

# Flats Sequencing System (FSS)

## Overview

- In January 2014 the USPS will require bundle and pallet preparation of automation flat-size Standard Mail, Periodicals and Bound Printed Matter mailpieces prepared for delivery within ZIP Codes serviced by FSS processing.
- The Flats Sequencing System (FSS) automates the sequencing of flat-size mailpieces into delivery order.
- Mailer prepared bundles and pallets specifically for FSS processing are trucked by a mailer or USPS to 47 FSS locations across the country. A list of FSS locations can be found at: <https://ribbs.usps.gov/index.cfm?page=flat>
- FSS Scheme bundles are now required to be prepared and can contain qualifying mailpieces from the following: 5-digit, 3-digit, ADC, MXD ADC, High Density Plus, High Density and Basic Carrier Route presort rates.
- FSS scheme pallets, required at 250lbs can be delivered directly to an FSS facility or an NDC or SCF facility.
- FSS Facility pallets can only be delivered to an SCF or an NDC. The Pallet preparation section of this fact sheet provides more details.

## Required FSS Preparation

The Postal Service initially introduced optional FSS preparation standards in the August 23, 2010 Federal Register, final rule. The Postal Service now proposes to require bundle and FSS scheme pallet preparation of automation flat-size Standard Mail, Periodicals and Bound Printed Matter mailpieces prepared for delivery within the ZIP Codes served by a FSS processing facility.

## FSS Sortation Labeling List

Labeling list L006 describes the 5-digit FSS scheme sortation list for flat sized Periodicals, Standard Mail, Bound Printed Matter and Package Services placed in bundles and pallets. This labeling list must be used when preparing FSS bundles and pallets.

A scheme or sort plan is a list of separations that are performed in a mail distribution (sorting) operation.

Column A Destination ZIP Codes	Column B Scheme Bundle/Container Placard	Column C Facility Container Placard
85018, 85060	FSS PHOENIX AZ 85018	FSS PHOENIX AZ 852

Column A of the labeling list shows an example of the destination ZIP Codes processed in a single FSS scheme sort.

Column B of the labeling list shows how a FSS scheme container/pallet, bundle or sack/tub must be identified.

Column C of the labeling list shows how the top line of an FSS Facility container/pallet placard or sack/tub label should be identified.

## Bundle Preparation

Presort software is used to prepare FSS Bundles.

Automation, automation compatible presorted and carrier route pieces must be consolidated into 5-digit FSS scheme bundles as outlined below. Piece sequencing requirements for carrier route mail do not apply when placed into a FSS Scheme bundle.

### Standard Mail Flats

Combine Five-Digit & Basic Carrier Route pieces into 5-digit FSS scheme bundles. Optionally, High Density and High Density Plus pieces must be included in a 5-digit FSS Scheme bundles. Pieces may be pulled from the Mixed ADC, ADC, and 3-digit pool into a 5-digit FSS Scheme bundle.

### Bound Printed Flats

Combine Presorted & Carrier Route pieces into 5-digit FSS scheme bundles.

### Periodical Flats

Combine Five-Digit & Basic Carrier Route pieces into 5-digit FSS scheme bundles. Optionally, High Density and High Density Plus pieces must be included in a 5-digit FSS Scheme bundles. Pieces may be pulled from the Mixed ADC, ADC, and 3-digit pool into a 5-digit FSS Scheme bundle.

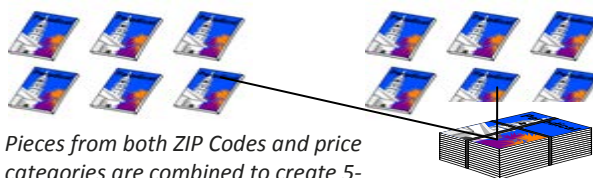
As a Periodicals example using the L006 labeling list:

Column A Destination ZIP Codes	Column B Scheme Bundle/Container Placard	Column C Facility Container Placard
85018, 85060	FSS PHOENIX AZ 85018	FSS PHOENIX AZ 852

(Column A/L006)

6 Carrier Route pcs -  
ZIP Code 85018 C001

6 5-Digit pcs -  
ZIP Code **85060**



Pieces from both ZIP Codes and price categories are combined to create 5-digit FSS scheme bundles

For each FSS scheme sort, bundle Sizes are required to be uniform and between 3" and 6.5" high. One overflow bundle may be under minimum height. Bundles must also be prepared to maintain integrity with the appropriate strapping and shrinkwrap.

Bundles must be identified as 5-digit scheme presort either with an Optional Endorsement Line (OEL) or with a "red Label 5 SCH" barcoded pressure sensitive bundle label.

FSS scheme bundles must be prepared for each 5-digit FSS scheme combination identified in labeling list L006 under the following conditions:

- Standard Mail – 10 or more pieces of automation, automation compatible or basic carrier route
- Periodical – 6 or more automation, automation compatible or carrier route pieces.
- Bound Printed Matter - 10 or more pieces (or 10 or more pounds) of presorted or carrier route

Note: Mailers may optionally prepare a FSS scheme bundle of less than the minimums listed above if the bundle contains a minimum of 3 inches of mail.

Saturation price Standard Mail and Periodicals flats are not eligible for this preparation.

## Pallet Preparation

After the 5-digit FSS Scheme bundles are prepared the bundles must be placed on pallets, in sacks or in approved alternate containers for 5-digit FSS scheme ZIP Code FSS 5-digit Scheme bundles can be placed on:

- FSS Scheme Pallet
- FSS Facility Pallet
- Other Presort Pallet

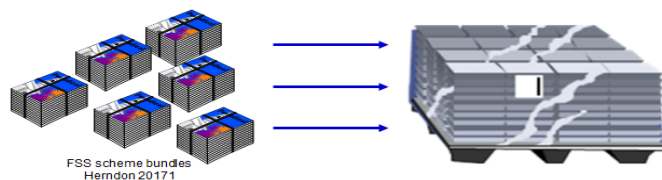
### FSS Scheme Pallet

- Required at 250 pounds
- Only 5-digit Scheme bundles on pallet for the same FSS scheme combination (column A/L006)
- Pallets labeled (column B/L006)
- Can be entered at FSS facility, SCF, NDC or origin.

Example: A mailer has 300 lbs. of mail bundled into FSS Scheme bundles for 20171. A FSS scheme pallet is created labeled for: FSS Herndon VA 20171

Column A Destination ZIP Codes	Column B Scheme Bundle/Container Placard	Column C Facility Container Placard
20136, 20171	FSS HERNDON VA 20171	FSS DULLES VA 201

### FSS scheme pallet: FSS Herndon VA 20171



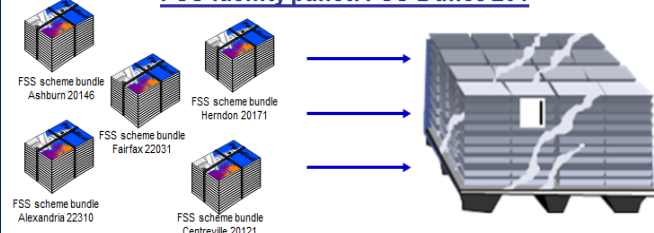
### FSS Facility Pallet

- Optional
- Contains FSS Scheme bundles created using column A/L006 and labeled for Column C/L006.
- Pallets labeled (Column C/L006)
- Cannot be entered at FSS facility. Can be entered at SCF, NDC, or origin facility.

Example: A mailer has 300 lbs. of mail bundled into FSS Scheme bundles for 20146, 22031, 20171, 22310, and 20121. An FSS Facility Pallet was created for FSS Dulles 201

Column A Destination ZIP Codes	Column B Scheme Bundle/Container Placard	Column C Facility Container Placard
20146 - 20147	FSS ASHBURN VA 20146	FSS DULLES VA 201
22031 - 22032	FSS FAIRFAX VA 22031	FSS DULLES VA 201
20136, 20171	FSS HERNDON VA 20171	FSS DULLES VA 201
22310, 22315	FSS ALEXANDRIA VA 22310	FSS DULLES VA 201
20112 - 20113, 20121 - 20122	FSS CENTREVILLE VA 20121	FSS DULLES VA 201

### FSS facility pallet: FSS Dulles 201



## Pallet Preparation cont.

### Other Presort Pallet

- Mailers may choose to prepare 5-digit FSS scheme bundles and place them on regular pallets along with presorted bundles.
- Prepared according to applicable standards based on class of mail.
- Contains automation compatible bundles according to applicable standards based on class
- Cannot be entered at FSS facility

## FSS Prices

### Standard Mail Flats-

- Based on original presort qualification 5-digit, basic, high density, and high density plus carrier route pieces will continue to be eligible for those prices when prepared in FSS scheme bundles. Qualifying 3-digit, ADC, and Mixed ADC pieces will be eligible for the 3-digit price when prepared in FSS 5-digit scheme bundle.

### Bound Printed Matter Flats-

- Based on original presort qualification BPM presort or carrier route pieces will continue to be eligible for those prices when prepared in FSS scheme bundles.

### Periodical Flats piece charges –

- Based on original presort all qualifying 5-digit, carrier route, High Density and 5-digit scheme pieces will continue to be eligible for those prices when prepared in FSS scheme bundles.

### Periodical Bundle Charges –

- Periodical FSS Scheme bundles will be assessed the 3-digit bundle price without regard to the piece prices claimed.

*Exception: 5-digit Outside-County bundle charges will be assessed to Outside-County bundles including bundles of pieces claimed at carrier route piece prices.*

### Periodical Container Charges –

- FSS Scheme pallets will be assessed the 3-digit Outside-County container charge.

*Exception: There is no container charge for FSS scheme pallets entered at an FSS facility.*

- FSS Facility pallets will be assessed SCF pallet price
- FSS scheme sacks or trays will continue to be assessed the 3-digit price. Sacks and trays entered at a FSS facility will claim the DSCF price. Before January 26, 2014 mailers are encouraged to use the PVDS process to enter FSS scheme pallets at FSS locations (*FSS Facility Pallets must not be delivered to an FSS facility*)

## Destination Entry

14. Entry Discounts Claimed  DDU  DBMC  Mailing Includes Pieces For Delivery Outside Service Area of Entry Office.  
(Check all that apply)  DSCF  International Service Center (ISC)  DADC  Other (International):

- Before January 26, 2014 mailers should populate the DSCF checkbox for deliveries of FSS scheme pallets to a FSS location.



# Flats Sequencing System (FSS)

## Mail.dat Key Values

File	Field	Value
.cqt	Rate Category	FS = FSS Scheme
.cqt	Destination Entry	P = DFSS
.cqt	Zone	W = FSS
.csm	Entry Point for Entry Discount – Facility Type	W = DFSS
.csm	Container Level	E = FSS Scheme F = FSS Facility
.pqt	Package Level	X = FSS Sort

## Mail.XML Key Values

Block in QualificationReport	Field	Value
containerDetailData	RateLevel	FS = FSS Scheme
containerDetailData	EntryDiscountType	P = DFSS
containerDetailData	Zone	W = FSS
containerInfoData	EntryPointFacilityType	W = DFSS
containerInfoData	SortationLevel	E = FSS Scheme F = FSS Facility
bundleRecord	ChargeableBundleLevel	FS = FSS Sort

### PS 3602 - Standard

Part	Line	Line Description	Mail.dat	Mail.XML
D - Automation Flats	D9, D24	DFSS – 5-Digit (DFSS Scheme)	Destination Entry = P Container Level = E	EntryDiscountType = P SortationLevel = E
	D10–D12; D25–D27	DFSS – 3-Digit, ADC, Mixed ADC	Not Supported	
E - Nonautomation Flats	E9, E24	DFSS – 5-Digit (DFSS Scheme)	Destination Entry = P Container Level = E	EntryDiscountType = P SortationLevel = E
	E10–E12; E25–E27	DFSS – 3-Digit, ADC, Mixed ADC	Not Supported	
F – Carrier Route Flats	F9, F49 F11, F51 F13, F53	DFSS - High Density Plus Scheme DFSS - High Density Scheme DFSS - Basic Scheme	Destination Entry = P Container Level = E	EntryDiscountType = P SortationLevel = E
	F10, F50 F12, F52 F14, F54	DFSS - High Density Plus Facility DFSS - High Density Facility DFSS - Basic Facility	Not Supported	

### PS 3541 – Periodicals

Part	Line	Line Description	Mail.dat	Mail.XML
B – Outside County Pound Prices	B2	Advertising Pound Prices – DFSS	Zone = W	
	B15	Nonadvertising Pound Prices - DFSS		
C – Outside County – Piece Prices	C3, C6, C9, C12	Machinable Flats – Mixed ADC, ADC, 3-Digit, 5-Digit – FSS	Not Supported	
D – Outside County – Bundle Prices	D4	Mixed ADC – FSS Scheme	Package Level = X	Chargeable Bundle Level = FS
	D10	ADC – FSS Scheme		
	D15	SCF/3-Digit – FSS Scheme		
E – Outside County – Sack and Tray Prices	D19	FSS Facility – FSS Scheme	Container Level = F Package Level = X	Sortation Level = F Chargeable Bundle Level = FS
	D20	FSS Scheme – FSS Scheme	Container Level = E Package Level = X	Sortation Level = E Chargeable Bundle Level = FS
	E18–E23, E25	FSS Facility Sack/Tray	Container Level/Sortation Level = F Entry Point for Entry Discount–Facility Type = K, J, C, O, B, R, S	
	E26–E31, E33	FSS Scheme Sack/Tray	Container Level/Sortation Level = E Entry Point for Entry Discount–Facility Type = K, J, C, O, B, R, S	
	E24	FSS Facility Sack/Tray – Destination FSS	Not Supported	
	E32	FSS Scheme Sack/Tray – Destination FSS	Container Level = E,F Entry Point for Entry Discount = W	
E60–E65, E67	E60–E65, E67	FSS Facility Pallet	Container Level/Sortation Level = F Entry Point for Entry Discount–Facility Type = K, J, C, O, B, R, S	
	E68–E75	FSS Scheme Pallet	Container Level/Sortation Level = E Entry Point for Entry Discount–Facility Type =K, J, C, O, B, R, W, S	
	E66	FSS Facility Pallet – Destination FSS	Not Supported Container Level = F Entry Point for Entry Discount = W	

### PS 3605 – Package Services

Part	Line	Line Description	Mail.dat	Mail.XML
A – Bound Printed Matter	A29	Carrier Route and FSS Carrier Route – Flats – DFSS (FSS Carrier Route Only)	Destination Entry = P Rate Category= D	Entry Discount = P Rate Level= D
	A54–A61 A66–A70 A73	FSS Presorted (column renamed from Barcoded/Non-barcoded)	Rate Category/Rate Level = FS (A70 - Destination Entry/Entry Discount = P)	
	A74	Presorted and FSS Presorted – Flats – DDU – FSS & Presorted	Rate Category/Rate Level = N or FS	

