

BULK MAIL RULES



By meeting the minimum requirement of 200 pieces, many of our districts and squadrons are able to take advantage of Nonprofit Standard Mail Rates in sending out their publications. The rate charged for sending mail under this classification is substantially lower than that charged for sending it by First Class Mail. However, in using this classification, the mailer must be aware of certain requirements that apply to the piece and of the restrictions that are imposed on its advertising content. Failure to observe these restrictions would likely involve being charged the regular Standard Mail (A) Rates for the entire batch of newsletters, a hefty expense for most of our squadrons and districts.

Under the postal definition, our publications may be classified as periodical publications provided they conform to the following criteria. It must:

1. Have a title.
2. Be published at regular intervals.
3. Consist of printed sheets.
4. Contain at least 25% non-advertising material
5. Show an identification statement within the first five pages that contains:
 - a. Issue date (may be shown on cover)
 - b. Statement of frequency of issues
 - c. Name and address of the authorized organization
 - d. Issue number (may be shown on the cover)

If you are presently using Nonprofit Standard Mail to distribute your publication to your members or plan to do so in the future, be aware that there are certain restrictions imposed on the advertising that may be carried.

Advertisements for credit, debit or charge cards are prohibited. However, you may announce the availability of such a card as a benefit of membership in our organization. If the newsletter contains advertising for or promotion of such a card it cannot be mailed at the Nonprofit Standard Mail rates.

Advertising that promotes, offers, recommends, describes or announces the availability of any travel arrangement is ineligible for mailing unless the arrangement is designed for and primarily promoted to the members of the organization. To be considered a travel arrangement, three elements must be mentioned in the advertisement. These are accommodations, a destination and transportation. Mention of these three, either directly or implied, in a newsletter advertisement would make the newsletter ineligible for mailing under the rules for Non-profit Standard Mail. To be eligible for mailing under these rules, the travel arrangement mentioned in the ad must contribute substantially to one or more of the purposes that constitute the basis for the organization's authorization to mail at nonprofit rates.

Material that advertises, promotes, offers, or for a fee recommends, describes or announces the availability of any insurance policy is ineligible for mailing at nonprofit rates, unless the following conditions are met:

1. The policy is designed for and primarily promoted to the members of the organization.
2. The coverage provided by the particular policy is not generally otherwise commercially available.

The rules, however, permit us to announce the availability of an insurance policy as a membership benefit. Also, an exception to excluding insurance advertising is that business cards may be published if the publication qualifies as a periodical.

If you have any questions concerning the content of any of your advertisements, play it safe and consult with the Mailing Requirements Office for your area. Your local Post Office will be able to tell you where it is located and how it can be contacted.

Please note that this discussion concerns only Nonprofit Standard Mail. These rules do not apply to First Class Mail.

GRASS-ROOTS LOBBYING PROHIBITED

The USPS® Operating Committee's position regarding lobbying is that squadrons engaging in political lobbying without prior approval of the Chief Commander or the Operating Committee is prohibited. Any oral communication or written correspondence by a member with non-USPS groups or individuals, public or private, which represents any official USPS policy or position or which implies that the member is an official representative of USPS shall have the prior approval of the Chief Commander or the Operating Committee.

Members may not encourage other members to write a government body regarding laws in USPS newsletters. Even if the publication specifies that members are to write in their names, such an appeal in a membership publication is considered *grass-roots lobbying* and is contrary to USPS policy.

Therefore, editors are advised not to publish any sort of lobbying in squadron and district newsletters.

