

# 2 Eligible and Ineligible Organizations

## 2-1 EVALUATION OF ELIGIBILITY

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In reviewing an application for authorization to mail at the Nonprofit Standard Mail rates, the Postal Service examines an organization's supporting documentation to verify the following:

- The organization's primary purpose. The organization must be organized and operated in conformity with its primary nonprofit purpose. An organization that incidentally engages in qualifying activities is ineligible for the Nonprofit Standard Mail rates.
- The organization's nonprofit status. An eligible organization (in one of the categories listed in 2-2.1) may receive authorization to mail at the Nonprofit Standard Mail rates if it meets these two financial conditions:
  - The organization is not organized for profit.
  - None of the organization's net income accrues (inures) to the benefit of any individual or private stockholder.

## 2-2 ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS

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### 2-2.1 Categories of Organizations

Nonprofit organizations organized and operated for the following primary purposes may apply for authorization to mail at the Nonprofit Standard Mail rates. Certain political committees (see 2-2.2) and voting registration officials (see 2-2.3) are also eligible to apply for authorization to mail at the Nonprofit Standard Mail rates. The eight categories of eligible nonprofit organizations are as follows:

- Agricultural.
- Educational.
- Fraternal.
- Labor.
- Philanthropic.
- Religious.
- Scientific.
- Veterans.

### 2-2.1.1 **Agricultural**

An agricultural organization is a nonprofit organization whose primary purpose is to better the conditions of those engaged in agricultural pursuits, to improve the grade of their products, and to develop a higher degree of efficiency in agriculture; or to collect and disseminate information or materials about agriculture. An agricultural organization may further and advance such agricultural interests by:

- Sponsoring educational activities.
- Holding agricultural fairs.
- Collecting and disseminating information about the cultivation of the soil and its fruits or the harvesting of marine resources.
- Rearing, feeding, and managing livestock, poultry, bees, etc.
- Promoting other activities related to agricultural interests.

### 2-2.1.2 **Educational**

An educational organization is a nonprofit organization whose primary purpose is to instruct or train individuals for improving or developing their capabilities or to instruct the public on subjects beneficial to the community. An organization may be educational even though it advocates a particular position or point of view, as long as the organization presents a sufficiently full and fair exposition of the pertinent facts to permit the formation of an independent opinion or conclusion. Conversely, an organization is not considered educational if its principal function is merely to present unsupported opinion. Examples of educational organizations include the following:

- Organizations (for example, a primary or secondary school, a college, or a professional or trade school) that have a regularly scheduled curriculum, a regular faculty, and a regularly enrolled body of students in attendance at a place where educational activities are regularly conducted.
- Organizations whose activities consist of presenting public discussion groups, forums, panels, lectures, or similar programs, including broadcasts of such activities on radio or television.
- Organizations that present a course of instruction by correspondence, television, or radio.
- Museums.
- Planetariums.
- Symphony orchestras.
- Zoos.

### 2-2.1.3 **Fraternal**

A fraternal organization is a nonprofit organization whose primary purpose is to foster fellowship and mutual benefits among its members. It must also be organized under a lodge or chapter system with a representative form of government; must follow a ritualistic format; and must be composed of members elected to membership by vote of the members.

Qualifying fraternal organizations include the Masons, Knights of Columbus, Elks, and college fraternities or sororities. Such organizations may have members of one sex or both sexes. Fraternal organizations do not encompass such organizations as business leagues, professional associations, civic associations, or social clubs.

#### 2-2.1.4 Labor

A labor organization is a nonprofit organization whose primary purpose is to better the conditions of workers. Labor organizations include, but are not limited to, organizations (for example, labor unions and employee associations) in which employees or workers participate, whose primary purpose is to deal with employers on such issues as grievances, labor disputes, wages, hours of employment, and working conditions.

#### 2-2.1.5 Philanthropic (Charitable)

A philanthropic (charitable) organization is a nonprofit organization organized and operated to benefit the public with such primary purposes as the following:

- To relieve the poor, distressed, or underprivileged.
- To advance religion, education, or science.
- To erect or maintain public buildings, monuments, or works.
- To lessen the burdens of Government.
- To promote social welfare for any of the above purposes or to lessen neighborhood tensions, eliminate prejudice and discrimination, defend human and civil rights secured by law, or combat community deterioration and juvenile delinquency.

If an organization organized and operated to relieve indigent persons receives voluntary contributions from those persons, that does not necessarily make it ineligible for Nonprofit Standard Mail rates as a philanthropic organization.

If an organization, in carrying out its primary purpose, advocates social or civic changes or presents ideas on controversial issues to influence public opinion and sentiment to accept its views, that does not necessarily make it ineligible for Nonprofit Standard Mail rates as a philanthropic organization.

#### 2-2.1.6 Religious

A religious organization is a nonprofit organization whose primary purpose is to conduct religious worship (for example, churches, synagogues, temples, or mosques), to support the religious activities of nonprofit organizations whose primary purpose is to conduct religious worship, or to further the teaching of particular religious faiths or tenets, including religious instruction and the dissemination of religious information.

#### 2-2.1.7 Scientific

A scientific organization is a nonprofit organization whose primary purpose is either to conduct research in the applied, pure, or natural sciences or to disseminate technical information dealing with the applied, pure, or natural sciences.

### 2-2.1.8 Veterans

A veterans' organization is a nonprofit organization of veterans of the armed services of the United States, or an auxiliary unit or society of, or a trust or foundation for, any such post or organization.

### 2-2.2 Qualified Political Committees

The following political committees may be authorized to mail at the Nonprofit Standard Mail rates without regard to their nonprofit status:

- A national committee of a political party (the organization responsible for the party's day-to-day operation at the national level).
- A state committee of a political party (the organization responsible for the party's day-to-day operation at the state level).
- The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.
- The Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee.
- The National Republican Congressional Committee.
- The National Republican Senatorial Committee.

### 2-2.3 Voting Registration Officials

Voting registration officials in a state or the District of Columbia may be authorized to mail at the Nonprofit Standard Mail rates if voters in that jurisdiction must register to vote before the date of voting in a general election for federal office. In addition to restrictions applicable to other categories of authorized organizations discussed in this chapter, specific content restrictions apply to Nonprofit Standard Mail mailings by these officials (see 4-2).

## 2-3 INELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS

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### 2-3.1 General

Organizations listed in 2-3.2 generally may not use the Nonprofit Standard Mail rates. Some of these organizations were designated ineligible when the U.S. Congress enacted legislation governing these rates.

### 2-3.2 Typical Ineligible Organizations

Even if organized on a nonprofit basis, these and similar organizations are ineligible for the Nonprofit Standard Mail rates:

- Automobile clubs.
- Business leagues.
- Chambers of commerce.
- Citizens' and civic improvement associations.
- Individuals.

- Mutual insurance associations.
- Political organizations (other than those specified in 2-2.2).
- Service clubs (Civitan, Kiwanis, Lions, Optimist, and Rotary).
- Social and hobby clubs.
- Rural electric cooperatives and their associations.
- Trade associations.

In general, state, county, and municipal governments and governmental organizations are ineligible for the Nonprofit Standard Mail rates. However, a separate and distinct state, county, or municipal governmental organization that meets the criteria for any one of the categories in 2-2 may be eligible, notwithstanding its governmental status.