

How to prepare a full-bleed postcard for submission to Chalk Line

To ensure that your postcard prints well, please refer to the following guidelines to help you layout and submit your design.

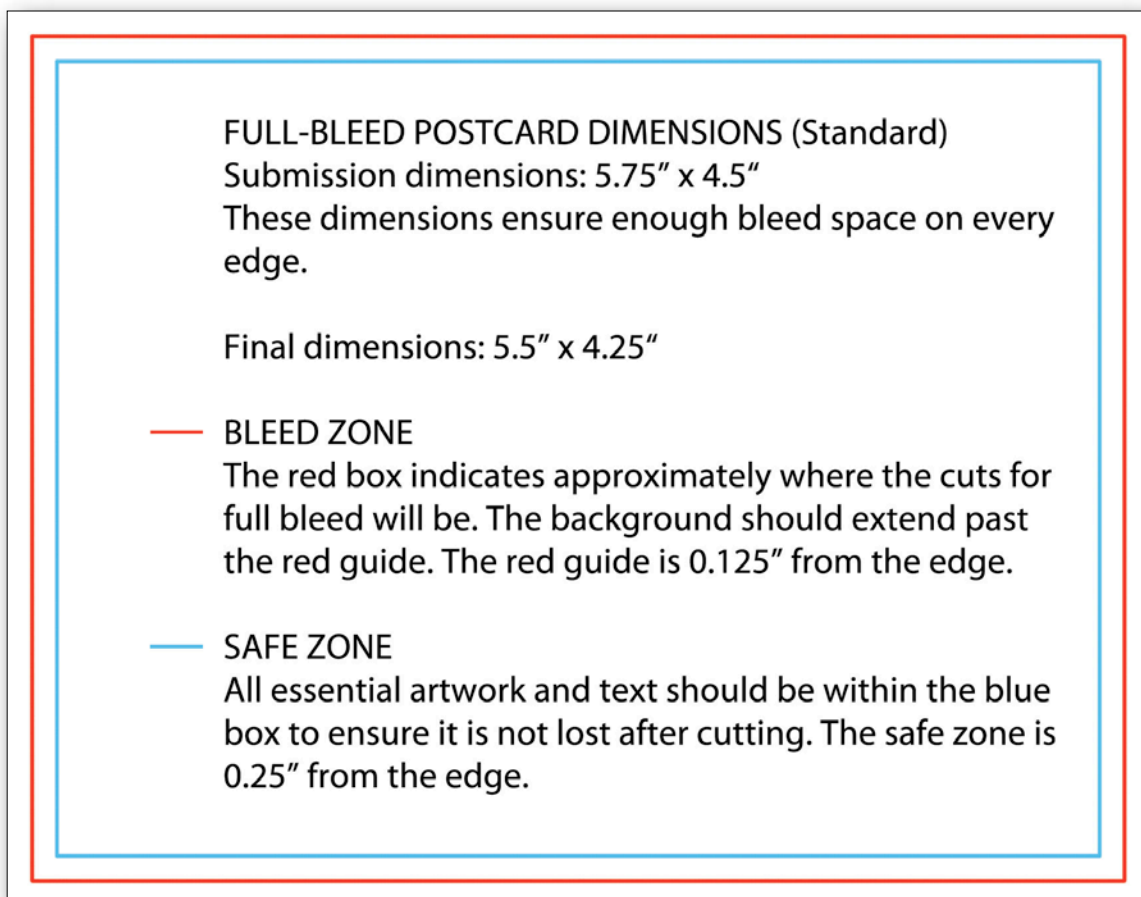
LAYOUT - Front side

Full-bleed postcards have color that goes all the way to the edge of the card. Our printers are unable to print all the way to the edge of paper, so to achieve a full-bleed, each piece must be cut down to its final size after printing.

The final dimensions of a standard-sized postcard after it is cut are 5.5" x 4.25". Our equipment requires a 0.125" space around every edge for the full-bleed. **When you design your postcard, please design it with the dimensions 5.75" x 4.5"**.

Although 0.125" is required on every side to allow for the full-bleed, please keep any essential artwork or text 0.25" away from every edge to avoid losing any important information or images. This allows for any shifts during printing. The background should continue beyond the bleed zone all the way to the edge of the design.

Refer to the image below as a guideline.



Below is an example of a postcard designed according to our specs. The dimensions of this design are 5.75" x 4.5", and it takes into account the bleed zone and cut zone. Notice that the background is continuous and runs all the way to the edges.



Similarly, if you are using a single image or photo for the card, make sure that no essential elements of the image (e.g. the side of a person's face, the family dog, etc.) are beyond 0.25" margins.

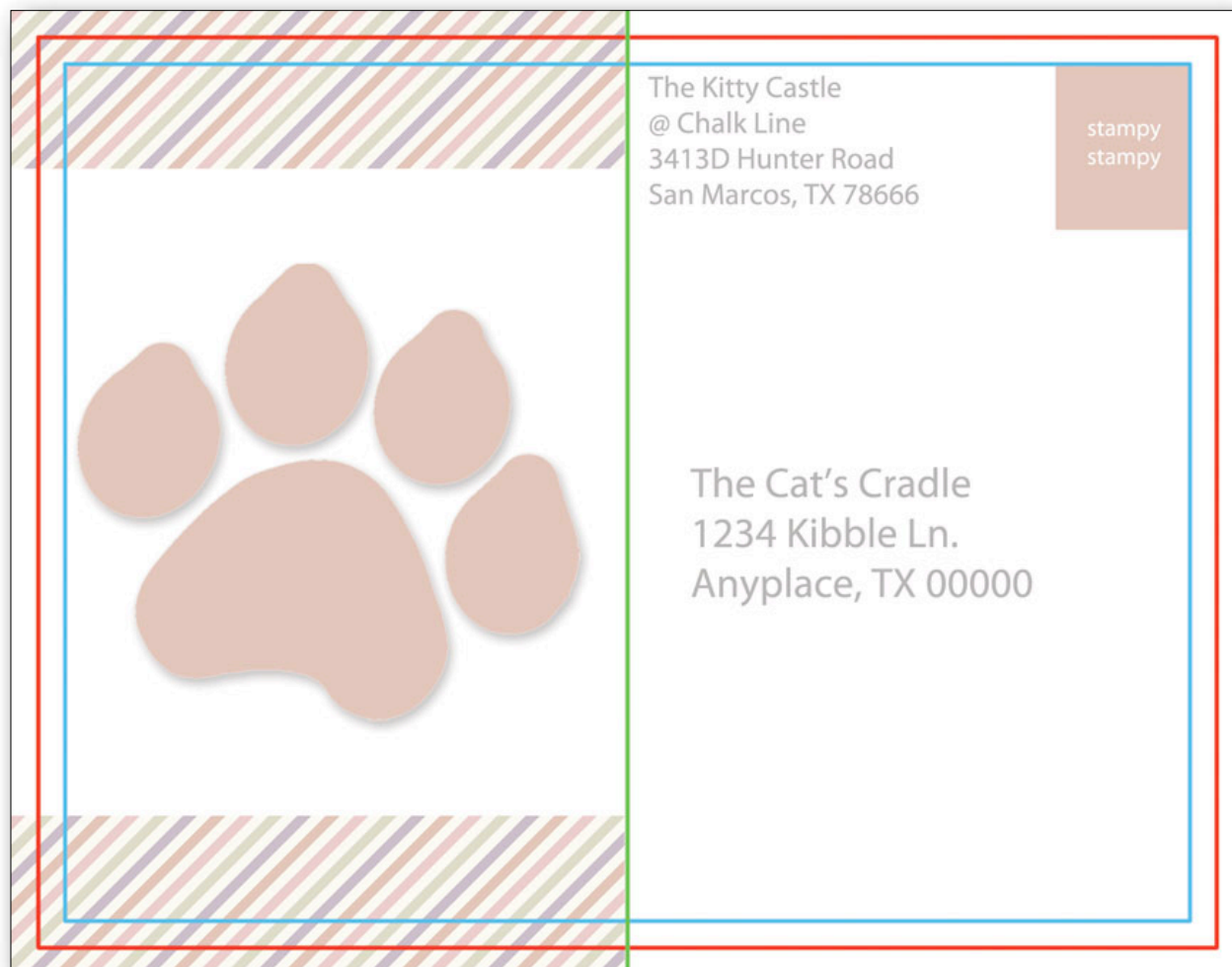
Now I'm going to overlay the bleed zone and safe zone margins so you can see where they fall on the design:



The red line indicates the approximate location of the cuts. The blue line indicates the margin of the safe zone. Notice that all of the text and images are within the blue line to ensure that they will not be cut off. If the image shifts during printing, I know that my graphics are still safe.

LAYOUT - Address side

On the address side, it is imperative that you leave the right half of the card open for mailing information. The outer margins remain the same as the previous side. Please refer to the image below for reference.



The green line down the middle indicates the center of the card at 2.875". You can see from this image that the left side of the card has a full-bleed with continuous background as on the previous side. The right side is left primarily blank except for the mailing address and return address. The red box in the top right corner indicates where the stamp will be placed.

Note on size:

This guide uses examples of our **standard size postcard**, which has the final dimensions 5.5" x 4.25". We also print large postcards (5.5" x 8.5"). If you have questions about custom sizes, please email Tiffany at tiffany@chalkline.org.

All sizes require 0.125" bleed space on every edge, so artwork must be designed with the same bleed and safe space as shown in this guide. For example, if you are designing a large postcard, the dimensions of the design should be 5.75" x 8.75".

Note on images:

To ensure high quality printing, please use the highest quality images you have. In general, the larger the image size, the higher the quality. Images taken from the internet tend to be of lower quality than is required for printing. Using original files for all photos, logos, and other graphics is always best.

Design options:

Chalk Line can send you a template with our guides in the following formats:

- Microsoft Publisher
- Apple Pages
- Adobe InDesign
- Adobe Illustrator
- Adobe Photoshop

Or you can send your text and photos to tiffany@chalkline.org for Chalk Line to lay out for you.

If you have any questions about layout, printing, or pricing, please email tiffany@chalkline.org.