

ZODIAC

PRINTING

Make Sure it Gets There

**New USPS Addressing Standards
for Flat Size Mail
Effective March 29, 2009**



New Address Requirements

New address requirements for flat-size mailpieces go into effect on March 29, 2009. For printers, distributors, and their clients who mail flats at automation, presort, and carrier route rates, planning for these changes will prevent expensive fixes later. Periodicals, Standard Mail, Bound Printed Matter, Media Mail, and Library Mail flat-size pieces are affected. Excluded is First-Class single-piece flat-size mail. These changes include both location- where on the mailpiece an address can be placed, and format- what type fonts, sizes, and spacing requirements are needed.

Why the Change?

The U.S. Postal Service is implementing its Flats Sequencing System (FSS) starting in the Fall of 2009. FSS will sort flat-size mail into trays in delivery point order at 16,500 pieces per hour. Currently, mail carriers sort flats manually. The potential savings in processing time is significant considering 50 billion flats are mailed annually. Because of the larger size of flats vs. letters, FSS will require a more consistent address location. Flat-size mailpieces are usually catalogs, envelopes, magazines, large cards, and newspapers that exceed at least one of the letter-size dimensions- 6 1/8" x 11 1/2" x 1/4". Flats cannot be larger than 12" x 15" x 3/4".

New Standards for Address Placement

FSS will orient flat-size mail vertically in trays. The new standards for address placement are:

- The "top" of the mailpiece is either of the short edges for enveloped or poly wrapped pieces.
- The entire delivery address must be within the top half.
- Postage must appear to right, or to the right and above the delivery address as it reads.
- Horizontal addresses cannot read upside down in relation to the top edge.
- A delivery address must be at least 1/8 inch from any edge.
- If a vertical address will not fit entirely within the top half, the address may cross the midpoint if placed within 1 inch of the top edge.

For Bound or Folded Pieces

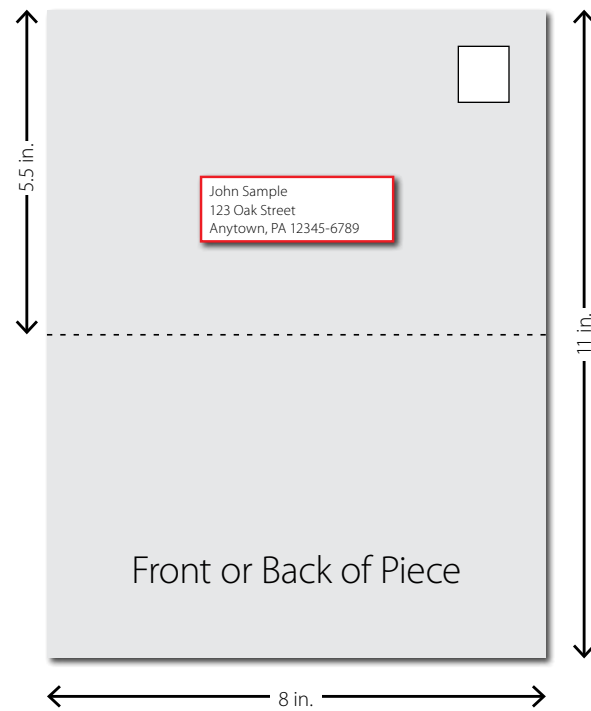
(not in an envelope or poly wrap):

- The "top" half is the upper edge of the mailpiece when the bound or final folded edge is vertical and on the right side.
Exception: Saturation mailing can be either of the shorter edges.

New Standards for Address Formats

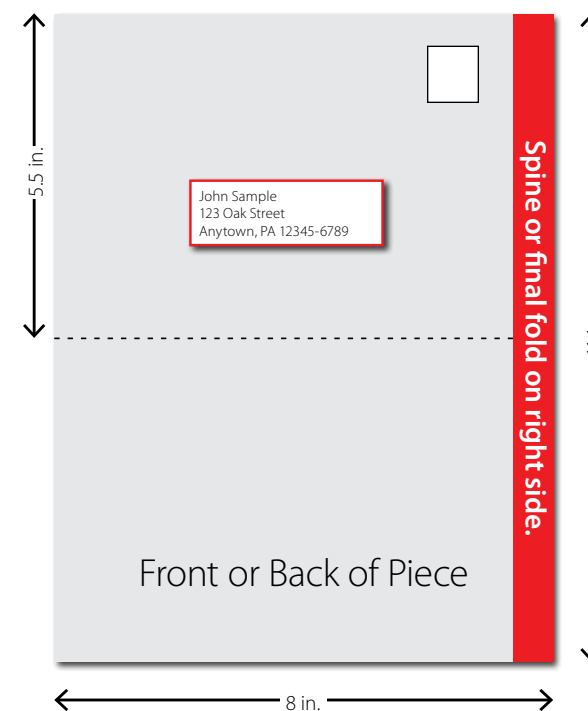
- Addresses will need to be a minimum 8-point type, or if the mailpiece bears a POSTNET™ or Intelligent Mail® barcode with a delivery point routing code, a minimum 6-point type in all capital letters can be used.
- Characters in the address cannot overlap.
- Address lines must not touch or overlap.
- Each address element may be separated by no more than five blank character spaces.

Envelope or Poly Wrap

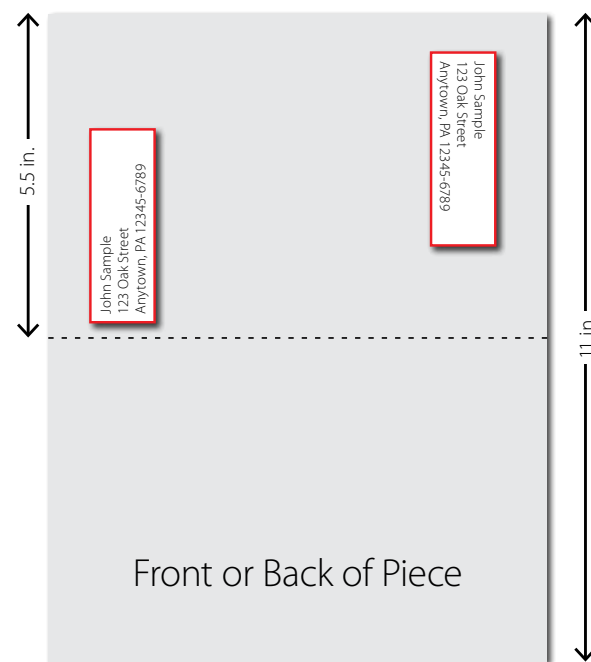


Address cannot read upside down and must be within top half of mail piece

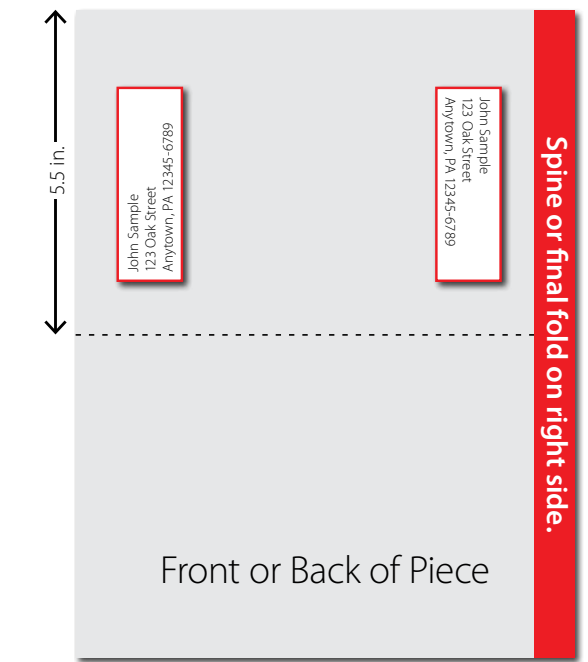
Bound or Folded



Address cannot read upside down and must be within top half of mail piece



Address can read right or left and must be within top half of mail piece



Address can read right or left and must be within top half of mail piece

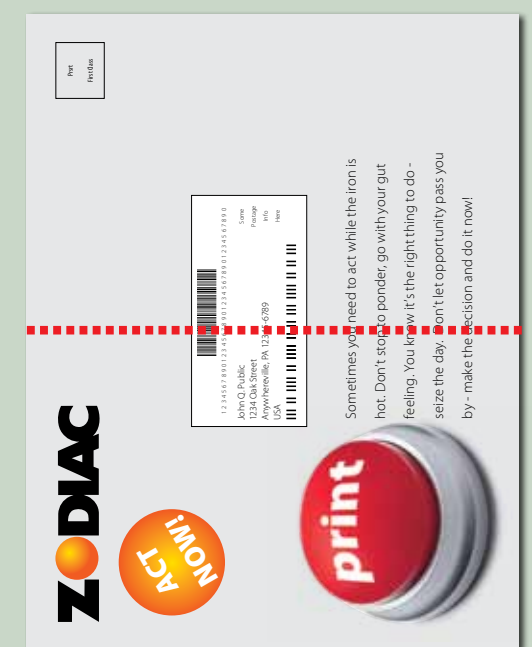
NON-COMPLIANT SAMPLE PIECES

Below are illustrations of two "non-compliant" examples of standard mail flats. These designs are common today, but after March 29, 2009, these designs could lose their postal discounts.

This envelope shows a delivery address below the midpoint. Standard mail flats will require delivery addresses to be in the top half, and not upside down. After March 29, 2009, new window envelope and insert re-designs may be needed.



End users doing standard mail campaigns will not want to "center" the delivery address. When placed vertically in a tray, the address needs to be in the top half (right or left of center). The address in this example could be moved right of center and not interfere with the existing copy.



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Concerns for Printers, Distributors and Their Customers

- Inventories of window envelopes and related collateral that don't meet standards beyond March 29, 2009.
- Addresses that straddle the mid-point of vertically oriented pieces may not meet new standards. Creating proper formatting and possible address relocation on inserts could require software and design changes.
Note: The maximum of five spaces between address elements such as city and state could create software issues for some mailers.
- Lead times for possible re-design, manufacturing and implementation of new address requirements and collateral.

The Postal Service is still determining consequences for non-compliance after March 29, 2009. The loss of an automation, presort, or carrier route discount is likely to be a costly possibility. Your Western States Sales Representative is a good resource to help determine a compliant and good envelope design for your client. Another good resource is your local USPS Mailpiece Design Analyst (MDA). To find the MDA in your area, go to pe.usps.com, click on postal locator, then Mailpiece Design Analyst. (For a direct link, click <http://ribbs.usps.gov/mda/index.htm>).

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