

2.0 Physical Standards for Flats

2.1 General Definition of Flat-Size Mail

Flat-size mail is:

- a. More than 11-1/2 inches long, or more than 6-1/8 inches high, or more than 1/4 inch thick, except as allowed for EDDM-Retail flats under [140](#). For general retail mailability, all pieces 1/4 inch thick or less must be a minimum of 5 inches long and 3-1/2 inches high and 0.007 inch thick.
- b. Not more than 15 inches long, or more than 12 inches high, or more than 3/4 inch thick.
- c. Flexible (see [2.3](#)).
- d. Rectangular with four square corners or with finished corners that do not exceed a radius of 0.125 inch (1/8 inch). See [Exhibit 201.1.1.1](#).
- e. Uniformly thick (see [2.4](#)).
- f. Unwrapped, sleeved, wrapped, or enveloped.

2.2 Length and Height of Flats

The length of a flat-size mailpiece is the longest dimension. The height is the dimension perpendicular to the length.

2.3 Minimum Flexibility Criteria for Flat-Size Pieces

Flat-size pieces must be flexible. Boxes—with or without hinges, gaps, or breaks that allow the piece to bend—are not flats. Tight envelopes or wrappers that are filled with one or more boxes are not flats. At the customer's option, a customer may perform the following test on their own mailpieces. When a postal employee observes a customer demonstrating that a flat-size piece is flexible according to these standards, the employee does not need to perform the test. Test flats as defined in [201.4.3](#).

2.4 Uniform Thickness

Flat-size mailpieces must be uniformly thick so that any bumps, protrusions, or other irregularities do not cause more than 1/4-inch variance in thickness. When determining variance in thickness, exclude the outside edges of a mailpiece (1 inch from each edge) when the contents do not extend into those edges. Also, exclude the selvage of any polywrap covering (see [201.5.3](#) from this determination. Mailers must secure nonpaper contents to prevent shifting of more than 2 inches within the mailpiece if shifting would cause the piece to be nonuniform in thickness or would result in the contents bursting out of the mailpiece (see [601.3.3](#)).

2.5 Ineligible Flat-Size Pieces

[3-5-18] Flat-size mailpieces that do not meet the eligibility standards in [2.1](#) through [2.4](#) are considered parcels and must pay the applicable parcel prices.