

USPS Revisions to Deflection (Droop) Standards for Flats – Implementation Date: **June 7, 2010** Implementation of postage consequences deferred until **October 3, 2010**

The USPS has postponed the implementation of changes to the deflection standards for flats until June 7, 2010, as opposed to the previously stated January 4, 2010 – with consequences deferred until October 3, 2010. The general changes to these mailing standards include:

- Deflection standards that apply to all flats, not just automation flats
- The longest edge of the flat is considered its length, including oblong type pieces
- The deflection testing method has been changed
- The tolerance has been reduced and is now more restrictive

Couple of Examples* on how this affects some current mailings:

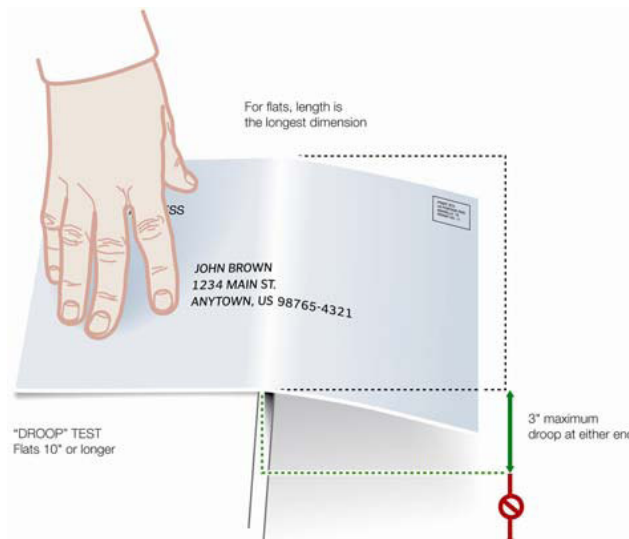
Periodicals Outside County		(example results in an 8% increase)	
Rate Before Failure		Rate After Failure	
Basic carrier route flat under 3oz		Machinable nonbarcoded or barcoded 5-digit flat	
Machinable barcoded 5-digit flat	\$0.276	Nonmachinable barcoded 5-digit flat	\$0.300
 Standard Mail		 (example results in a 16.4% increase)	
Rate Before Failure		Rate After Failure	
12.25oz Basic carrier route flat	\$0.651	12.25 Nonautomation 5-digit flat	\$0.779

(*See .xls attachment for other examples)

The standards for determining deflection are dependent on the mail pieces length. The length is the longest dimension of the mail-piece irrespective of the bound edge.

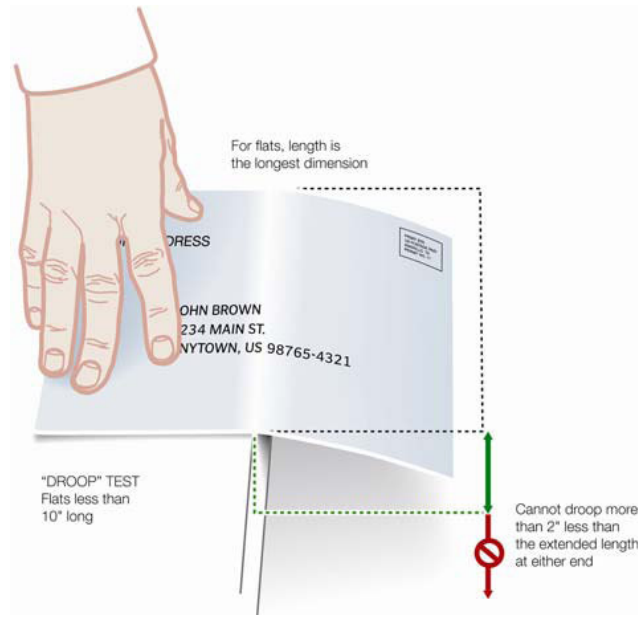
Mail Pieces w/ Length 10" or Greater

1. Place the piece on a flat surface with the length perpendicular to the edge of the surface and extend the piece 5 inches off the edge of the surface. Test square-shaped bound flats by placing the bound edge parallel to the edge. Repeat on opposite edge.
2. The piece is mailable as a flat **if it does not droop more than 3 inches** vertically at either end.



Mail Pieces w/ Length Less than 10"

1. Place the piece on a flat surface with the length perpendicular to the edge of the surface and extend the piece one-half of its length off the edge of the surface. Test square-shaped bound flats by placing the bound edge parallel to the edge. Turn the piece around and repeat the process.
2. The piece is mailable as a flat **if it does not droop more than 2 inches less than the extended length** from both ends. For example, a piece 9 inches long would extend 4.5 inches horizontally off a flat surface. It must not droop more than 2.5 inches vertically at either end. Formula for allowable deflection ($(\text{Length} \div 2) - 2$).



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