

243 Prices and Eligibility

Overview

- [1.0 Prices and Fees for Standard Mail](#)
- [2.0 Content Standards for Standard Mail Letters](#)
- [3.0 Basic Standards for Standard Mail Letters](#)
- [4.0 Price Eligibility for Standard Mail](#)
- [5.0 Additional Eligibility Standards for Nonautomation Standard Mail Letters](#)
- [6.0 Additional Eligibility Standards for Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail Letters](#)
- [7.0 Eligibility Standards for Automation Standard Mail](#)
- [8.0 Incentive Programs for Standard Mail Letters](#)

1.0 Prices and Fees for Standard Mail

1.1 Price Application

Postage is based on the price that applies to the weight (postage) increment of each addressed piece.

1.2 Standard Mail Price Application

Standard Mail prices are based on the weight of the pieces as follows:

- a. The appropriate minimum per piece price applies to any Standard Mail piece that weighs 3.3 ounces (0.2063 pound) or less.
- b. A price determined by adding the per piece charge and the corresponding per pound charge applies to any Standard Mail piece that weighs more than 3.3 ounces.

1.3 Regular Standard Mail—ECR, Automation, and Nonautomation Prices

For prices see [Notice 123—Price List](#).

1.4 Nonprofit Standard Mail—ECR, Automation, and Nonautomation Prices

For prices see [Notice 123—Price List](#).

1.5 Fees

1.5.1 Presort Mailing Fee

Mailing fee required per 12-month period (see [Notice 123—Price List](#)).



1.5.2 Weighted Fee

For return of pieces bearing the ancillary service markings “Address Service Requested” and “Forwarding Service Requested.” Weighted fee equals single-piece First-Class Mail or Priority Mail price (plus the nonmachinable surcharge, if applicable) multiplied by 2.472.

1.6 Computing Postage for Standard Mail

1.6.1 Weight

To compute the total weight of the addressed pieces in a mailing or mailing segment for:

- a. Identical-weight pieces, multiply the computed average weight of a single piece by the corresponding number of pieces; do not round the product.
- b. Nonidentical-weight pieces, add the actual weight of the individual pieces or weigh the entire mailing in bulk; do not round either result.

1.6.2 Determining Single-Piece Weight

To determine single-piece weight in a mailing of identical-weight pieces, weigh a sample group of at least 10 randomly selected pieces and divide the total sample weight by the number of pieces in the sample. To determine single-piece weight in a mailing of nonidentical-weight pieces, weigh each piece individually. Express all single-piece weights in decimal pounds, rounded off to four decimal places.

1.6.3 Net Postage

Postage is computed at the applicable prices on the entire mailing to be mailed at one time. The net postage price is either the applicable minimum per piece price or the piece/pound price, as adjusted for any discounts and surcharges.

1.6.4 Per Piece and Per Pound Charges

The per piece charge is computed based on the total number of addressed pieces for each price category claimed. The minimum price may apply to each piece as detailed in [1.2, Standard Mail Price Application](#). Otherwise, the per piece charge must be added to the per pound charge to determine total postage. Where applicable, the per pound charge is computed based on the total weight of the addressed pieces for each price category claimed, and is added to the per piece charge to determine total postage. For example, a quantity of pieces weighing 100.25 pounds is charged 100.25 times the applicable price per pound, based on the price claimed, plus one unit of the applicable per piece charge for each addressed piece.

1.6.5 Computing Affixed Postage

To compute postage to be affixed to each piece, multiply the weight of the piece (in pounds) by the applicable price per pound; add the applicable per piece charge and any surcharge; and round the sum up to the next tenth of a cent. The applicable minimum per piece charge must be affixed if it is more than the total computed per piece postage.

**1.6.6 Computing Affixed Postage—Heavy Letters**

To compute postage to be affixed to each piece, multiply the weight of the piece (in pounds) by the applicable price per pound; add the applicable per piece charge, subtract the heavy letter discount (see 1.6.8 through 1.6.9); and round the sum up to the next tenth of a cent.

1.6.7 Permit Imprint

In any permit imprint mailing:

- a. For each price or price category, multiply the number of addressed pieces by the corresponding price per piece and (if applicable) multiply the *unrounded* total weight of the pieces by the corresponding price per pound; round off each product to four decimal places.
- b. Add the per piece and per pound charges and round off the total postage to the nearest whole cent.

1.6.8 Discount for Heavy Automation Letters

Automation letters that weigh more than 3.3 ounces but not more than 3.5 ounces are charged postage equal to the automation piece/pound price for that piece and receive a discount equal to the corresponding automation flat-size piece price (3.3 ounces or less) minus the corresponding automation letter-size piece price (3.3 ounces or less). If a destination entry price is claimed, the discount is calculated using the corresponding prices.

1.6.9 Discount for Heavy ECR Letters

Pieces that otherwise qualify for the high density or saturation letter price and weigh more than 3.3 ounces but not more than 3.5 ounces pay postage equal to the piece/pound price and receive a discount equal to the flat-size piece price (3.3 ounces or less) minus the letter-size piece price (3.3 ounces or less). If a destination entry price is claimed, the discount is calculated using the corresponding prices.

2.0 Content Standards for Standard Mail Letters**2.1 Definition and Weight**

Standard Mail consists of mailable matter that is neither mailed or required to be mailed as First-Class Mail nor entered as Periodicals (unless permitted or required by standard) and that weighs less than 16 ounces. Standard Mail includes matter formerly classified as Standard Mail (A) and third-class mail.

2.2 Personal Information

Personal information may not be included in a Standard Mail mailpiece unless all of the following conditions are met:

- a. The mailpiece contains explicit advertising for a product or service for sale or lease or an explicit solicitation for a donation.
- b. All of the personal information is directly related to the advertising or solicitation.
- c. The exclusive reason for inclusion of all of the personal information is to support the advertising or solicitation in the mailpiece.



2.3 Bills and Statements of Account

Mail containing bills or statements of account as defined in [233.2.2](#) may not be entered as Standard Mail except under the conditions described in [2.5.2](#).

2.4 Handwritten and Typewritten Matter

Mail containing handwritten or typewritten matter may not be entered as Standard Mail except under the conditions described in [2.6](#).

2.5 Attachments and Enclosures

2.5.1 Invoice

An invoice, whether it also serves as a bill, may be placed either inside a Standard Mail piece or in an envelope marked “Invoice Enclosed” and attached to the outside of the piece if the invoice relates solely to the matter with which it is mailed. The invoice may show this information:

- a. Names and addresses of the sender and addressee.
- b. Names and quantities of the articles enclosed, descriptions of each (e.g., price, tax, style, stock number, size, and quality, and, if defective, nature of defects).
- c. Order or file number, date of order, date and manner of shipment, shipping weight, postage paid, and initials or name of packer or checker.

2.5.2 Incidental First-Class Mail Attachments and Enclosures

Incidental First-Class Mail matter may be enclosed in or attached to Standard Mail merchandise (including books but excluding merchandise samples) without payment of First-Class Mail postage. Incidental First-Class Mail matter may not be enclosed in or attached to matter mailed as Customized MarketMail under [705.1.0](#). An incidental First-Class Mail attachment or enclosure must be matter that, if mailed separately, would require First-Class Mail postage, is closely associated with but secondary to the host piece, and is prepared not to encumber postal processing. An incidental First-Class Mail attachment or enclosure may be a bill for the product or publication, a statement of account for past products or publications, or a personal message or greeting included with a product, publication, or parcel. Postage at the Standard Mail or Package Services price for the host piece is based on the combined weight of the host piece and the incidental First-Class Mail attachment or enclosure.

2.5.3 Nonincidental First-Class Mail Enclosures

Letters or other pieces of nonincidental First-Class Mail, subject to postage at First-Class Mail prices, may be enclosed with Standard Mail pieces (except matter mailed as Customized MarketMail under [705.1.0](#)). Postage for the First-Class Mail enclosure must be placed on the outside of the piece. It may be affixed separately or added to the postage for the host piece. The endorsement “First-Class Mail Enclosed” must be placed on the piece, below the postage and above the address.

2.5.4 Nonincidental First-Class Mail Attachments

Letters or other pieces of nonincidental First-Class Mail may be placed in an envelope and securely attached to the address side of a Standard Mail piece (except matter mailed as Customized MarketMail under [705.1.0](#)), or of the principal piece, as applicable. Combination envelopes or containers with separate parts for the two classes of mail may be used. The names and addresses of the sender and



addressee must be placed on both the principal piece and the attachment. Alternatively, the sender's name and address must be placed on one part and the addressee's name and address on the other. If the piece is a combination container with inseparable parts or compartments, the names and addresses may appear on only one part. The applicable Standard Mail postage for the Standard Mail matter must be prepaid and placed in the upper right corner of the address space. Postage at the applicable First-Class Mail price must be paid for and affixed to the First-Class Mail attachment, unless other payment methods are permitted by standard.

2.5.5 Attachment of Other Standard Mail Matter

Standard Mail letters may bear one repositionable note per mailpiece under [705.22.0](#). A Standard Mail letter may bear a label, a sticker, or a release card eligible as Standard Mail matter, when affixed under [2.5.5](#) and [2.5.6](#). Standard Mail letters also may bear other attachments eligible as Standard Mail matter if these additional conditions are met:

- a. The piece bearing the attachment is claimed as Customized MarketMail (CMM) under [705.1.0](#) or as Enhanced Carrier Route letters under [6.0](#), except as allowed for labels, stickers and release cards under [2.5.6](#). The face of the attachment may bear only the price markings and endorsements permitted for the price claimed for the host piece.
- b. At the time of mailing, the piece shows only one complete delivery address. If the attachment is a reply card, the address for returning the piece is not visible.
- c. CMM host pieces are any size permitted under [705.1.1.3, Physical Standards](#). Enhanced Carrier Route letters are larger than 6 by 11 inches, except as allowed under [2.5.6](#).
- d. The attachment is not larger than the host piece and does not extend beyond the host piece. An attachment affixed to a CMM piece may not be greater than 1/4 inch thick at its thickest point.
- e. Each piece in the mailing bears the attachment, and the attachment is of identical size, weight, and positioning on the host piece. Different wording or designs may be used.
- f. The attachment does not interfere with processing or delivery. Folded or multipage attachments must be secured to prevent opening during handling.
- g. Letters, with attachments that have been approved in writing by the Pricing and Classification Service Center, are eligible for mailing under the conditions specified in the approval letter.

2.5.6 Letter-Size Pieces with Labels, Stickers, or Release Cards

Automation letters and Enhanced Carrier Route letters with an attached label, sticker, or release card eligible as Standard Mail matter must meet the standards in [201.3.13](#).

2.6 Written Additions

Markings that have the character of personal correspondence require, with certain exceptions, additional postage at the First-Class Mail prices. The following written additions and enclosures do not require additional First-Class Mail postage:



243.3.1

- a. The sender's and the addressee's names, occupations, and addresses, preceded by "From" or "To," and directions for handling.
- b. Marks, numbers, names, or letters describing the contents.
- c. Words or phrases such as "Do Not Open Until Christmas" and "Happy Birthday, Mother."
- d. Instructions and directions for the use of the item mailed.
- e. A manuscript dedication or inscription not having the nature of personal correspondence.
- f. Marks to call attention to words or passages in the text.
- g. Corrections of typographical errors in printed matter.
- h. Manuscripts accompanying related proof sheets and corrections of proof sheets including corrections of typographical and other errors, changes in the text, insertions of new text, marginal instructions to the printer, and corrective rewrites of parts.
- i. Handstamped imprints, unless the added material is in itself personal or converts the original matter to a personal communication.
- j. Matter mailable separately as Standard Mail printed on the wrapper, envelope, tag, or label.

3.0 Basic Standards for Standard Mail Letters

3.1 Description of Service

3.1.1 Service Objectives

Standard Mail may receive deferred handling. Service objectives for delivery are 2 to 9 days; however, delivery time is not guaranteed.

3.1.2 Minimum Quantity

Standard Mail provides economical prices for mailings of 200 or more pieces or 50 or more pounds of mail.

3.2 Defining Characteristics

3.2.1 Mailpiece Weight

All Standard Mail pieces must weigh less than 16 ounces. The following weight limits also apply to pieces mailed at Standard Mail letter prices:

- a. Pieces mailed at machinable letter prices may weigh up to 3.3 ounces. Letter-size pieces weighing more than 3.3 ounces are mailable at nonmachinable letter prices, unless they are barcoded and eligible to be mailed as automation letters. For saturation and high density letters over 3.5 ounces, see [3.2.1b](#).
- b. Pieces mailed at automation letter prices may weigh up to 3.5 ounces. Saturation and high density letters weighing more than 3.5 ounces are mailable at applicable saturation or high density nonautomation letter prices.

**3.2.2 Preparation Requirements**

Standard Mail is subject to specific volume, marking, and preparation requirements.

3.2.3 Inspection of Contents

Standard Mail is not sealed against postal inspection.

3.2.4 Forwarding Service

The price of Standard Mail typically does not include forwarding service. Forwarding service is available under [507.1.5](#).

3.2.5 Return Service

The price of Standard Mail does not include return service. Return service is available under [507.1.5](#) for an additional fee.

3.2.6 Extra Services

Extra services available with Standard Mail are insured mail service (bulk insurance only), certificate of mailing service (bulk certificate of mailing only), return receipt for merchandise service, and Delivery Confirmation service (parcels only). See information regarding extra services in [503](#).

3.2.7 Periodicals

Authorized Periodicals may not be entered as Standard Mail unless permitted by standard.

3.2.8 Identical Pieces

The contents of printed matter in a Standard Mail mailing must be identical to a piece sent to at least one other addressee. Standard Mail may include the addressee's name and address but may not transmit personal information except as permitted under [2.2](#).

3.3 Additional Basic Standards for Standard Mail

Each Standard Mail mailing is subject to these general standards:

- a. All pieces in a mailing must be of the same processing category.
- b. Each mailing must contain at least 200 pieces or 50 pounds of pieces. See [3.6](#), [Residual Volume Requirement](#), for volume requirement eligibility unique to Presorted Standard price mailings. Other volume standards also can apply, based on the price claimed.
- c. All pieces in an automation mailing must be eligible for an automation price.
- d. All pieces in a mailing must be sorted together and marked under the standards for the price claimed.
- e. Each piece must bear the addressee's name and delivery address, including the correct ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code (see [602.6.1](#)), unless an alternative addressing format is used subject to 602.3.0. Detached address labels may be used subject to [602.4.0](#).
- f. Postage must be paid under [244.1.0](#) through [244.3.0](#) with precanceled stamps, meter stamps, or permit imprint.



243.3.4

- g. A postage statement, completed and signed by the mailer, using the correct USPS form or an approved facsimile, must be submitted with each mailing. In addition, mailings must be documented under [244.4.2, Basic Documentation Standards](#), and the standards for the price claimed.
- h. Each piece must meet the standards for any other price or discount claimed.
- i. Any POSTNET barcode on a mailpiece must be correct for the delivery address and meet the standards in [202.5.0, Barcode Placement](#), [708.3.0, Coding Accuracy Support System \(CASS\)](#), and [708.4.0, Standards for POSTNET and Intelligent Mail Barcodes](#).
- j. Mailings must be deposited at a business mail entry unit of the Post Office where the postage permit or license is held and the annual mailing fee paid, unless deposit elsewhere is permitted by standard.

3.4 Presort Mailing Fees

An annual mailing fee must be paid once each 12-month period at each Post Office of mailing. A mailer paying this fee may enter clients' mail as well as the mailer's own. The mailer whose permit imprint appears on pieces in a mailing paid with a permit imprint must show that permit number on the postage statement and must pay the annual mailing fee for that permit; this fee is in addition to the one-time fee for an application to use permit imprints. The fee may be paid in advance only for the next 12 months and only during the last 60 days of the current service period. The fee charged is that which is in effect on the date of payment.

3.5 Merging Similar Standard Mailings

Mailings are subject to the general definitions and conditions in [245.1.0, General Information for Mail Preparation](#). Generally, mailers may merge similar Standard Mail matter into a single mailing. Differences in text, address labels, and address lists or list key numbers do not prohibit the mailer from merging and sorting pieces together. Pieces with different methods of postage payment may be combined in the same mailing only if authorized by Business Mailer Support (BMS). Pieces of nonidentical weight, if merged in the same mailing, must bear the correct postage when mailed, unless otherwise authorized by BMS.

3.6 Residual Volume Requirement

Pieces in an Enhanced Carrier Route mailing that has separately met a 200-piece or 50-pound minimum quantity requirement may be counted toward the minimum quantity requirement for a Presorted mailing, provided that the Enhanced Carrier Route mailing and the Presorted mailing are part of the same mailing job. Likewise, pieces in an automation mailing that has separately met a 200-piece or 50-pound minimum quantity requirement may be counted toward the minimum quantity requirement for a Presorted mailing, provided that the automation mailing and the Presorted mailing are part of the same mailing job. Pieces mailed at Presorted Standard Mail prices must not be counted toward the minimum volume requirements for an Enhanced Carrier Route or an automation mailing.

3.7 Residual Mail Subject to First-Class Mail or Priority Mail Prices

Pieces prepared as Standard Mail (i.e., that bear Standard Mail markings, ACS codes, etc.) that do not qualify for Enhanced Carrier Route, automation, or Presorted Standard Mail prices are subject to the single-piece First-Class Mail or



Priority Mail prices as applicable for the weight of the mailpiece. Metered pieces weighing over 13 ounces but less than 16 ounces that do not qualify for Standard Mail prices and any pieces that do not qualify for Standard Mail prices for which First-Class Mail or Priority Mail service is desired must be re-enveloped or otherwise prepared so that they do not bear Standard Mail markings, endorsements, and ACS codes and must bear the proper First-Class Mail or Priority Mail markings and ACS codes. Mailers who have pieces (other than metered pieces weighing over 13 ounces but less than 16 ounces) that do not qualify for Standard Mail prices but that are prepared as Standard Mail and who do not desire to receive First-Class Mail or Priority Mail service for those pieces may enter their mailpieces “as is” (i.e., bearing the Standard Mail markings and endorsements), provided the requirements in [244.5.1, *Residual Standard Mail Subject to First-Class Mail Prices*](#), and [244.5.2, *Residual Standard Mail Subject to Priority Mail Prices*](#), are met.

3.8 ZIP Code Accuracy

[11-7-11] The ZIP Code accuracy standard is a means of ensuring that the 5-digit ZIP Code in the delivery address correctly matches the delivery address information. For the purposes of this standard, *address* means a specific address associated with a specific 5-digit ZIP Code. Each address in a mailing at Standard Mail letter prices must meet the ZIP Code accuracy requirements in [602.6.0](#).

3.9 Move Update Standard

3.9.1 Basic Standards

[11-7-11] The Move Update standard requires the periodic matching of a mailer's address records with customer-filed change-of-address orders maintained by the USPS. For this standard, *address* is a specific address associated with a specific occupant name. Each address in a mailing at Standard Mail letter prices must meet the requirements in [602.5.0](#).

3.9.2 Basis for Move Update Assessment Charges

Mailings are subject to a Move Update assessment charge if more than 30 percent of addresses with a change-of-address (COA) are not updated, based on the error rate found in USPS sampling at acceptance during Performance-Based Verification. Specifically, mailings for which the sample contains greater than 30 percent failed COAs out of the total COAs in the sample are subject to additional postage charges as follows:

- a. The percentage of the mailing paying the charge is based on the percentage of failed pieces above 30 percent.
- b. Each of the assessed pieces is subject to the \$0.07 per piece charge.
- c. As an example, if 40% of COAs in the sample are not updated, then the charge is applied to 10% (=40% - 30%) of the total mailing.
- d. Mailings for which the sample has five or fewer pieces that were not updated for a COA are not subject to the assessment, regardless of the failure percentage.



4.0 Price Eligibility for Standard Mail

4.1 General Information

All Standard Mail prices are presorted prices (including all nonprofit prices). These prices apply to mailings meeting the basic standards in [2.0](#) through [4.0](#) and the corresponding standards for Presorted prices under [3.0](#) and [5.0](#), Enhanced Carrier Route prices under [6.0](#), automation prices under [7.0](#), or Customized MarketMail prices under [705.1.0](#). Except for Customized MarketMail pieces, destination entry discount prices are available under [246.2.0](#) through [246.5.0](#). Nonprofit prices may be used only by organizations authorized by the USPS. Not all processing categories qualify for every price. Pieces are subject to either a single minimum per piece price or a combined piece/pound price, depending on the weight of the individual pieces in the mailing.

4.2 Minimum Per Piece Prices

The minimum per piece prices (the minimum postage that must be paid for each piece) apply as follows:

- a. Basic Requirement. Pieces mailed at Regular, Enhanced Carrier Route, Nonprofit, and Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route prices are subject to minimum per piece prices when they weigh no more than 3.3 ounces (0.2063 pound).
- b. In applying the minimum per piece prices, a mailpiece is categorized as either a letter or a nonletter, based on whether the piece meets the letter-size standard in [201.1.1.1, *Dimensional Standards for Letters*](#), without regard to placement of the address on the piece, except under these conditions:
 1. If the piece meets both the definition of a letter in [201.1.1.1](#) and the definition of an automation flat in [301.3.0](#), the piece may be prepared and entered at an automation flat price.
 2. If the piece is prepared for automation letter prices, address placement is used to determine the length when applying the size standards and aspect ratio requirements to qualify for automation letter prices under [201.3.0, *Physical Standards for Machinable and Automation Letters and Cards*](#). For this purpose, the length is considered to be the dimension parallel to the address.
 3. Pieces mailed as Customized *MarketMail* under [705.1.0](#) must pay the prices in [705.1.2](#) and must not exceed 3.3 ounces.
- c. Individual Prices. There are separate minimum per piece prices for each subclass (Regular, Enhanced Carrier Route, Nonprofit, and Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route) and within each subclass for the type of mailing and the level of presort within each mailing.

4.3 Piece/Pound Prices

Pieces that exceed 3.3 ounces (0.2063 pound) are subject to a two-part piece/pound price that includes a fixed charge per piece and a variable pound charge based on weight. Pieces exceeding 3.3 ounces may not be mailed as Customized MarketMail. There are separate per piece prices for each subclass (Regular, Enhanced Carrier Route, Nonprofit, and Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier



Route) and within each subclass for the type of mailing and the level of presort within each mailing under 3.0 through 7.0. There are separate per pound prices for each subclass (Regular, Enhanced Carrier Route, Nonprofit, and Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route) under 3.0 through 7.0. Discounted per pound prices also may be claimed for destination entry mailings (destination network distribution center (DNDC) and destination sectional center facility (DSCF)) under 246.

5.0 Additional Eligibility Standards for Nonautomation Standard Mail Letters

5.1 Basic Standards

All pieces in a Regular Standard Mail or Nonprofit Standard Mail nonautomation price mailing must:

- a. Meet the basic standards for Standard Mail in 2.0 through 4.0 in *Prices and Eligibility*.
- b. Except as provided in 3.6, *Residual Volume Requirement*, be part of a single mailing of at least 200 addressed pieces or 50 pounds of pieces qualifying for nonautomation Standard Mail. Regular and Nonprofit mailings must meet separate minimum volumes.
- c. Bear a delivery address that includes the correct ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code and that meets these address quality standards:
 1. The ZIP Code accuracy standard in 3.8.
 2. If an alternative addressing format is used, the additional standards in 602.3.0.
- d. Be marked, sorted, and documented as specified in 245, *Mail Preparation*, or 705.8.0, *Preparing Pallets*.

5.2 Weight Standards for Machinable Pieces

Maximum weight limit for machinable nonautomation Standard mail is 3.3 ounces (0.2063 pound).

5.3 Price Application

Nonautomation prices for Regular and Nonprofit Standard Mail apply to letters that meet the eligibility standards in 2.0, *Content Standards for Standard Mail Letters*, and the preparation standards in 245, *Mail Preparation*, or 705.8.0, *Preparing Pallets*.

5.4 Machinable Price Application

Machinable letters are subject only to AADC and mixed AADC prices.

5.4.1 AADC Price

The AADC price applies to qualifying letter-size machinable pieces (see 201.1.0, *Physical Standards for Machinable Letters and Cards*) placed in origin/entry 3-digit trays, to quantities of 150 or more pieces prepared in AADC trays for a single AADC, and to pieces placed in mixed AADC trays in lieu of overflow AADC trays.



5.4.2 Mixed AADC Price

The mixed AADC price applies to qualifying letter-size machinable pieces that the mailer prepares in mixed AADC trays, except for pieces placed in mixed AADC trays in lieu of overflow AADC trays (see 245.5.3.2).

5.5 Nonmachinable Price Application

Nonmachinable prices in 1.0 apply only to Standard Mail letter-size pieces (including card-size pieces) that meet the criteria in 201.2.1 for nonmachinable letters. Nonmachinable saturation or high density letter-size pieces are subject to the applicable saturation or high density nonautomation letter prices.

5.5.1 5-Digit Price

[9-6-11] The 5-digit price applies to letter-size pieces subject to nonmachinable prices in quantities of 150 or more pieces for a 5-digit ZIP Code prepared in 5-digit trays (and overflow pieces in 3-digit or ADC trays) under 245.5.0.

5.5.2 3-Digit Price

[9-6-11] The 3-digit price applies to letter-size pieces subject to nonmachinable prices in quantities of 150 or more pieces for a 3-digit ZIP Code prepared in 3-digit trays (and overflow pieces in ADC or MADC trays) under 245.5.0.

5.5.3 ADC Price

[9-6-11] The ADC price applies to letter-size pieces subject to nonmachinable prices in 3-digit origin/entry trays and to pieces in quantities of 150 or more for an ADC prepared in ADC trays (and overflow pieces in MADC trays) under 245.5.0.

5.5.4 Mixed ADC Price

The mixed ADC price applies to letter-size pieces that are subject to the nonmachinable prices and prepared in mixed ADC trays.

6.0 Additional Eligibility Standards for Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail Letters

6.1 General Enhanced Carrier Route Standards

6.1.1 Optional Preparation

Preparation to qualify for any Enhanced Carrier Route price is optional and need not be performed for all carrier routes in a 5-digit area. An Enhanced Carrier Route mailing may include pieces at basic, high density, and saturation (simplified address and other addressing) Enhanced Carrier Route prices.

6.1.2 Basic Eligibility Standards

All pieces in an Enhanced Carrier Route or Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail mailing must:

- Meet the basic standards for Standard Mail in 2.0 through 4.0 in *Prices and Eligibility*.
- Be part of a single mailing of at least 200 pieces or 50 pounds of pieces of Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail. ECR and Nonprofit ECR mailings must meet separate minimum volumes.



- c. Be sorted to carrier routes, marked, and documented under [245.6.0, *Preparing Enhanced Carrier Route Letters*](#), or [705.8.0, *Preparing Pallets*](#).
- d. Bear a delivery address that includes the correct ZIP Code, ZIP+4 code, or numeric equivalent to the delivery point barcode (DPBC) and that meets these address quality standards:
 - 1. The carrier route accuracy standard in [6.2](#).
 - 2. The address matching and coding standards in [7.5, *Address Standards for Barcoded Pieces*](#), and [708.3.0, *Coding Accuracy Support System \(CASS\)*](#).
 - 3. If an alternative addressing format is used, the additional standards in [602.3.0](#).
- e. Meet the applicable sequencing requirements in [6.3](#) through [6.5](#) and [245.6.8](#).
- f. Meet the applicable documentation and postage payment standards in [244, *Postage Payment and Documentation*](#), and [1.6, *Computing Postage for Standard Mail*](#).
- g. Meet the requirements for automation compatibility in [201.3.0](#) and bear an accurate delivery point POSTNET barcode or Intelligent Mail barcode encoded with the correct delivery point routing code matching the delivery address and meeting the standards in [202.5.0](#), and [708.4.0](#), except as provided in [6.1.2h](#). Pieces prepared with a simplified address format are exempt from the automation-compatibility and barcode requirements. Letters with Intelligent Mail barcodes entered under the full-service Intelligent Mail automation option also must meet the standards in [705.23.0](#).
- h. All saturation and high density letters over 3.5 ounces, and saturation (other than pieces with a simplified address) and high density letter-size pieces not meeting the standards [6.1.2g](#) must pay the applicable nonautomation saturation or high density prices. Basic carrier route letter prices are the same for barcoded automation-compatible pieces and nonautomation pieces.

6.2 Carrier Route Accuracy

6.2.1 Basic Standards

The carrier route accuracy standard is a means of ensuring that the carrier route code correctly matches the delivery address information. For the purposes of this standard, *address* means a specific address associated with a specific carrier route code. Addresses used on pieces claiming certain prices under [6.2.2](#) that are subject to the carrier route accuracy standard must meet these requirements:

- a. Each address and associated carrier route code used on the mailpieces in a mailing must be updated within 90 days before the mailing date with one of the USPS-approved methods in [602.6.2](#).
- b. Each individual address in the mailing is subject to the carrier route accuracy standard.



243.6.2.2

- c. If the carrier route code (and accuracy) of an address used on a mailpiece in a carrier route mailing at one class of mail and price is updated with an approved method, the same address may be used during the following 90 days to meet the carrier route accuracy standard required for mailing at any other class of mail and price.

6.2.2 Mail Classes and Prices

Except as provided in [243.6.2.3](#), addresses used on pieces claiming all Enhanced Carrier Route prices for Standard Mail, regardless of any required surcharges, must meet the carrier route accuracy standard.

6.2.3 Exception

The carrier route accuracy standard does not apply to mail of any class bearing a simplified address format under [602.3.0, *Use of Alternative Addressing*](#).

6.2.4 USPS-Approved Methods

Carrier route coding must be performed using CASS-certified software and the current USPS Carrier Route Product or another Address Information System (AIS) product containing carrier route information subject to [509.1.0, *Address Information System Services*](#), and [708.3.0, *Coding Accuracy Support System \(CASS\)*](#).

6.2.5 Mailer Certification

The mailer's signature on the postage statement certifies that the carrier route accuracy standard has been met for each address in the corresponding mailing presented to the USPS.

6.3 Basic Price Enhanced Carrier Route Standards

6.3.1 Sequencing

All pieces mailed at basic prices must be prepared in walk sequence or in line-of-travel (LOT) sequence according to LOT schemes prescribed by the USPS (see [245.6.8](#) through [245.6.9 in *Preparing Enhanced Carrier Route Letters*](#)).

6.3.2 Basic Price Eligibility

Basic prices apply to each piece sorted under [245.6.0](#) or [705.8.0](#) in a full carrier route tray, in a carrier route bundle of 10 or more pieces, or in groups of 10 or more pieces placed in a 5-digit carrier routes or a 3-digit carrier routes tray.

6.4 High Density Enhanced Carrier Route Standards

6.4.1 Basic Eligibility Standards for High Density Prices

High density letter-size mailpieces must be in a full carrier route tray or in a carrier route bundle of 10 or more pieces placed in a 5-digit carrier routes or 3-digit carrier routes tray. High density prices for barcoded letters apply to each piece that is automation-compatible according to [201.3.0](#), and has an accurate delivery point POSTNET barcode or Intelligent Mail barcode encoded with the correct delivery point routing code matching the delivery address and meeting the standards in [202.5.0](#), and [708.4.0](#). Except for pieces with a simplified address, pieces that are not automation-compatible or not barcoded are mailable only at the nonautomation high density letter prices.



6.4.2 High Density Prices for Letters

All pieces mailed at high density prices must:

- a. Be prepared in walk sequence according to schemes prescribed by the USPS (see [245.6.8](#) through [245.6.9](#) in *Preparing Enhanced Carrier Route Letters*).
- b. Meet the density requirement of at least 125 pieces for each carrier route. Multiple pieces per delivery address can count toward this density standard.

6.4.3 High Density Discount for Heavy Letters

High density pieces that are automation-compatible under [201.3.0](#), that are accurately barcoded with a delivery point barcode, and that weigh more than 3.3 ounces but not more than 3.5 ounces, pay postage equal to the piece/pound price and receive a discount equal to the high density flat-size piece price (3.3 ounces or less) minus the high density letter piece price (3.3 ounces or less). The discount is calculated using nondestination entry prices only, regardless of entry level. This discount does not apply to pieces paying nonautomation high density letter prices.

6.5 Saturation ECR Standards

6.5.1 Basic Eligibility Standards for Saturation Prices

Saturation letter-size mailpieces must be in a full carrier route tray or in a carrier route bundle of 10 or more pieces placed in a 5-digit carrier routes or 3-digit carrier routes tray. Saturation prices for barcoded letters apply to each piece that is automation-compatible according to [201.3.0](#), and has an accurate delivery point POSTNET barcode or Intelligent Mail barcode encoded with the correct delivery point routing code matching the delivery address and meeting the standards in [202.5.0](#) and [708.4.0](#). Except for pieces with a simplified address, pieces that are not automation-compatible or not barcoded are mailable at nonautomation saturation letter prices.

6.5.2 Saturation Prices for Letters

All pieces mailed at saturation prices must:

- a. Be prepared in walk sequence according to schemes prescribed by the USPS (see [245.6.8](#) through [245.6.9](#) in *Preparing Enhanced Carrier Route Letters*).
- b. Meet the density requirement of at least 90% or more of the active residential addresses or 75% or more of the total number of active possible delivery addresses on each carrier route receiving this mail. Pieces bearing a simplified address must meet the coverage standards in [602.3.0](#), *Use of Alternative Addressing*. Multiple pieces per delivery address do not count toward this density standard.

6.5.3 Saturation Discount for Heavy Letters

Saturation pieces that are automation-compatible under [201.3.0](#), are accurately barcoded with a delivery point barcode, and weigh more than 3.3 ounces but not more than 3.5 ounces pay postage equal to the piece/pound price and receive a discount equal to the saturation flat-size piece price (3.3 ounces or less) minus the saturation letter piece price (3.3 ounces or less). The discount is calculated using



nondestination entry prices only, regardless of entry level. This discount also applies to saturation pieces with simplified addresses. This discount does not apply to pieces paying nonautomation saturation letter prices.

7.0 Eligibility Standards for Automation Standard Mail

7.1 Basic Eligibility Standards for Automation Standard Mail

All pieces in a Regular Standard Mail or Nonprofit Standard Mail automation mailing must:

- a. Meet the basic standards for Standard Mail in [2.0](#) through [4.0 in *Prices and Eligibility*](#).
- b. Be part of a single mailing of at least 200 pieces or 50 pounds of pieces of automation price Standard Mail (Regular and Nonprofit mailings must meet separate minimum volumes).
- c. Be in the same processing category and meet the physical standards in [201.3.0, *Physical Standards for Machinable and Automation Letters and Cards*](#).
- d. Bear a delivery address that includes the correct ZIP Code, ZIP+4 code, or numeric equivalent to the delivery point barcode (DPBC) and that meets these address quality standards:
 1. The address matching and coding standards in [7.5, *Address Standards for Barcoded Pieces*](#), and [708.3.0, *Coding Accuracy Support System \(CASS\)*](#).
 2. If an alternative addressing format is used, the additional standards in [602.3.0](#).
- e. Bear an accurate delivery point POSTNET barcode or Intelligent Mail barcode encoded with the correct delivery point routing code, matching the delivery address and meeting the standards in [202.5.0](#), and [708.4.0](#). Mailers must apply the barcode either on the piece or on an insert showing through a window.
- f. Be marked and sorted according to [245.7.0, *Preparing Automation Letters*](#).
- g. Meet the applicable documentation and postage payment standards in [1.6, *Computing Postage for Standard Mail*](#), and [244.1.0](#) through [244.3.0 in *Postage Payment and Documentation*](#).

7.2 Additional Eligibility Standards for Full-Service Automation Standard Mail Letters

All pieces entered under the full-service Intelligent Mail automation option must:

- a. Bear a unique Intelligent Mail barcode.
- b. Be part of a mailing that meets the standards in [705.23.0](#).
- c. Be scheduled for an appointment through the Facility Access and Shipment Tracking (FAST) system when deposited as a DNDC or DSCF drop-shipment.

**7.3 Maximum Weight for Automation Letters**

Maximum weight limit for automation price mail is 3.5 ounces (0.2188 pound). See [201.3.6, Heavy Letter Mail \(over 3 ounces\)](#), for pieces heavier than 3 ounces.

7.4 Price Application for Automation Letters

Automation prices apply to each piece that is sorted under [245.7.0, Preparing Automation Letters](#), into the corresponding qualifying groups:

- a. Groups of 150 or more pieces in 5-digit/scheme trays qualify for the 5-digit price. Preparation to qualify for that price is optional. Pieces placed in full 3-digit/scheme trays under [245.7.5](#) in lieu of 5-digit/scheme overflow trays are eligible for 5-digit prices (see [245.7.5](#)).
- b. Groups of 150 or more pieces in 3-digit/scheme trays qualify for the 3-digit price. Pieces placed in full AADC trays under [245.7.5](#) in lieu of 3-digit/scheme overflow trays are eligible for 3-digit prices (see [245.7.5](#)).
- c. Groups of fewer than 150 pieces in origin/entry 3-digit/scheme trays and groups of 150 or more pieces in AADC trays qualify for the AADC price. Pieces placed in mixed AADC trays under [245.7.5](#) in lieu of AADC overflow trays also are eligible for AADC prices (see [245.7.5](#)).
- d. Pieces in mixed AADC trays qualify for the mixed AADC price, except for pieces prepared under [7.4c](#).

7.5 Address Standards for Barcoded Pieces**7.5.1 Basic Address Standards for Barcodes**

To qualify for automation prices, addresses must be sufficiently complete to enable matching to the current USPS ZIP+4 Product when used with current CASS-certified address matching software. Standardized address elements are not required. Any barcode as defined in [202.5.0, Barcode Placement](#), and [708.4.0, Standards for POSTNET and Intelligent Mail Barcodes](#), that appears on a mailpiece claimed at an automation price must be the correct barcode for the corresponding delivery address on the piece.

7.5.2 Numeric ZIP+4

A numeric ZIP+4 code must consist of five digits, a hyphen, and four digits.

7.5.3 Numeric Delivery Point Barcode (DPBC)

The numeric equivalent is formed by adding three digits directly after the ZIP+4 code.

7.5.4 Address Elements

Addresses must include the correct street number, predirectional, street name, suffix, and postdirectional that are input to obtain a match with the current USPS ZIP+4 Product.

7.5.5 Firm Name

An address must include a firm name when necessary to obtain a match with the finest level of ZIP+4 code in the USPS ZIP+4 Product. If an address contains a firm name assigned a unique ZIP+4 code in the USPS ZIP+4 Product, the unique ZIP+4 code must be used. If the firm name is not one assigned a unique ZIP+4 code in the USPS ZIP+4 Product and the apartment/suite number is included in the address,



243.7.5.6

the ZIP+4 code for the range in which the apartment/suite number appears must be used in that address. If the firm name does not correspond to a firm name that has a unique ZIP+4 code assigned in the USPS ZIP+4 Product and the apartment/suite number is not included in the address, the ZIP+4 code for the building must be used.

7.5.6 Secondary Designator

If a secondary address designator (e.g., an apartment number) is shown in the address, the mailpiece must show the appropriate ZIP+4 code representing the range for that secondary address as contained in the current USPS ZIP+4 Product. If a secondary address designator is required to obtain an exact match with the finest level of ZIP+4 code in the USPS ZIP+4 Product but the information is not available, the alternative ZIP+4 code or ZIP+4 or delivery point barcode for the building must be used.

7.5.7 Rural and Highway Contract Routes

If a rural route or highway contract route box number is included in the address, the mailpiece must show the appropriate ZIP+4 code representing the range for that box number as contained in the current USPS ZIP+4 Product. If a rural route or highway contract route box number is required to obtain a match with the finest level of ZIP+4 code but is not available, the alternative ZIP+4 code or ZIP+4 or delivery point barcode for the rural route or highway contract route must be used. If used, the rural route or highway contract route box number must be placed on the line immediately above the city/state/ZIP Code line.

7.5.8 Post Office Box

A Post Office box address must contain a Post Office box number that can be exactly matched with the USPS ZIP+4 Product in effect.

7.6 Enclosed Reply Cards and Envelopes

All letter-size reply cards and envelopes (business reply, courtesy reply, and meter reply mail) provided as enclosures in automation Regular or Nonprofit Standard Mail, and addressed for return to a domestic delivery address, must meet the standards in [201.3.0, *Physical Standards for Machinable and Automation Letters and Cards*](#), for enclosed reply cards and envelopes. The mailer's signature on the postage statement certifies that this standard has been met when the corresponding mail is presented to the USPS.

7.7 Discount for Heavy Automation Letters

Automation letters that weigh more than 3.3 ounces but not more than 3.5 ounces pay postage equal to the automation piece/pound price and receive a discount equal to the automation nonletter piece price (3.3 ounces or less) minus the automation letter piece price (3.3 ounces or less). If claiming a destination entry price, the discount is calculated using the corresponding prices.

8.0 Incentive Programs for Standard Mail Letters

8.1 General Description

Incentive programs for Standard Mail letters are designed to encourage mail volume growth and retention.

8.2 Saturation and High Density Incentive Program

The Saturation and High Density Incentive Program provides postage credits for qualified mail owners of Standard Mail, or Nonprofit Standard Mail, letters and flats mailed at saturation and high density carrier route prices that can document mail volumes exceeding their individual USPS-recorded threshold level, during the 2011 program period, from January 2, 2011 through December 31, 2011. Participating mail owners documenting volumes above their threshold level receive a credit, for each piece exceeding their threshold level, to a designated permit imprint advance deposit account or Centralized Account Payment System (CAPS) account after the end of the program period. Refer to [343.8.2](#) for program details.

