



US Postal Service Folded Self-Mailer Regulation Changes Effective January 2013

A FRIENDLY REMINDER

On January 5, 2013, revised postal regulations become effective for folded self-mailers (FSM's) and other unenveloped pieces. Hopefully, you have already made plans to use up your remaining stock and make design changes for affected mailpieces that will mail after January 5th. If you haven't, you had better get a move on! These changes were first published by the United States Postal Service® (USPS®) in the December 1, 2011 Register. As part of the changes, the USPS renamed pieces designed to carry discs and expanded the standards that apply to tabs to include folded self-mailers (FSM's). *These new rules do not apply to cards, envelopes, booklet style letters or mailpieces designed to carry discs.*

THE CHANGES

The notice lays out the specifications for the size requirements for FSM's:

- **Length:** A minimum of 5 inches and a maximum of 10 1/2 inches.
- **Height:** A minimum of 3 1/2 inches and a maximum of 6 inches.
- **Thickness:** A minimum of 0.007 inch; (0.009 inch if the height exceeds 4 1/4 inches or if the length exceeds 6 inches); the maximum thickness is 1/4 inch.
- **Maximum Weight:** 3 ounces.
- Rectangular, with four square corners and parallel opposite sides.
- Within an aspect ratio (length divided by height) of 1.3 to 2.5, inclusive (see Domestic Mail Manual 601.1.4).
- **Maximum number of panels, bi-fold, tri-fold and oblongs:** 12 for FSM's constructed of non-newsprint paper
 - ◆ **Exception:** Quarter-folded self-mailers made of a minimum of 100 lb book grade paper may have 4 panels and those made of 55 lb newsprint must have at least 8 panels and may contain up to 24 panels.

The regulations include the definition of a "panel" and lengthy descriptions of permissible fold and panel configurations. The sealing options provided are numerous, including the optimal continuous glue line, as well as three or four glue spots, three or four elongated glue lines, and various tabbing options.

Many of the options are dependent on the paper basis weight and number of folds or panels. There are also a number of options for other design elements, such as die cuts, perforations, loose enclosures and attachments.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Since the **January 5, 2013** effective date is right around the corner, we strongly encourage mailers to review these new regulations and review any existing mailpiece components or mailpieces in the design stages to insure they will meet the new requirements. Many mailpieces, or components of mailpieces, are designed and prepared months in advance of the actual mailing date and may be kept in stock for re-mailings. Before you design and order mailpieces for 2013, please review these new rules so that you do not get stuck with additional postage charges or, worse, unmailable pieces.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For more detailed information on these new rules, see the Folded Self-Mailer Reference Material document, at the USPS / RIBBS web site. <https://ribbs.usps.gov/>.

If you have questions on how these changes may impact the design of your mailing pieces, please contact us.

DTMB Logistics and Operations Support Contact Information

William Doxie <i>Mail & Delivery Services Manager</i>	517.636.0731	doxiew@michigan.gov
Thomas Goodine <i>Mailing Consultant</i>	517.322.6469	goodinet@michigan.gov
Kristen Hampton <i>Printing Services Manager</i>	517.322.5488	hamptonk@michigan.gov
Mark Miller <i>Printing Consultant</i>	517.322.6455	millerm13@michigan.gov
Rex Waltersdorf <i>Printing Consultant</i>	517.322.5889	waltersdorfr@michigan.gov