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Postal Service Adjusts Mailing Services Prices for 2012 *Penny Increase in Price of Forever Stamps First Since May 2009*

WASHINGTON — Beginning early next year, it will cost just a penny more to mail letters to any location in the United States, the first price change for First-Class Mail stamps (Forever stamps) in more than two and a half years. The new 45-cent price for Forever stamps is among price changes filed with the Postal Regulatory Commission today.

Highlights of the new single-piece First-Class Mail pricing, effective Jan. 22, 2012, include:

- Letters (1 oz.) – 1-cent increase to 45 cents
- Letters additional ounces – unchanged at 20 cents
- Postcards – 3-cent increase to 32 cents
- Letters to Canada or Mexico (1 oz.) – 5-cent increase to 85 cents.
- Letters to other international destinations – 7-cent increase to \$1.05

Prices also will change for other mailing services, including Standard Mail, Periodicals, Package Services and Extra Services. Today's announcement does not affect Express Mail and Priority Mail prices. More information on the new pricing is available at http://about.usps.com/news/national-releases/2011/pr11_factsht_pricechng_1018.pdf.

"The overall average price increase is small and is needed to help address our current financial crisis," said Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe. "We continue to take actions within our control to increase revenue in other ways and to aggressively cut costs. To return to sound financial footing we urgently need enactment of comprehensive, long-term legislation to provide the Postal Service with a more flexible business model."

While actual percentage price increases for various products and services varies, the overall average price increase across all mailing services is capped by law at 2.1 percent, the rate of inflation calculated based on the Consumer Price Index.

For business mailers, today's announcement offers good news for First-Class Mail Presort mailers. When the new prices go into effect on Jan. 22, the second ounce for presorted letters will be free. "This gives companies expanded opportunities to advertise new services and products to their customers as part of bill and statement mailings," said Paul Vogel, president and chief marketing/sales officer.

And new for all customers is a 3-month pricing option to rent PO Boxes, perfect for people on the move and others who need a PO Box for a short time period.

The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

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For reporters interested in speaking with a regional Postal Service public relations professional on this issue, please go to <http://about.usps.com/news/media-contacts/usps-local-media-contacts.pdf>.

A self-supporting government enterprise, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that reaches every address in the nation, 150 million residences, businesses and Post Office Boxes. The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses, and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations. With 32,000 retail locations and the most frequently visited website in the federal government, *usps.com*, the Postal Service has annual revenue of more than \$67 billion and delivers nearly 40 percent of the world's mail. If it were a private sector company, the U.S. Postal Service would rank 29th in the 2010 Fortune 500. *Black Enterprise* and *Hispanic Business* magazines ranked the Postal Service as a leader in workforce diversity. The Postal Service has been named the Most Trusted Government Agency six consecutive years and the sixth Most Trusted Business in the nation by the Ponemon Institute.