

United States Postal Service®

INDUSTRY ALERT

April 4, 2019

Postal Service Maintains Existing Marketing Mail Letter and Flats Requirements

After issuing an Advance Federal Register Notice (AFRN) last summer requesting industry feedback on potential changes to content standards for Marketing Mail letters and flats, the Postal Service has determined to maintain its existing regulations.

The August 23, 2018 AFRN, 2018-18105, sought to learn the potential impact of limiting Marketing Mail to paper-based, non-merchandise content with goals to:

- Facilitate levels of service expected for the processing and delivery of merchandise that include end-to-end tracking and visibility.
- Move fulfillment of merchandise and goods out of USPS Marketing Mail consistent with transfer of Commercial fulfillment parcels out of Marketing Mail.
- Reduce operational inefficiencies when machines are unable to process letter-size or flat-size shaped inflexible items.

There were nearly 4,700 comments on the AFRN received from mailing associations, printers, mail service providers, non-profit organizations, marketing services, magazine publishers, elected officials, and concerned citizens. Additionally, the USPS received more feedback from MTAC associations after sharing communication materials developed in conjunction with the industry.

The Postal Service has worked with the mailing industry through MTAC Task Team #27 to review industry comments, better understand implications to key stakeholders, and recommend a path forward.

At this time, the Postal Service has decided that there will be no changes to existing Marketing Mail letters and flats requirements. This includes no new restrictions based on the content of mailpiece or whether the mailpiece contains non-paper material.

The Postal Service does plan to do the following:

1. Review and provide clarification, where necessary, of existing eligibility requirements of Marketing Mail Letters and Flats as it relates to what are the characteristics that make a

mail piece a letter, flat, parcel, and the qualifications to be machinable and/or qualify for automation eligibility.

2. Focus efforts on identifying and addressing non-machinable mailings and work directly with customers who are providing these mailings to identify solutions.
3. Continue to work with the mailing community to further identify fulfillment mailings used within Marketing Mail and evaluate the impact of potentially limiting specific types of (non-marketing) fulfillment merchandise within Marketing Mail. As findings evolve and decisions are made, if there are any potential changes, the Postal Service intends to provide ample notification to customers and the mailing industry to allow for proper business planning.

Please feel free to email us at [Product Management](#) if you have additional questions.

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