

445 Mail Preparation

Overview

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1.0 General Information for Mail Preparation

1.1 Definition of Presort Process

Presort is the process by which a mailer prepares mail so that it is sorted to at least the finest extent required by the standards for the price claimed. Generally, presort is performed sequentially, from the lowest (finest) level to the highest level, to those destinations specified by standard and is completed at each level before the next level is prepared. Not all presort levels are applicable in all situations.

1.2 Definition of Mailings

[1-27-13] Mailings are defined as:

- a. General. A mailing is a group of pieces within the same class of mail and, except for certain parcel prices, the same processing category that may be sorted together and/or presented under a single minimum volume mailing requirement under the applicable standards. Generally, types of mail that follow different flows through the postal processing system and mail for each separate class and subclass must be prepared as a separate mailing. Other specific standards may define whether separate mailings may be combined, palletized, reported, or deposited together.
- b. Standard Mail. Except as provided in [443.3.6, Residual Volume Requirement](#), the types of Standard Mail listed below may not be part of the same mailing.
 1. Product Sample parcels and any other type of mail.
 2. Product Sample parcels of nonidentical size or nonidentical weight.
 3. Presorted price mail and any other type of mail.
 4. Machinable and nonmachinable pieces.
 5. Except as provided by standard, Regular mail may not be in the same mailing as Nonprofit mail, and Enhanced Carrier Route mail may not be in the same mailing as Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route mail.
 6. Customized MarketMail and any other type of mail.



1.3 Terms for Presort Levels

[1-27-13] Terms used for presort levels are defined as follows:

- a. *Targeted (Product Samples or Simple Samples)*: a type of Marketing parcel that is intended for specific carrier routes, with DALs sorted to and marked at the carrier route level; with a minimum of one piece per carrier route. Multiple DALs per route are all addressed for delivery to the same city route, rural route, highway contract route, Post Office box section, or general delivery unit.
- b. *5-digit*: the delivery address on all pieces includes the same 5-digit ZIP Code.
- c. *5-digit scheme (pallets and sacks) for Standard Mail parcels*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces begins with one of the 5-digit ZIP Code zones processed by the USPS as a single scheme, as shown in [L606](#).
- d. *3-digit*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces begins with the same three digits (see [L002](#), Column A).
- e. *SCF*: the separation includes pieces for two or more 3-digit areas served by the same sectional center facility (SCF) (see [L005](#)), *except that*, where required or permitted by standard, mail for a single 3-digit area may be prepared in an SCF separation when no mail for other 3-digit ZIP Code areas is available. For pallets, the SCF sort may include mail for a single 3-digit ZIP Code area.
- f. *ASF/NDC*: all pieces are addressed for delivery in the service area of the same auxiliary service facility (ASF) or network distribution center (NDC) (see [L601](#), [L602](#), or [L605](#)).
- g. *Origin NDC*: this separation includes all pieces addressed for delivery to ZIP Codes within the same NDC (see [L601](#)) that serves the acceptance office that verifies the mailing. There is no minimum quantity requirement for this separation.
- h. *Mixed [NDC, ADC, etc.]*: the pieces are for delivery in the service area of more than one NDC, ADC, etc.
- i. *Residual pieces/bundles/sacks* contain material remaining after completion of a presort sequence. Residual mail lacks the volume set by standard to require or allow bundle preparation to a particular destination, and usually does not qualify for a presort price. Residual mail is also referred to as *nonqualifying* or *working* mail.

1.4 Preparation Definitions and Instructions

For purposes of preparing mail:

- a. *Pieces* refers to individually addressed mailpieces.
- b. A *full sack* is defined in the standards for the class and price claimed.
- c. A *5-digit/scheme sort for Standard Mail parcels* yields 5-digit scheme sacks or pallets for those 5-digit ZIP Codes listed in [L606](#) and 5-digit sacks or pallets for other ZIP Codes. The 5-digit ZIP Codes in each scheme are treated as a single presort destination subject to a single minimum volume (if required), with no further separation by 5-digit ZIP Code required. Sacks or pallets prepared for a

5-digit scheme destination that contain pieces for only one of the schemed 5-digit ZIP Codes are still considered 5-digit scheme sorted and are labeled accordingly.

- d. The *required at [quantity]* instruction (e.g., “required at 10 pieces”) means that the particular unit *must* be prepared for the corresponding presort level whenever the specified quantity of mail is reached or exceeded. Bundles and containers may contain more than the specified *required at* quantity up to the applicable maximum physical size. Subject to applicable price eligibility standards, smaller quantities may be prepared only if permitted. Where specified by standard, required preparation applies only if the mailer chooses to qualify for the corresponding price.
- e. The *optional at [quantity]* instruction means that the particular unit *may* be prepared for the corresponding presort level whenever the specified quantity of mail is reached or exceeded. Bundles or containers may contain more than the specified *optional at* quantity up to the applicable maximum physical size. Smaller quantities may be prepared only if permitted by applicable price eligibility standards. Standards for quantities with which preparation is optional are often followed by standards for larger quantities with which preparation is required.
- f. *Entry [facility]* (or *origin [facility]*) refers to the USPS mail processing facility (e.g., “entry NDC”) that serves the Post Office at which the mail is entered by the mailer. If the Post Office where the mail is entered is not the one serving the mailer’s location (e.g., for plant-verified drop shipment), the Post Office of entry determines the *entry facility*. *Entry SCF* includes both single-3-digit and multi-3-digit SCFs. *Entry NDC* includes subordinate ASFs unless otherwise specified.
- g. The *group pieces* instruction means the pieces are to be sorted together as if to be bundled but not actually secured into a bundle. Bundle labels and other bundle identification methods may be used for unsecured groups of pieces as permitted by standard.
- h. A *bundle* is a group of addressed pieces secured together as a unit. Bundle preparation is described in [2.0](#).
- i. A “*logical presort destination*” represents the total number of pieces that are eligible for a specific presort level based on the required sortation, but which might not be contained in a single bundle or in a single container (sack or pallet) due to applicable preparation requirements or the size of the individual pieces. For example, there may be 42 mailpieces for ZIP Code 43112 forming a Standard Mail “logical” 5-digit bundle, and they are prepared in three physical 5-digit bundles because of the applicable weight and height restrictions on bundles. For pallets, 2,800 pounds of mail may be destined to an SCF destination, and these would form the “logical” SCF pallet, but the mail is placed on two physical SCF pallets each weighing 1,400 pounds because of the 2,200 pound maximum pallet weight requirement.



2.0 Bundles

2.1 General

[1-27-13] A bundle is a group of addressed pieces for a presort destination secured together as a unit. Bundling is permitted only for Marketing parcels mailed at Product Sample prices and for related DALs when used. Bundles must be in equal quantities of up to 50 parcels per bundles, with quantities of other than 50 indicated on a bundle facing slip. Bundles of parcels must be either banded or shrinkwrapped, and bundles of parcels more than 8 ounces each must be banded and shrinkwrapped. See [601.2.0](#) for other bundling standards.

2.2 Facing Slips

[1-27-13] Facing slips used on bundles of DALs must show the carrier route designation, the 5-digit destination ZIP Code, and the number of DALs for that carrier route. Facing slips used on bundles of Product Sample parcels must show the quantity in the bundle if less than 50 and this information:

- a. Line 1: Destination city, two-letter state abbreviation, and 5-digit ZIP Code.
- b. Line 2: Content (e.g., "STD MKTG SAMPLE) if accompanied by DALs bundled by carrier route, or contents followed by carrier route type and route number when not accompanied by DALs (e.g., "STD MKTG SAMPLE CR R 012").
- c. Line 3: City and two-letter state abbreviation of the origin Post Office.

3.0 Sacks

3.1 Standard Containers

[1-27-13] Mailings must be prepared in sacks, except for Product Samples, which may be in cartons, sacks, or bundles directly on pallets. Also, see [602.4.0](#) when Product Samples are mailed with DALs. Containers for Customized MarketMail are specified in [705.1.0](#). The following additional standards apply:

- a. Palletized mail is also subject to [705.8.0](#).
- b. A postmaster may authorize nonpostal containers for a small-volume presorted mailing if the mailing weighs no more than 20 pounds, consists primarily of mail or bundles of mail for local ZIP Codes, and requires no USPS transportation for processing.

3.2 Sack Preparation

All sack preparation is subject to these standards:

- a. Each sack must bear the correct sack label.
- b. The weight of a sack and its content must not exceed 70 pounds.

4.0 Sack Labels

4.1 Basic Standards

Sack labels are subject to the following:

- a. Use 1-inch labels for sacks with metal 1-inch label holders/closures.
- b. Use 2-inch labels for sacks with 2-inch label holder pockets.
- c. Use 2-inch labels for sacks with dual plastic label holders/closures. One-inch labels may be used but are not recommended.
- d. Illegible labels are not acceptable. Machine-printed labels (available from the USPS) ensure legibility. Legible hand-printed labels are acceptable.

4.2 Physical Characteristics of a Sack Label

A sack label must meet these specifications:

- a. Color: white or manila.
- b. Weight: 70-pound or heavier stock (optional).
- c. Length (parallel to printing): 3.250 inches minimum; 3.515 inches maximum.
- d. Height (perpendicular to printing):
 1. For 1-inch labels: 0.937 inch minimum; 0.980 inch maximum.
 2. For 2-inch labels: 1.860 inches minimum; 2.015 inches maximum.

4.3 Line 1 (Destination Line)

Line 1 (destination line) must meet these standards:

- a. *Placement.* Line 1 must be the first visible line on the label. It must be completely visible and legible when placed in the label holder. This visibility is ensured if the top of this line is no less than 1/8 (0.125) inch below the top of the label when the label is cut and prepared.
- b. *Information.* Line 1 must contain only the information specified by standard, including the appropriate destination facility prefix (e.g., “ADC”). Two zeros may follow the 3-digit ZIP Code prefix required by labeling standards (e.g., 223 as 22300).
- c. *Overseas Military Mail.* On 5-digit sacks and trays for overseas military destinations, Line 1 shows, from left to right, “APO” or “FPO,” followed by “AE” (for ZIP Codes within the ZIP Code prefix range 090-098), “AA” (for ZIP Codes within the 3-digit ZIP Code prefix 340), or “AP” (for ZIP Codes within the ZIP Code prefix range 962-966), followed by the destination 5-digit ZIP Code of the mail in the sack or tray.

4.4 Line 2 (Content Line)

Line 2 (content line) must meet these standards:

- a. *Placement:* Line 2 must be the second visible line on the label. This line must show the class and processing category of the mail in the sack and other information as specified by standards.



- b. *Codes:* The codes shown below must be used as appropriate on Line 2 of sack labels:

CONTENT TYPE	CODE
Carrier Route	C (type of route)
Carrier Routes	CR-RT or CR-RTS
Digit	D
General Delivery Unit	G
Highway Contract Route	H
Irregular Parcels	IRREG
Machinable	MACH
Marketing Parcels	MKTG
Mixed	MXD
Mixed Machinable and Irregular Parcels	MACH & IRREG
Post Office Box Section	B
Rural Route	R
Standard Mail	STD
Working	WKG

4.5 Line 3 (Origin Line)

Line 3 (origin line showing office of mailing or mailer information) must be the bottom line of required information unless the sack contains mail manifested using the Electronic Verification System (eVS) under [705.2.9](#). Line 3 must show either the city and state of the entry Post Office or the mailer's name and the city and state of the mailer's location. It is recommended that the mailer's name also appear with the city and state of the entry Post Office. As an alternative to adding a fourth line for eVS mailings as required by [4.6](#), "eVS" may appear as the first element on Line 3.

4.6 Electronic Verification System

All sacks containing parcels prepared and identified using the Electronic Verification System (eVS) under [705.2.9](#) must show "eVS" (or the alternatives "EVS" or "E-VS") directly below Line 3 using the same size and lettering used for Line 3. As an option, "eVS" may be placed as the first element on Line 3.

4.7 Abbreviations for Lines 1 and 3

Lines 1 and 3 may contain abbreviated information if such abbreviations are those in the USPS City State Product.

4.8 Placement of Extraneous Information

Extraneous information is not permitted on the destination and content lines. It may be placed away from required lines, subject to these conditions:

- It may be placed above Line 1 in not more than 0.083 inch high type (6-point type).
- It may appear to the right of required Line 3 information but it must not consist of numerals that resemble a ZIP Code or 3-digit ZIP Code prefix.

- c. It must not appear between Lines 1 and 2 (a blank line is permitted), but may appear between Lines 2 and 3 if it does not consist of numerals that resemble a ZIP Code or 3-digit ZIP Code prefix.
- d. It may appear below Line 3.
- e. A mailer code assigned by the USPS or such words as “Mailer,” “From” (or “FR”), or “Entered at” may appear before the required information on Line 3.

5.0 Preparing Presorted Parcels

5.1 Basic Standards

All mailings and all pieces in each mailing at Standard Mail and Nonprofit Standard Mail parcel prices are subject to preparation standards in [5.3](#) or [5.4](#), and to these general standards:

- a. All pieces must meet the standards for basic eligibility in [443.2.0](#) through [443.4.0 in *Prices and Eligibility*](#) and specific eligibility in [443.5.0](#). Nonprofit Standard Mail must meet the additional eligibility standards in [703.1.0](#).
- b. Marketing parcels, Nonprofit machinable parcels, and Nonprofit irregular parcels must each be prepared as separate mailings, except under [5.3.1](#).
- c. All pieces must meet the applicable general preparation standards in [1.0](#) through [4.0](#); [708.7.0, *Optional Endorsement Lines \(OELs\)*](#); and [708.6.0, *Standards for Barcoded Tray Labels, Sack Labels, and Container Placards*](#).
- d. All pieces in the mailing must meet the specific sortation and preparation standards in [5.0](#) or the palletization standards in [705.8.0](#).
- e. Sortation determines price eligibility as specified in [443.5.0, *Additional Eligibility Standards for Presorted Standard Mail Pieces*](#).

5.2 Markings

All parcels must be marked according to [402.2.0](#).

5.3 Preparing Marketing Parcels (6 Ounces or More) and Machinable Parcels

5.3.1 Sacking

Prepare mailings of Marketing parcels weighing 6 ounces or more and mailings of machinable parcels under [5.3](#). Prepare 5-digit sacks only for parcels dropshipped to a DNDC (or ASF when claiming DNDC prices), DSCF, or DDU. Prepare ASF or NDC sacks only for parcels dropshipped to a DNDC (or ASF when claiming DNDC prices). There is no minimum for parcels in 5-digit/scheme sacks entered at a DDU. Mailers combining irregular parcels with machinable parcels placed in 5-digit/scheme sacks must prepare those sacks under [5.3.2a](#). Mailers combining Marketing parcels weighing 6 ounces or more with machinable parcels placed in ASF, NDC, or mixed NDC sacks must prepare the sacks under [5.3.2](#).

5.3.2 Sacking and Labeling

Preparation sequence, sack size, and labeling:



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- a. 5-digit/scheme (optional, but required for 5-digit price), see definition in [1.4c](#); allowed only for mail deposited at DNDC (or ASF when claiming DNDC prices), DSCF, or DDU. Sacks must contain a 10-pound minimum except at DDU entry which has no minimum; labeling:
 1. Line 1: For 5-digit scheme sacks, use [L606](#), Column B. For 5-digit sacks, use city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code destination on pieces (see [4.0](#) for overseas military mail).
 2. Line 2: For 5-digit scheme sacks, “STD MACH 5D SCH.” For 5-digit sacks, “STD MACH 5D.”
- b. ASF (optional), allowed only for mail deposited at an ASF to claim DNDC price; 10-pound minimum; labeling:
 1. Line 1: [L602](#), Column B.
 2. Line 2: “STD MACH ASF.”
- c. NDC, allowed only for mail deposited at a DNDC to claim the NDC price; 10-pound minimum; labeling:
 1. Line 1: [L601](#), Column B.
 2. Line 2: “STD MACH NDC.”
- d. Origin NDC (required); no minimum; labeling:
 1. Line 1: [L601](#), Column B.
 2. Line 2: “STD MACH NDC.”
- e. Mixed NDC (required); no minimum; labeling:
 1. Line 1: “MXD” followed by [L601](#), Column B information for NDC serving 3-digit ZIP Code prefix of entry Post Office.
 2. Line 2: “STD MACH WKG.”

5.4 Preparing Marketing Parcels (Less Than 6 Ounces) and Irregular Parcels

5.4.1 Bundling

[\[1-27-13\]](#) Bundling is permitted only for bundles of Product Sample parcels (and associated DALs) under [6.0](#).

5.4.2 Sacking

Prepare mailings of Marketing parcels weighing less than 6 ounces and mailings of irregular parcels under [5.4](#). Prepare 5-digit sacks only for parcels dropshipped to a DNDC (or ASF when claiming DNDC prices), DSCF, or DDU. See [5.4.3](#) for restrictions on SCF, ASF, and NDC sacks. Mailers must prepare a sack when the mail for a required presort destination reaches 10 pounds of pieces. There is no minimum for parcels prepared in 5-digit/scheme sacks entered at a DDU. Mailers combining irregular parcels with machinable parcels and Marketing parcels weighing 6 ounces or more in 5-digit/scheme sacks must prepare those sacks under [5.3.2](#). Mailers may not prepare sacks containing irregular and machinable parcels to other presort levels. Mailers may combine irregular parcels with Marketing parcels weighing less than 6 ounces in sacks under [5.4.3](#).

5.4.3 Sacking and Labeling

Preparation sequence, sack size, and labeling:

- a. 5-digit/scheme (optional, but required for 5-digit price), see definition in [1.4c](#); allowed only for mail deposited at DNDC (or ASF when claiming DNDC prices), DSCF, or DDU. Sacks must contain a 10-pound minimum except at DDU entry which has no minimum; labeling:
 1. Line 1: For 5-digit scheme sacks, use [L606](#), Column B. For 5-digit sacks, use city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code destination on pieces (see [4.0](#) for overseas military mail).
 2. Line 2: For 5-digit scheme sacks, “STD IRREG 5D SCH.” For 5-digit sacks, “STD IRREG 5D.”
- b. SCF, allowed only for mail deposited at a DSCF or a DNDC to claim SCF price; 10-pound minimum; labeling:
 1. For Line 1, [L002](#), Column C.
 2. For Line 2, “STD IRREG SCF.”
- c. ASF (optional), allowed only for mail deposited at an ASF to claim DNDC price; 10-pound minimum; labeling:
 1. Line 1: [L602](#), Column B. DNDC price eligibility determined by Exhibit 446.3.1, NDC/ASF—DNDC Price Eligibility.
 2. Line 2: “STD IRREG ASF.”
- d. NDC, allowed only for mail deposited at a DNDC to claim the NDC price; 10-pound minimum; labeling:
 1. Line 1: [L601](#), Column B.
 2. Line 2: “STD IRREG NDC.”
- e. Origin NDC (required); no minimum; labeling:
 1. Line 1: [L601](#), Column B.
 2. Line 2: “STD IRREG NDC.”
- f. Mixed NDC (required); no minimum; labeling:
 1. Line 1: “MXD” followed by [L601](#), Column B information for NDC serving 3-digit ZIP Code prefix of entry Post Office.
 2. Line 2: “STD IRREG WKG.”

6.0 Preparing Enhanced Carrier Route Product Sample Parcels

6.1 Basic Standards

[1-27-13] All mailings and all pieces in each mailing at an Enhanced Carrier Route (ECR) parcel price are subject to specific preparation standards in [6.4](#) and [6.5](#), entry standards in [446](#), and to these general standards:



- a. All pieces must meet the standards for basic eligibility in [443.2.0](#) through [443.4.0](#) and specific eligibility in [443.6.0](#). Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail must meet the additional eligibility standards in [703.1.0](#).
- b. All pieces in each mailing must be Product Sample parcels as defined in [443.3.2.2](#).
- c. All pieces must meet the applicable general preparation standards in [1.0](#) through [4.0](#), and the following:
 1. Pieces must be sequenced according to [6.6](#) and [6.7](#).
 2. Pieces with a simplified address format must meet the standards in [602.3.0](#).
- d. All pieces in the mailing must meet the specific sortation and preparation standards in [6.0](#) or the palletization standards in [705.8.0](#).
- e. Sortation, size, and preparation determine price eligibility as specified in [443.6.0](#).

6.2 Marking

[\[1-27-13\]](#) All Enhanced Carrier Route pieces (or DALs) must be marked under [402.2.0](#). All pieces must be marked “ECRL0T” for pieces claiming a targeted price, or “ECRWSS” for pieces claiming a saturation (Every Door) price.

6.3 Residual Pieces

[\[1-27-13\]](#) Parcels not prepared or sorted as a carrier route mailing at Product Sample prices must be prepared as a separate mailing at Standard Mail Presorted prices.

6.4 Bundling

6.4.1 Bundle Preparation

[\[1-27-13\]](#) Carrier route preparation and bundling of DALs is required; Product Samples must be bundled by either carrier route or by 5-digit/[L606](#) destinations. Prepare bundles as follows:

- a. Sacks must contain at least 15 pounds or 125 pieces of mail, except under [6.4.2](#). Cartons may be used instead of sacks. Cartons have no minimum weight, must not weigh more than 40 pounds, and must not exceed 108 inches in combined length and girth.
- b. DALs are required for parcels mailed at targeted prices; mailers must prepare carrier route bundles of DALs. Bundles of DALs must have a facing slip with the number of DALs for that carrier route indicated. Bundles of parcels must be prepared in sacks or cartons labeled to the correct 5-digit/[L606](#) destination, and bundled under [2.0](#) and the same bundling standards as for saturation parcels under [6.4.1c](#). Optionally, parcels may be prepared in carrier route bundles, with a facing slip on the top of each bundles noting the carrier route. Prepare bundles of DALs and bundles of samples in the same carton or sack, with the bundles of DALs on the top. See [602.4.0](#) for additional preparation standards for parcels and accompanying DALs, including optional pallet preparation.

- c. DALs are optional for parcels mailed at saturation prices. Bundles of parcels must be prepared in sacks or cartons labeled to carrier routes or to 5-digit (or [L606](#)) destination ZIP Codes, and bundled in similar quantities per bundle up to 50 pieces per carrier route bundle or 5-digit/[L606](#) bundle. When DALs are used, the DALs must be prepared in carrier route bundles and placed in the same carton or sack as the samples for the corresponding route or routes within the same delivery ZIP Code. Bundles of DALs must have a facing slip with the number of DALs for that carrier route indicated. If not placed in a sack or carton, saturation parcels must be bundled in quantities of 50 or less under [2.0](#), and the bundles placed on 5-digit/[L606](#) pallets in a stable manner. As an option, bundled saturation parcels without accompanying DALs may be prepared in sacks or cartons labeled to carrier routes or 5-digit destination ZIP Codes, then placed on pallets. A manifest report showing the total number of samples per carrier route is required when the samples are not prepared with DALs.

6.4.2 Fewer than the Minimum Number of Pieces Per Route

[\[1-27-13\]](#) As a general exception to [6.4.1](#) and [6.5.1](#), mailers may prepare pieces and DALs with fewer than 125 pieces or less than 15 pounds of mail to a carrier route or a 5-digit destination when the mail is in a carton. Also, there may be less than 125 pieces or 15 pounds of mail to a sack when the saturation price for the contents is correctly claimed. Mailers using Express Mail Open and Distribute or Priority Mail Open and Distribute to dropship ECR parcels also may prepare sacks of fewer than 125 pieces or less than 15 pounds of mail.

6.5 Preparing Product Samples

6.5.1 Sack Minimums

[\[1-27-13\]](#) Except for bundled saturation parcels and except under [6.4.2](#), a sack or carton must be prepared when the quantity of mail for a required presort destination reaches either 125 pieces or 15 pounds of mail.

6.5.2 Sacking and Labeling

[\[1-27-13\]](#) Preparation sequence, sack or carton size, and labeling:

- a. Carrier route: optional with no minimum per carton; see [6.5.1](#) for sack minimums.
 1. Line 1: city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code on mail (see [4.3](#) for overseas military mail).
 2. Line 2: "STD MKTG WSS" (for saturation samples) or "STD MKTG LOT" (for targeted samples), followed by the route type and number.
- b. 5-digit carrier routes: required (no minimum).
 1. Line 1: city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code on mail (see [4.3](#) for overseas military mail).
 2. Line 2: "STD MKTG CR-RTS."



6.5.3 Required Palletization

[1-27-13] All Product Sample mailings must be destination entered at one or more DDUs, DSCFs, or DNDCs. Except for sacks or cartons of Product Samples entered directly at a DDU, all mailings of Product Samples must be palletized. Pallets (under 705.8.10.3) must be used for sacks or cartons (or bundles of saturation samples only) of Product Samples for mail entered at DNDCs and DSCFs.

6.6 Delivery Sequence Documentation

6.6.1 Basic Standards

Mailpieces for which a walk-sequence discount is claimed must be organized in the delivery sequence determined by the USPS and prepared as a carrier route mailing under 6.0 and the standards below. Pieces prepared with a simplified address must also meet the corresponding standards.

6.6.2 Missing Addresses

Some mailpieces cannot be sequenced because an exact match for a name or address cannot be obtained. These pieces may be included in a sequenced mailing only if they are placed behind or after the sequenced mail. Arrange these pieces:

- a. Alphabetically by complete street name, then either in ascending order by ZIP+4 code sector segments or numerically in ascending order by primary address.
- b. Numerically for numbered streets, then either in ascending order by ZIP+4 code sector segments or numerically in ascending order by primary address.

6.6.3 Updating Walk Sequence Information—General

Walk-sequence price pieces prepared with other than a simplified address format under 6.6.4 must be sequenced using USPS data from one of the following sources, issued within 90 days before the mailing date:

- a. The Computerized Delivery Sequence (CDS) file.
- b. The Delivery Sequence File, Second Generation (DSF²).
- c. Delivery sequence information from USPS address sequencing services, as requested by the customer.

6.6.4 Updating Walk Sequence Information for Simplified Addressing

Mailpieces with a simplified address, prepared for distribution to rural or highway contract routes or to PO boxes in a Post Office without city delivery, must be based on delivery stop information obtained within 90 days before the mailing date, either from the Delivery Statistics File, in accordance with 509.1.1, or from the postmaster of the destination office. Mailpieces with a simplified address, prepared for distribution to city routes or to PO boxes in a Post Office with city delivery, must be based only on delivery stop information obtained from the Delivery Statistics File, in accordance with 509.1.1, within 90 days before the mailing date.

6.6.5 Out-of-Date Walk Sequence Information

Mailings prepared with out-of-date walk-sequencing information are not eligible for walk-sequence prices.

6.6.6 Updating Line-of-Travel Sequence Information

Unless the mail is prepared in carrier walk sequence, line-of-travel (LOT) sequence is required for mailings at Standard Mail Enhanced Carrier Route basic prices. LOT sequence is not an exact walk sequence but a sequence of ZIP+4 codes arranged in the order that the route is served by a carrier. (First the ZIP+4 groups are sequenced, then the addresses within each are identified as being in ascending or descending order.) The USPS eLOT product provides a list of the ZIP+4 codes each carrier route serves, identifies the order in which they are delivered, and provides an indicator specifying whether the addresses that share the same ZIP+4 code must be sorted in ascending or descending order. When a range of ZIP+4 codes on the same carrier route are assigned the same sequence number, the addresses bearing those ZIP+4 codes must be arranged in ascending ZIP+4 code order before the sequence number is assigned. LOT information must be updated within 90 days before the date of mailing.

6.7 Delivery Sequence Documentation

6.7.1 General Standards

The postage statement must be annotated in the “Carrier Route Sequencing Date” block on page 1. The mailer must annotate the postage statement to show the earliest (oldest) date of the method used to obtain sequencing information for the mailing. The mailer’s signature on the postage statement certifies that this standard has been met when the corresponding mail is presented to the USPS. The mailer must maintain documentation to substantiate compliance with the standards for carrier route sequencing. Unless submitted with each corresponding mailing, the mailer must be able to provide the USPS with documentation (if requested) of accurate sequencing or delivery statistics for each carrier route to which pieces are mailed. Acceptable forms of documentation are:

- a. The invoice showing that the addresses came from CDS.
- b. DSF² invoice or documentation.
- c. Copies of the delivery unit summaries that served as the mailer’s bills for address sequencing service charges.
- d. Evidence of receipt of information from postmasters for simplified address mailings (see [509.1.0, Address Information System Services](#)).
- e. Form 3553 showing the date of the eLOT product used, or the date from the USPS Qualification report produced by presort software.

6.7.2 Product Samples—Targeted

[1-27-13] For each mailing of Product Samples at targeted carrier route prices, the mailer must document the total number of pieces mailed to each carrier route.

6.7.3 Saturation Density—Simplified Address Mail

For each carrier route to which mail with a simplified address is sent at the saturation price, the mailer must be able to document that the mailing meets the applicable density standard. This documentation must show the total number of active possible deliveries and the total number to which mailpieces in the mailing are being addressed, by 5-digit ZIP Code and, within each, by carrier route. It must be submitted with each applicable mailing.



445.6.7.4

6.7.4 Both Prices

[1-27-13] If a mailing contains pieces qualifying for targeted and saturation prices, the documentation required may be combined. Entries for pieces at the targeted price must be so annotated on the documentation. For the entire mailing, a summary of the total number of pieces at each price must be provided. This documentation must be submitted with each mailing.