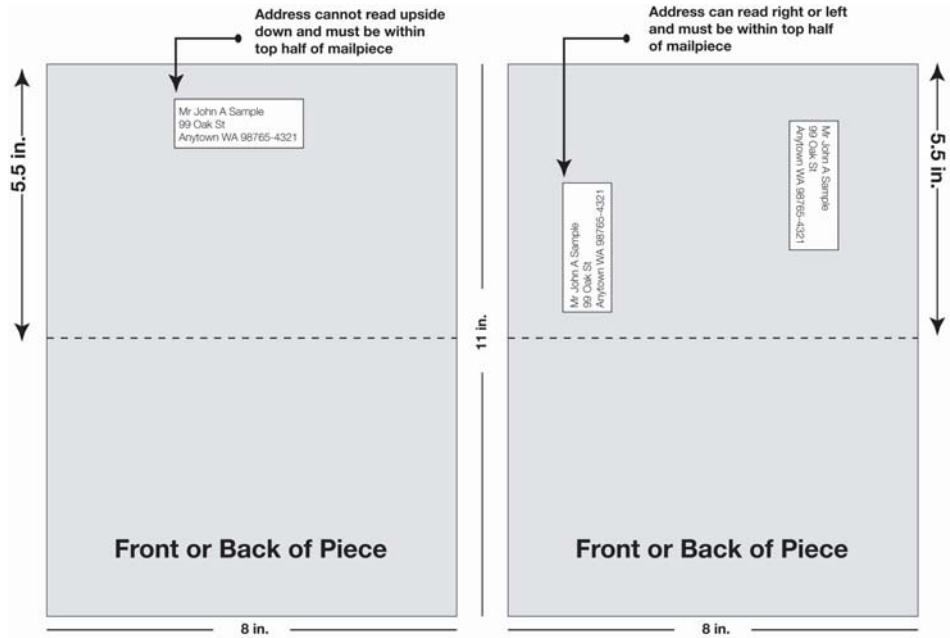


2.2 Address Placement on Enveloped or Polywrapped Pieces

The following standards apply to enveloped, polywrapped, or card-style Periodicals (including shrinkwrapped Firm bundles), Standard Mail, Bound Printed Matter, Media Mail, and Library Mail flats mailed at presorted, automation, or carrier route prices:

- a. The “top” of the mailpiece is either of the shorter edges.
- b. The entire delivery address must be within the top half of the mailpiece (see [Exhibit 2.2](#)), except under [2.2c](#) or [2.2d](#). Optimal placement is at the top edge (while maintaining the 1/8-inch clearance requirement).
- c. If a vertical address will not fit entirely within the top half, the address may cross the midpoint if it is placed within 1 inch of the top edge.
- d. If the delivery address is placed on an insert polywrapped with the host piece:
 1. The address must not appear on a component that rotates within the bag.
 2. The address must remain visible throughout the addressed component's range of motion.
 3. The insert must be affixed to maintain the address entirely in the top half throughout processing and delivery or, if not affixed, the insert must maintain at least the beginning 0.5 inch of the address in the top half. The “beginning 0.5 inch” means the first half-inch of the recipient, delivery address, and city/state/ZIP Code lines, and not the end of each line.

Exhibit 2.2 Delivery Address on Enveloped, Polywrapped, and Card-Style Pieces



2.3 Address Placement on Bound or Folded Pieces

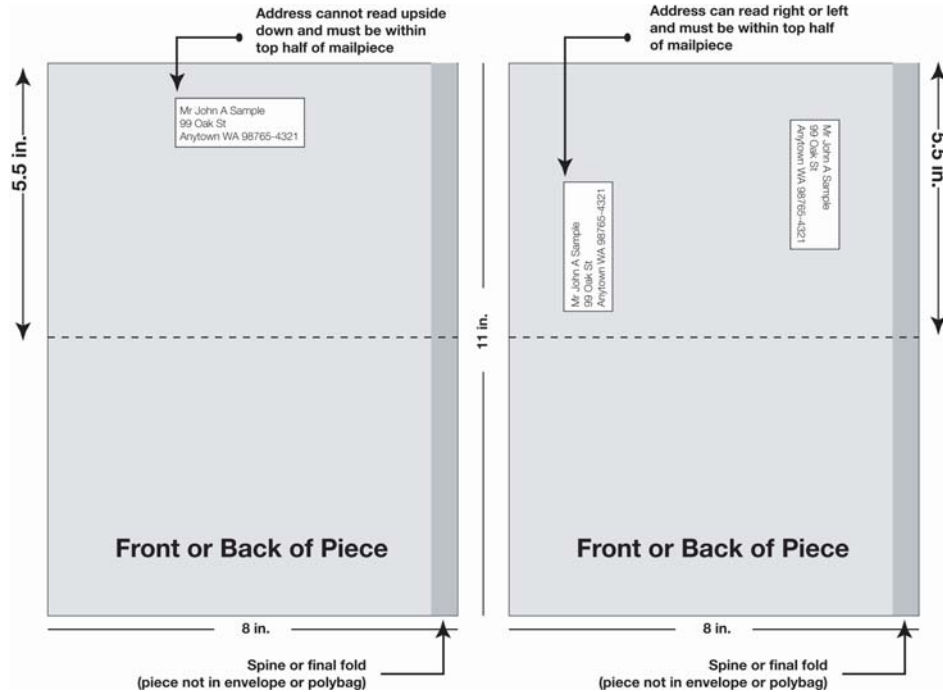
The following standards apply to bound or folded Periodicals, Standard Mail, Bound Printed Matter, Media Mail, and Library Mail flats mailed at presorted, automation, or carrier route prices not in envelopes or polywrap (see 2.2 for all card-style pieces):

- a. The “top” is the upper edge of the mailpiece when the bound or final folded edge is vertical and on the right side of the piece. Exception: For Carrier Route (or Enhanced Carrier Route) saturation pieces, the “top” of the mailpiece is either of the shorter edges.
- b. The entire delivery address must be within the top half of the mailpiece (see Exhibit 2.3), except under 2.3c. Optimal placement is at the top edge (while maintaining the 1/8-inch clearance requirement).
- c. If a vertical address will not fit entirely within the top half, the address may cross the midpoint if it is placed within 1 inch of the top edge.



302.2.4

Exhibit 2.3 Delivery Address on Bound or Folded Pieces



2.4 Type Size and Line Spacing

[1-27-13] On all First-Class Mail, Periodicals, Standard Mail, Bound Printed Matter, Media Mail, and Library Mail flats mailed at presorted, automation, or carrier route prices, mailers must print the delivery address using at least 8-point type (each character must be at least 0.080 inch high). A sans serif font is preferred. Addresses printed in all capital letters are also preferred. These additional standards apply to automation pieces:

- The individual characters in the address cannot overlap. The individual lines in the address cannot touch or overlap. A minimum 0.028-inch clear space between lines is preferred.
- Each element on each line of the address may be separated by no more than five blank character spaces. One or two blank spaces is preferred. For example, "ANYTOWN US 12345," *not* "ANYTOWN US 12345." A "blank" character space can equal the width of the widest character in the address.
- For pieces that bear an Intelligent Mail barcode with a delivery point routing code under 708.4.3, mailers may print the delivery address in a minimum of 6-point type (each character must be at least 0.065 inch high) if all capital letters are used.

3.0 Placement and Content of Mail Markings

3.1 Express Mail, Priority Mail, and Critical Mail Markings

Express Mail pieces must be marked “Express Mail,” by using a mailing label according to [315.2.1](#). Priority Mail pieces must have the basic price marking of “Priority Mail” printed prominently on the address side; see more options in [102.3.1](#). Critical Mail flats (see [323](#)) have the marking “Critical Mail” preprinted on the USPS-produced packaging. Critical Mail flats with permit imprint postage must have “Critical Mail” in the indicia when a class of mail is printed. In addition, except for pieces paid using an Express Mail Corporate Account or permit imprint, Express Mail and Priority Mail pieces claiming the Commercial Base or Commercial Plus price must bear the appropriate commercial price marking, printed on the piece or produced as part of the meter imprint or PC Postage indicia. Place the commercial price 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”

3.2 First-Class Mail and Standard Mail Markings

3.2.1 Placement

[1-27-13] Mailpieces must be marked under the corresponding standards to show the class of service and/or price paid:

- 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 Mail”
 2. “Standard,” “STD,” “Presorted Standard,” or “PRSRT STD”
 3. “Nonprofit Organization,” “Nonprofit Org.,” or “Nonprofit”
 4. For Standard Mail flats mailed at saturation flats prices under EDDM- Retail standards in 140 and [602.3.0](#), add “EDDM-Retail” as the last line in the permit imprint indicia. See Exhibit 144.1.3 for an example.
- b. Other Markings. Mailers may place price-specific markings as follows:
 1. In the location specified in [3.2.1a](#).
 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 information under [708.8.0](#).
 3. If preceded by two asterisks (**), the “AUTO,” “PRESORTED” (or “PRSRT”), “CUSTOMIZED MARKETMAIL” (or “CUST MKTMAIL” or “CMM”), or “Single-Piece” (or “SNGLP”) markings 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.



302.3.2.2

- c. 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.

3.2.2 Exceptions to Markings

Exceptions are as follows:

- a. Automation Flats. First-Class Mail and Standard Mail flats do not require an “AUTO” marking. First-Class Mail flats not marked “AUTO” must bear both the “Presorted” or “PRSRT” and “First-Class” markings. Standard Mail flats not marked “AUTO” must bear the appropriate basic marking in [3.2.1a](#).
- b. Manifest Mailings. The basic marking must appear in the postage area on each piece. The two-letter price category code, printed in the keyline on manifest mailing system pieces using batch processing under [705.2.0, Manifest Mailing System](#), meets the requirement for other price markings when those pieces are part of a manifest mailing or another automation mailing. If a single-piece marking (“SP”) has been applied to pieces that subsequently become part of a presorted or automation mailing, the “SP” marking must be marked out and replaced with a “Presorted” or “PRSRT” marking.
- c. MLOCR Prepared Automation Mailings. The basic marking must appear in the postage area on each piece. The other “AUTO” marking must be replaced by the appropriate identifier/price code marking described in [705.5.3.2, Price and Postage Marking](#), on those pieces that have the marking applied by an MLOCR. This seven-character marking provides a description of the Product Month Designator, MASS/FASTforward System Identifier, postage payment method, and the price of postage affixed for metered and precanceled stamp mail or other postage information for permit imprint mail.

3.3 Bound Printed Matter, Media Mail, and Library Mail Markings

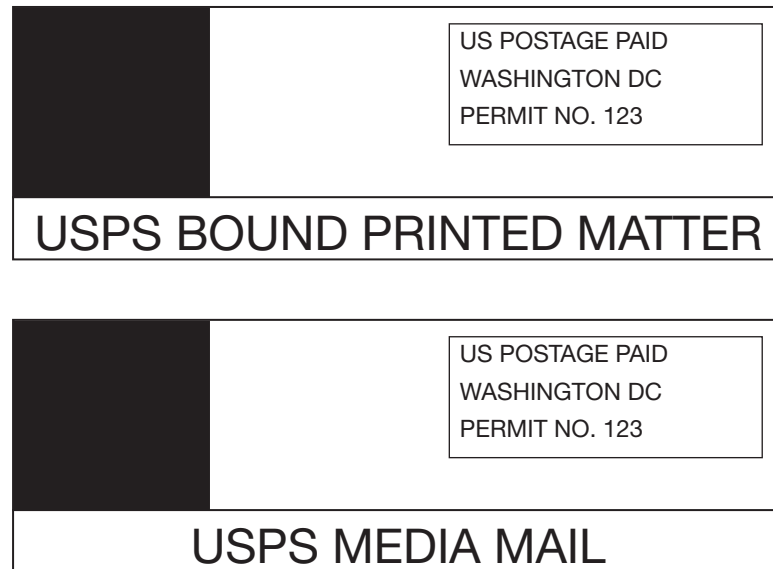
3.3.1 Basic Markings

The basic required Package Services subclass marking—“Bound Printed Matter” or “BPM,” “Media Mail,” or “Library Mail”—must be printed on each piece claimed at the respective price. The basic required marking must be placed in the postage area (i.e., 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 3.3.1, Package Services Indicator Examples](#)):

- a. The service icon that will identify all Package Services subclasses 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 subclass marking (e.g., “BOUND PRINTED MATTER,” “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 3.3.1 Package Services Indicator Examples



3.3.2 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 [3.3.1, Basic Markings](#). 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”). For presorted flats claiming the barcode discount prepared under [365.7.0](#), the optional marking “AUTO” may be used in place of “Presorted” (or “PRSRT”). If the “AUTO” marking is not used, the automation price flats must bear the “Presorted” (or “PRSRT”) price marking.
- b. For carrier route price mail, the additional required marking is “Carrier Route Presort” (or “CAR-RT SORT”).

3.3.3 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 [3.3.1, Basic Markings](#). Alternatively, these markings may be placed in the address area on the



302.3.3.4

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](#).

3.3.4 Library Mail Markings

Each piece of Library Mail mailed at a presorted price must bear the required marking “Presorted” or “PRSRT” in addition to the basic marking “Library Mail.” This additional marking may be placed in the postage area as specified in [3.3.1, Basic Markings](#). 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](#).

3.4 Enclosures

Enclosures, attachments, and mixed price mailpieces must be marked under the applicable standards in [703.9.0, Mixed Classes](#), and [705.18.0, Express Mail Open and Distribute and Priority Mail Open and Distribute](#).

3.5 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.

3.6 Marking Hazardous Materials

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

4.0 Placement and Physical Standards for Endorsements

4.1 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](#)), subject to the corresponding standards for use and availability.

4.2 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).

4.3 Placement of Endorsements

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

- a. A retention period specified by the mailer must be placed directly above the return address.
- b. 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.

4.4 Physical Standards for Endorsements

The endorsement, or, if combined, endorsements, must meet these physical standards:

- a. The type size of the endorsement must be at least 8 points.
- 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. This 1/4-inch clear space is not required for an endorsement that is applied with a multiline optical character reader (MLOCR) inkjet and placed in the location directly below the postage area and any price marking if the endorsement is clear and legible.

5.0 Barcode Placement

5.1 Barcode Placement for Flats

[1-27-13] On any flat-size piece claimed at automation prices, the piece must bear an Intelligent Mail barcode with a delivery point routing code. The barcode may be anywhere on the address side as long as it is at least 1/8 inch from any edge of the piece. The portion of the surface of the piece on which the barcode is printed must meet the barcode dimensions and spacing requirements in 708.4.2.5, and the reflectance standards in 708.4.4. Intelligent Mail barcodes are subject to standards in 708.4.3.2. A POSTNET barcode or an additional Intelligent Mail barcode may also appear in the address block of an automation flat, when the qualifying Intelligent Mail barcode is not in the address block. Other non-USPS barcodes may appear on the address side of a flat if the barcode format is not discernable to automated postal flat-sorting equipment.

5.2 5-Digit and ZIP+4 Barcodes

[1-27-13] An automation flat-size piece must not bear a 5-digit or a ZIP + 4 barcode.

5.3 Delivery Point Routing Code Numeric Equivalent

[1-27-13] In automation mailings only, the numbers corresponding to the delivery point routing code may appear in the delivery address. If read from left to right: a correct numeric equivalent consists of five digits, a hyphen, and six digits.



302.5.4

5.4 Barcode in Address Block

[1-27-13] When the barcode is included as part of the address block:

- a. The barcode must be placed 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. The printing of the barcode is prohibited anywhere between the address line containing the recipient's name and the city, state, and ZIP Code line.
- c. The minimum clearance between the barcode and any information line above or below it within the address block must be at least 0.028 inch, and the separation between the barcode and top line or bottom line of the address block must not exceed 0.625 (5/8) inch. The clearance between the leftmost and rightmost bars and any adjacent printing must be at least 0.125 (1/8) inch.
- d. If a window envelope is used, the clearance between the leftmost and rightmost bars and any printing or window edge must be at least 0.125 (1/8) inch, and the clearance between the barcode and the top and bottom window edges must be at least 0.028 inch. These clearances must be maintained during the insert's range of movement in the envelope. Covers for address block windows are subject to 5.5. Window envelopes also must meet the specifications in 601.6.3.
- e. If an address label is used, a clear space of at least 0.125 (1/8) inch must be left between the barcode and the left and right edges of the address label, and the clearance between the barcode and the top and bottom edges of the address label must be at least 0.028 inch.

5.5 Window Cover

The window cover must be of 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.

