

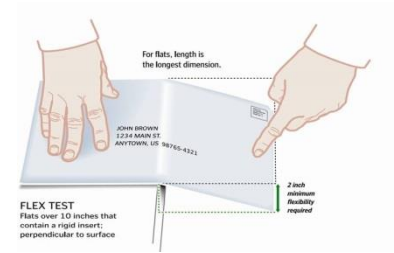
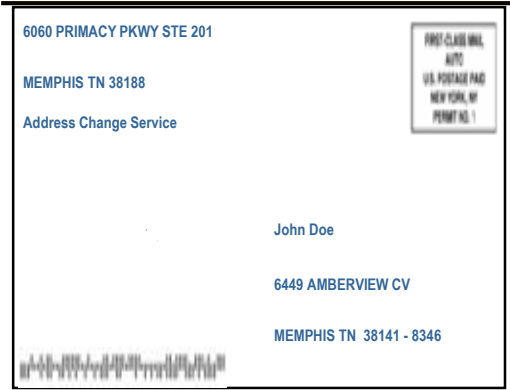


# **Basic Design Elements**

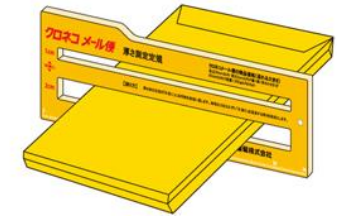
## **Flats**

**2017**

# Importance of Flat Standards



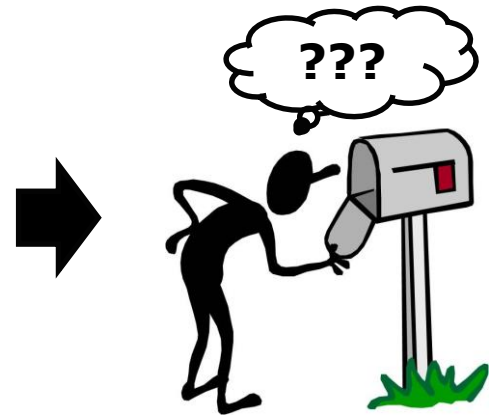
Too rigid.



Incorrect Barcode Placement



Automated Flats Sorting Machine

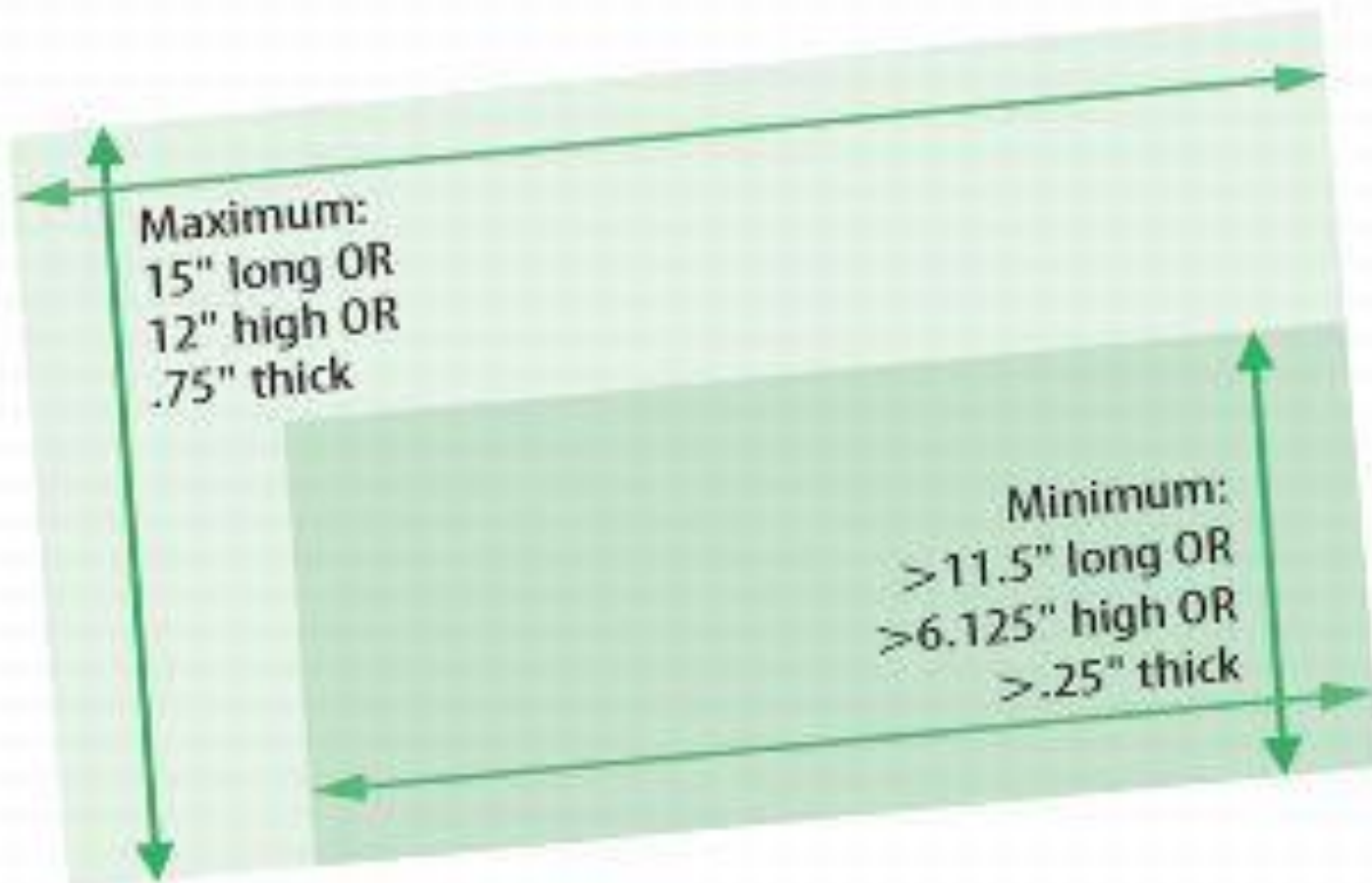


# Agenda

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- ➔ Physical Standards of Flats
  - Addressing Standards for Flats
  - Automation Flats

# Flats – Physical Standards



Length is the physically longer dimension



Height is perpendicular to the length

# Flats – Physical Standards

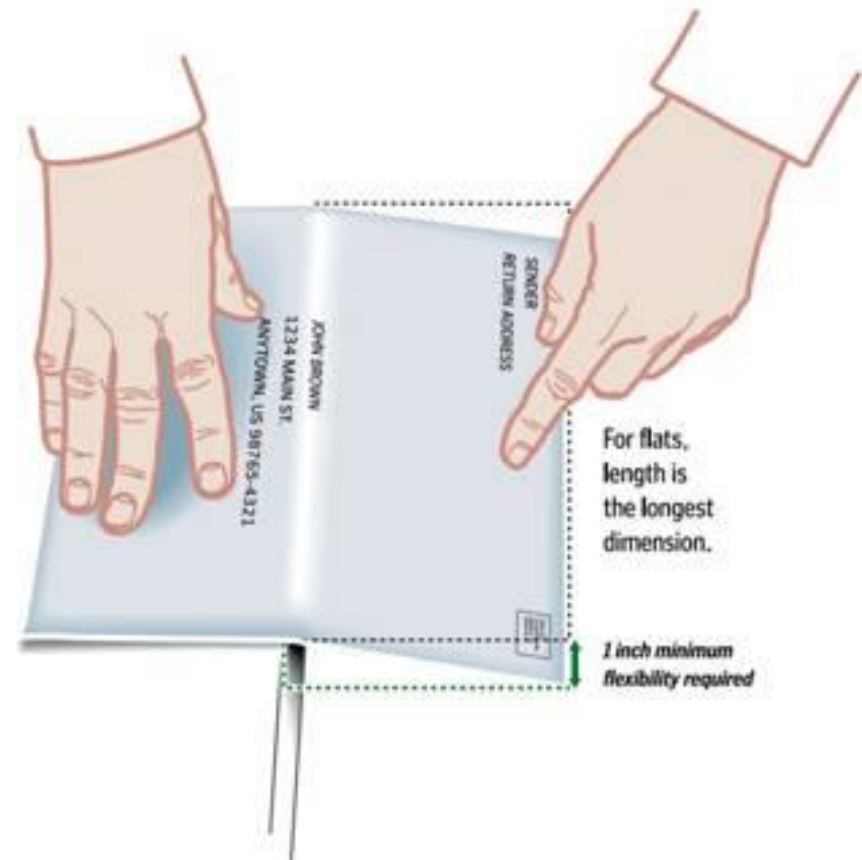
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Flat-size pieces must be:

- **F**lexible
- **U**niformly thick (within  $\frac{1}{4}$ " )
- **R**ectangular
- **D**eflection

# Flexibility Test – Part One

First test pieces with the longest side parallel to the edge of a flat surface

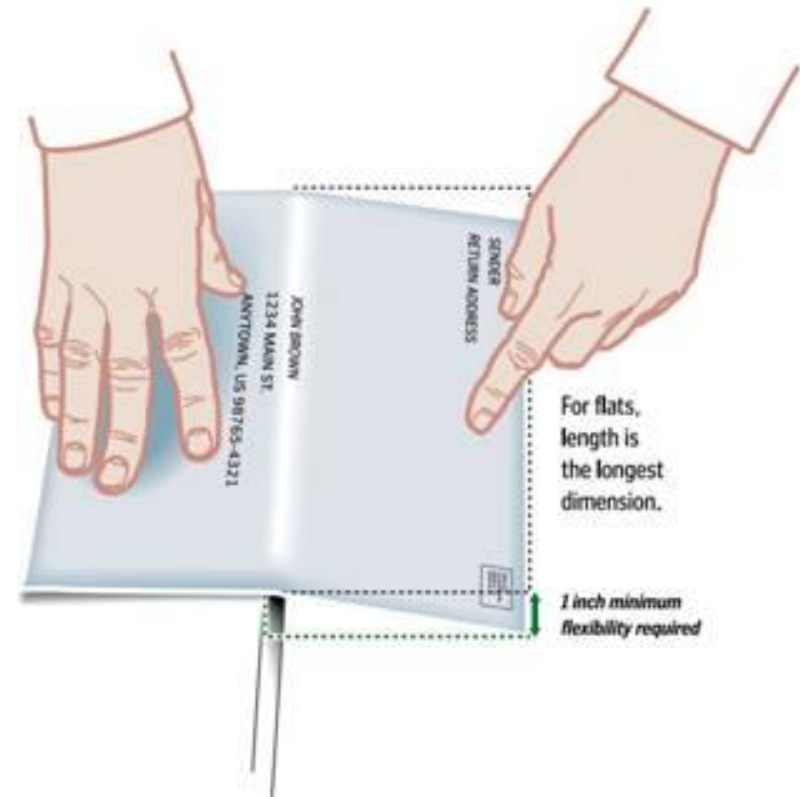


# Flexibility Test – Part One

If the piece can pass this test  
**AND** does not contain a rigid  
insert, no further testing is  
necessary

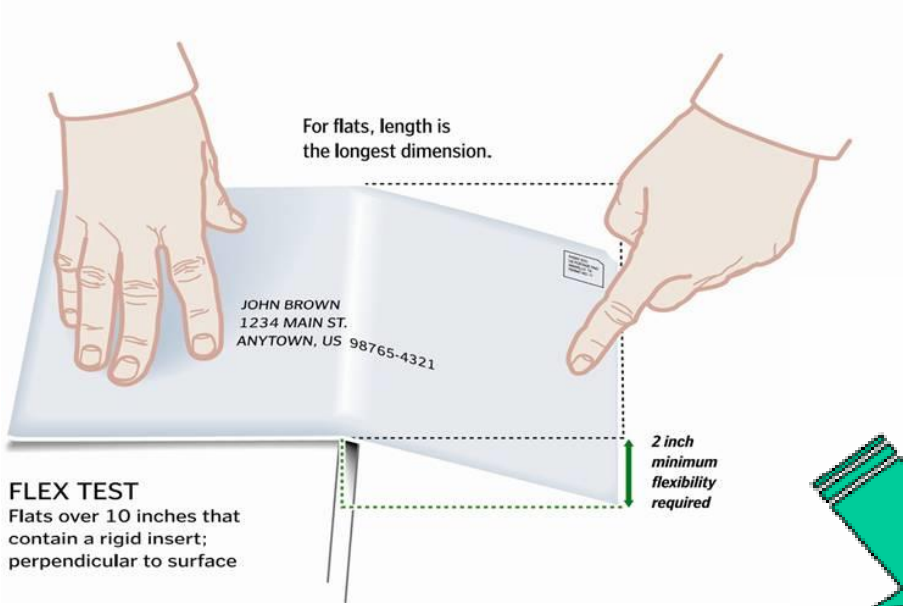
If the piece passes this test  
but it **DOES** have rigid  
contents, go to the next step,  
part 2

**Note:** A permanent bound  
edge is not considered a rigid  
item.

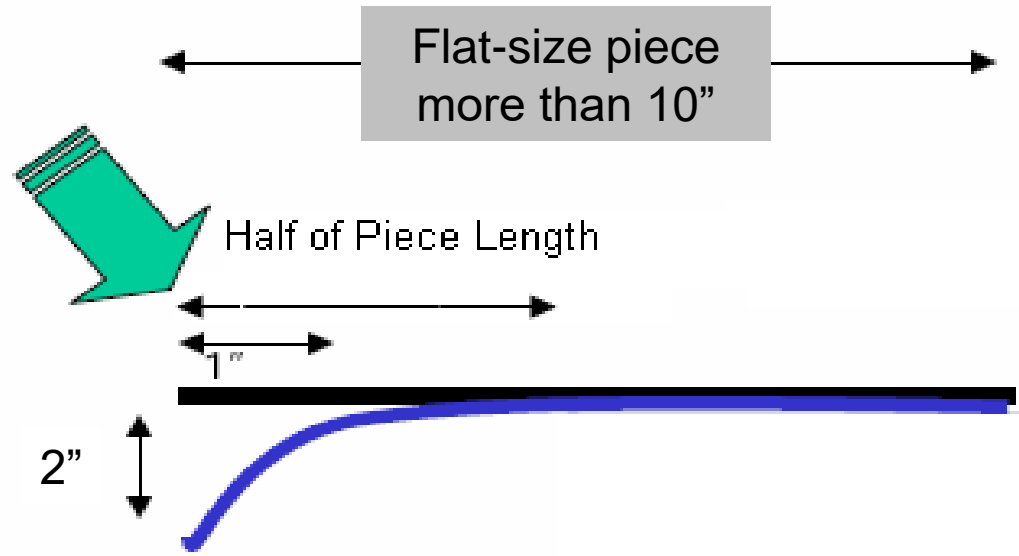


# Flexibility Test – Part Two

*Mailpieces that pass first test and contain rigid contents*

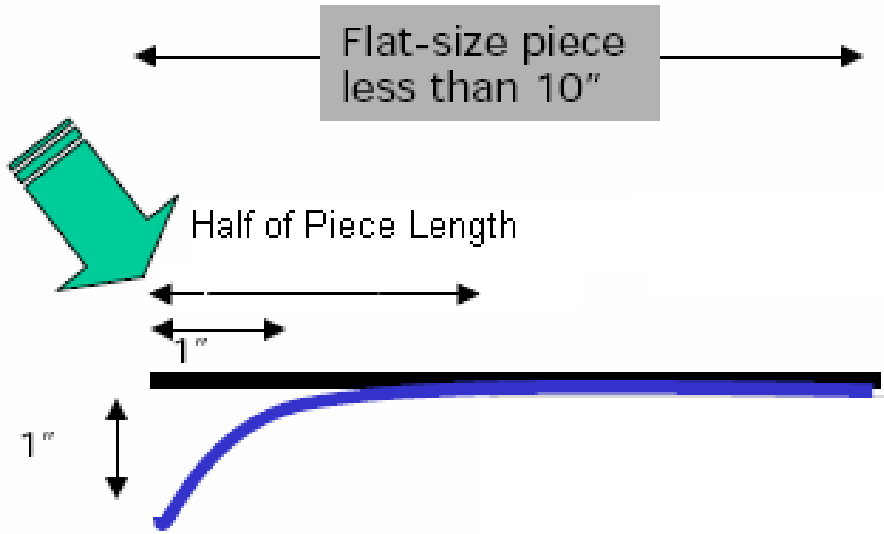
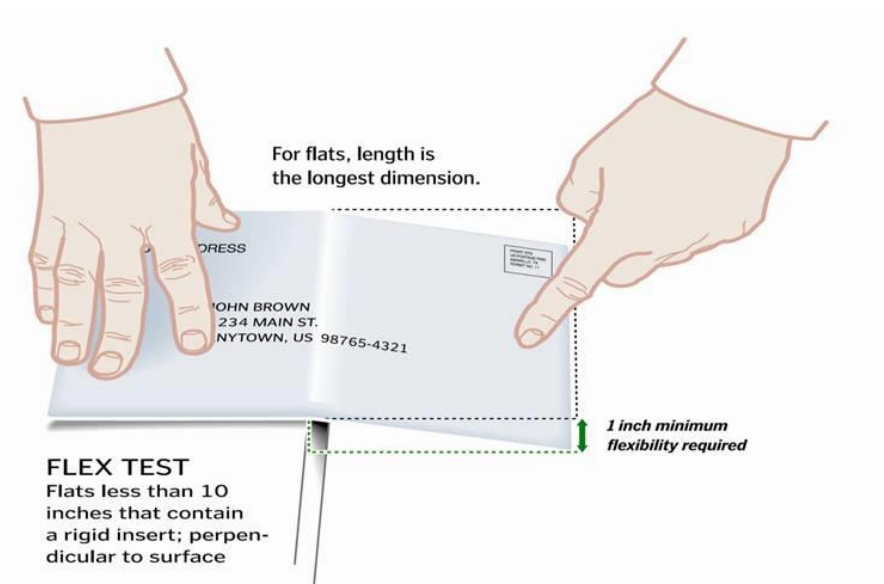


**FLEX TEST**  
Flats over 10 inches that contain a rigid insert; perpendicular to surface





# Flexibility Test – Part Two



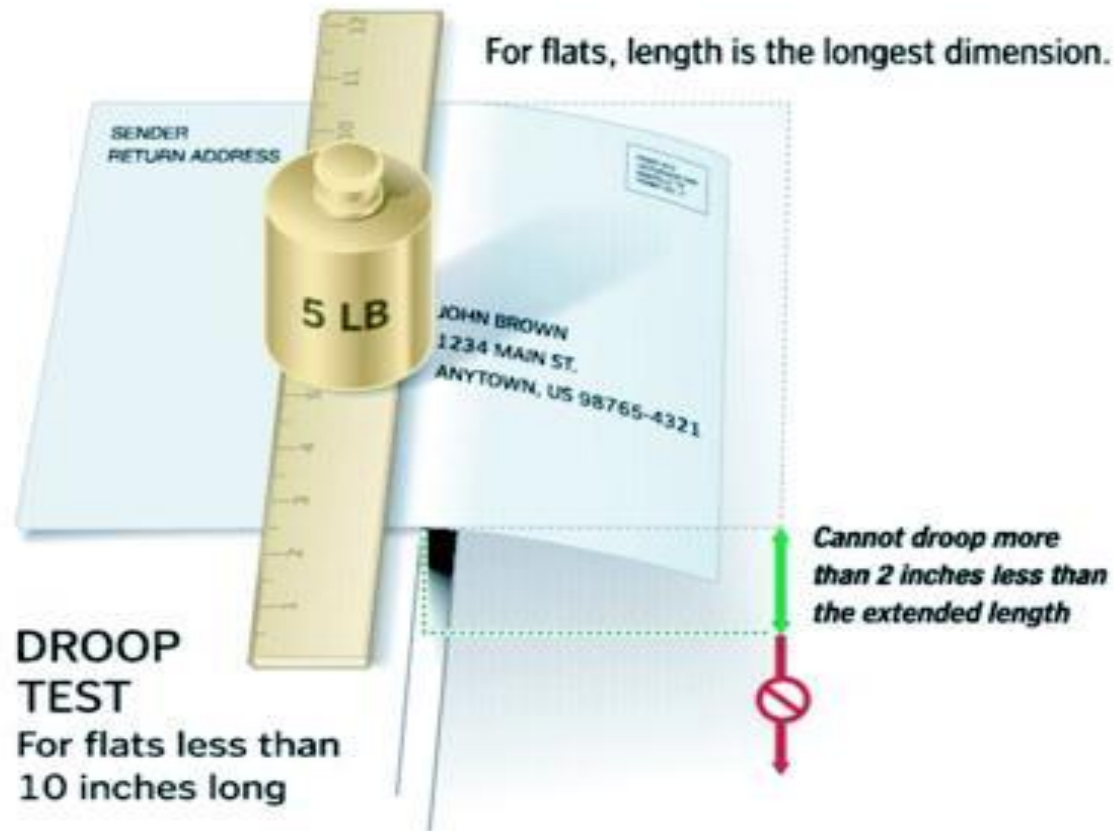
# Deflection Test

For flats, length is the longest dimension



**DROOP TEST**  
For flats 10 inches  
or longer

# Deflection Test



# Flats – Physical Standards

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## Uniform Thickness

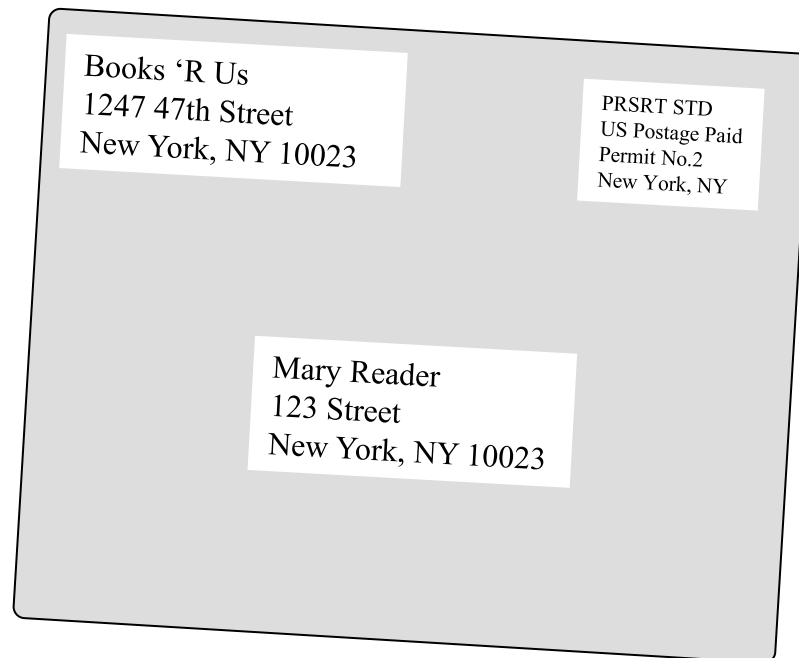
- Flat-size mailpieces must be uniformly thick so that any bumps, protrusions, or other irregularities do not cause more than 1/4-inch variance in thickness.
- Mailers must secure nonpaper contents to prevent shifting of more than 2 inches within the mailpiece if shifting would cause the piece to be nonuniformly thick or result in the contents bursting out of the mailpiece

# Flats – Physical Standards

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## Rectangular

- ❑ May be prepared with finished corners not exceeding a radius of .125" inch ( $\frac{1}{8}$  inch)



# Flats – Physical Standards

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## Polywrap Film or Similar Material:

- ❑ Only products listed as approved on the USPS RIBBS Web site may be used

## Physical Requirements:

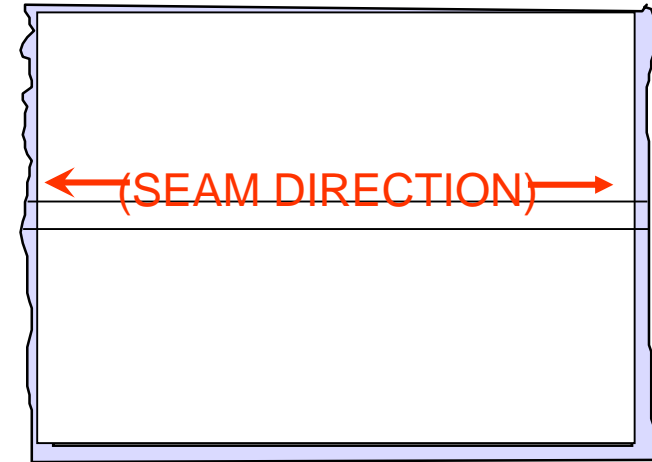
- ❑ Outlined in DMM section 201.4.5



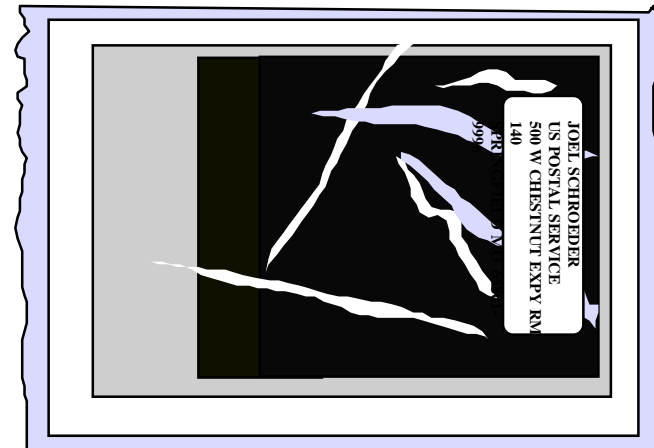
# Flats – Physical Standards

## Polywrap Film or Similar Material:

- ❑ Wrap direction must be around the longer axis
- ❑ Seam:
  - Parallel to longer dimension
  - Front or back
  - Not over address or barcode

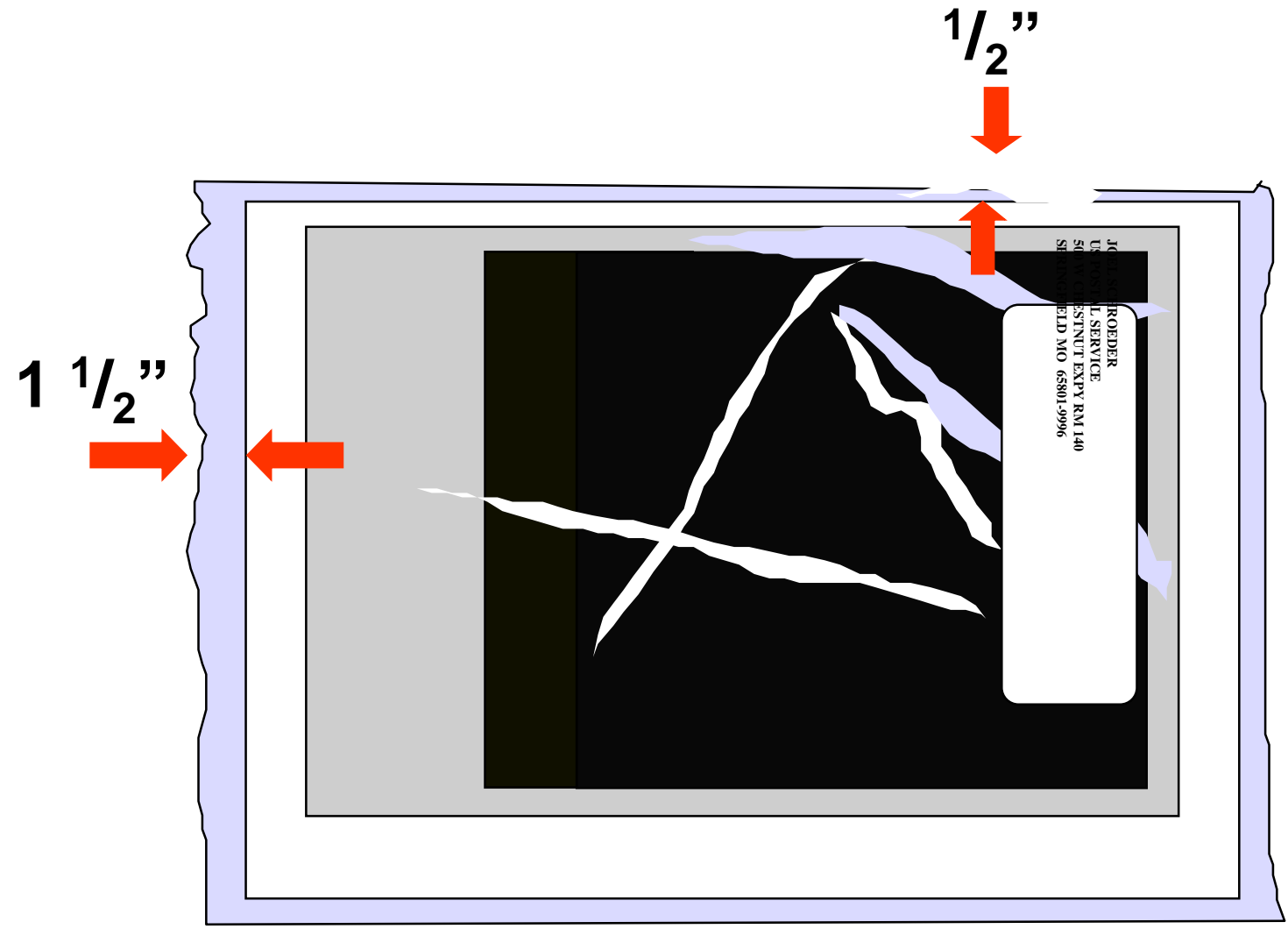


BACK



FRONT

# Flats – Physical Standards





# Flats – Physical Standards

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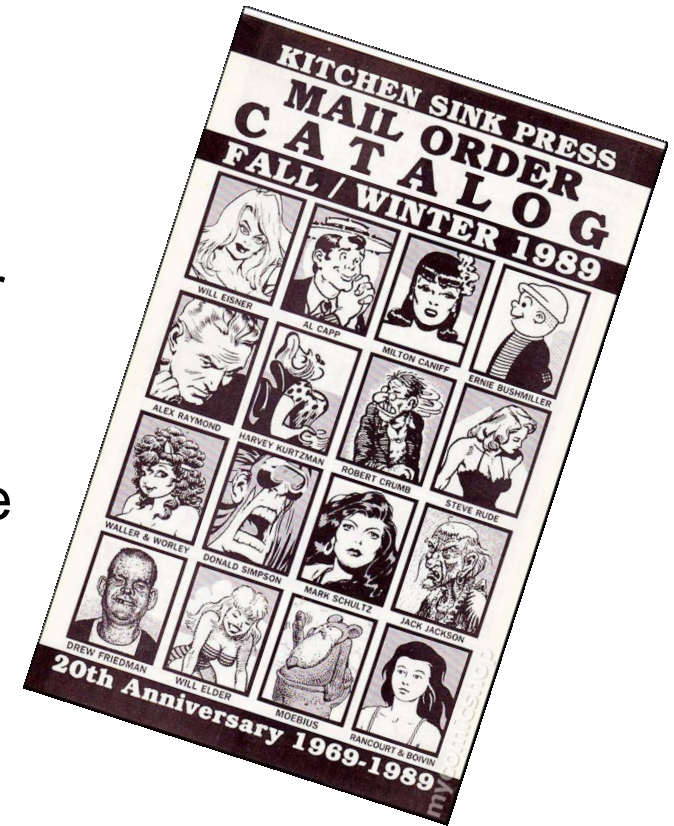
## Labels, Stickers, and Release Cards

- 201.4.8.1 – Use
- 201.4.8.2 – Pressure-Sensitive Label
- 201.4.8.3 – “Sandwich” Label
- 201.4.8.4 – Flats with Attached Release Cards
- 201.4.8.5 – Standards for Release Cards

# Flats – Physical Standards

## Catalogs

- A bound flat-sized mailpiece with at least 16 pages meeting flat physical criteria.
- Provide a listing of products offered for sale arranged systematically and include images, photographs or illustrations of the products, descriptive details, and prices.
- Must contain an order form, a phone number, or a web address to place orders and provides shipping options for the products offered for sale.



# Agenda

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- Physical Standards of Flats
- □ Addressing Standards for Flats
- Automation Flats

## Flats – Addressing

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- ❑ Minimum 8-point type (6-point for automation flats)
- ❑ 6-point if all capital letters with DPBC
- ❑ Characters in address can not overlap
- ❑ Address lines can not touch or overlap
- ❑ Address elements separated by no more than five blank character spaces

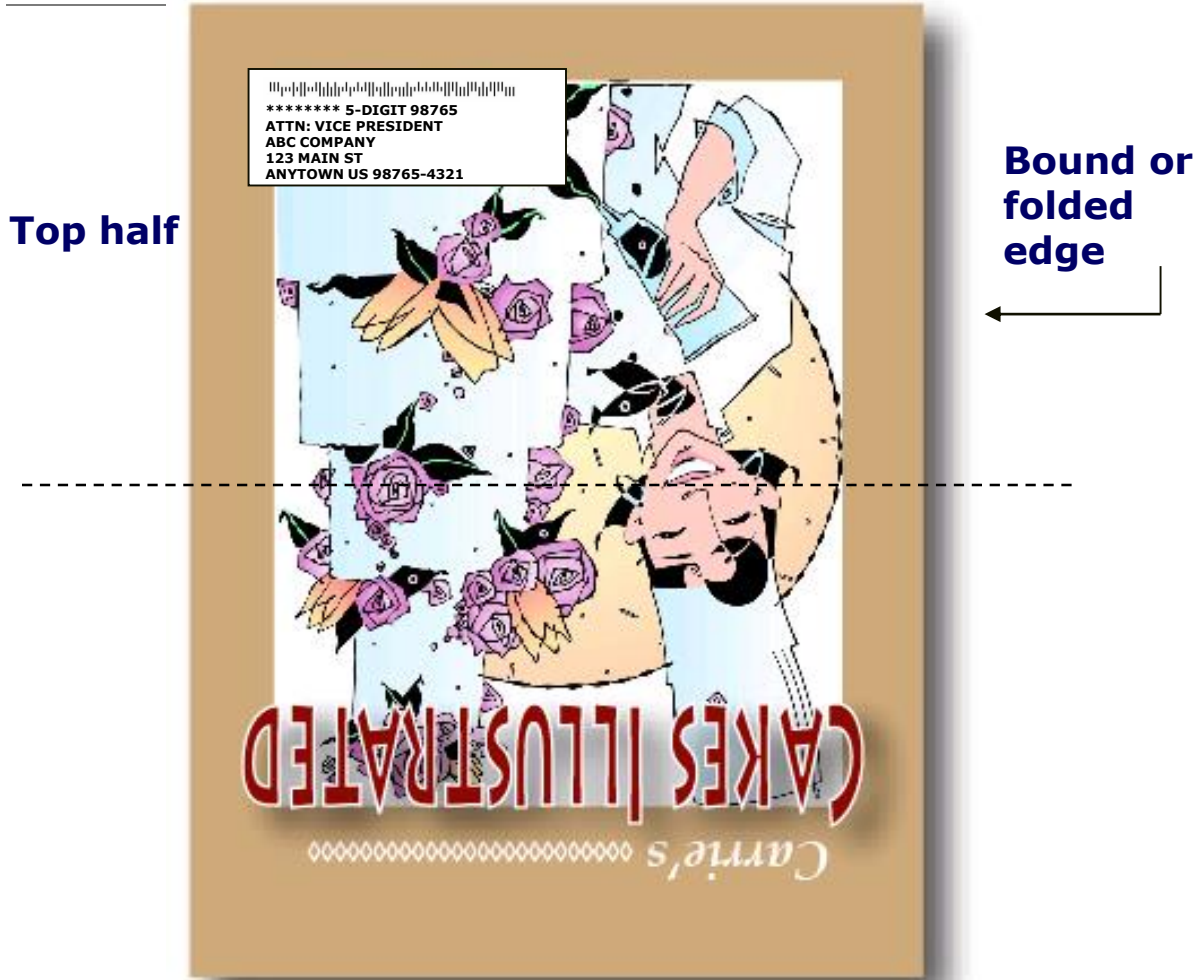
# Address Placement Enveloped, Polywrapped, or Card-style Flats

Top edge

Top half



# Address Placement - Bound or Folded Flats



# Nonautomation Flats

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## **Additional Physical Standards by Mail Class:**

- 201.5.1 – First-Class Mail
- 201.5.2 – Standard Mail
- 201.5.3 – Bound Printed Matter
- 201.5.4 – Media Mail and Library Mail
- 201.5.5 – Priority Mail Express, Priority Mail and Critical Mail Flats

# Agenda

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- Physical Standards of Flats
- Addressing Standards for Flats

 Automation Flats



# Automation Flats – Physical Standards

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<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
Height	5"	12"
Length	6"	15"
Thickness	.009"	0.75"

# Automation Flats

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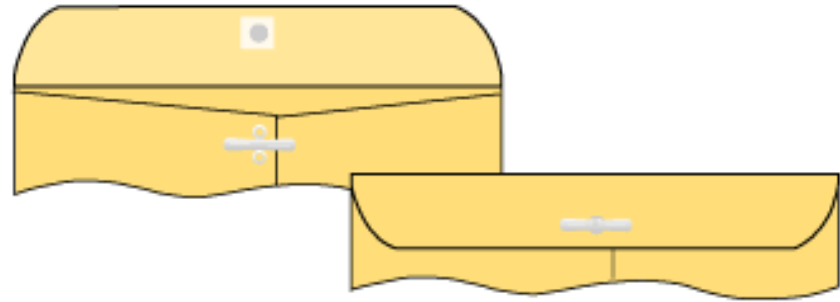
## Weight Maximums

- ❑ First-Class Mail: 13 ounces
- ❑ Periodicals: 20 ounces
- ❑ Standard Mail: < 16 ounces
- ❑ Bound Printed Matter: 20 ounces

# Automation Flats

## Prohibitions

- ❑ Protrusions
- ❑ Staples



## Tabs, Wafer Seals, Tape, and Glue



## Booklet-Type Piece or Magazine

# Flats – Physical Standards

## Short Covers

- More than  $\frac{3}{4}$ " from each edge
- Secured with at least two tabs etc. at least 1" from top and bottom edges of the cover



## Outside Stickers

- Affixed with permanent adhesives



# Automation Flats - Barcoding

## Barcode:

- ❑ Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb)



## Placement:

- ❑ On address side at least 1/8 inch from any edge of the piece

## Clearances:

- ❑ 1/8 inch between the leftmost and rightmost bars to any printing, label edge or window edge
- ❑ .028" inch above and below barcode to any printing, label edge or window edge



# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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**Visit our websites at:**

**[www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com)**

**<http://pe.usps.gov/>**

**Contains the DMM, IMM and various publications.**

**<https://postalpro.usps.com/>**

**Contains information on Intelligent Mail, Full Service, eInduction, Seamless Acceptance etc.**

## MDA SUPPORT CENTER

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### Contact Information

by phone **855-593-6093**

**OR**

by email **MDA@USPS.GOV**

**MONDAY – FRIDAY, 7am – 5pm  
CST**