

UNITED KINGDOM VAPING DUTY STAMPS SCHEME

Stamps Application Guidelines for
Affixing Operators of Vaping Products

Phase 2 – Digitally Enhanced Stamps

Version: 1.2
24.06.2026

CONFIDENTIAL



DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version	Date	Observations
V1.0	23.03.2026	First release based on Transitional Stamps.
V1.1	30.03.2026	Update to telephone number and Copyright.
V1.2	24.06.2026	Digitally Enhanced stamps have been added and replaces the previous Transitional stamps. In addition, the reel unwinding direction has been added for WET duty stamps.

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1 Preface

Purpose

This document provides guidelines on how to apply the vaping duty stamps correctly to vaping products covered by the vaping duty stamps (VDS) scheme implemented by the revenue authorities in the United Kingdom (UK). The VDS scheme is intended to monitor the domestic production and importation of vaping products in the UK, thereby enabling fast detection of non-duty paid products. Vaping duty stamps must be applied to each vaping product before it is released into the market.



Note : All visual aids in this guide are based on Digitally Enhanced Stamps and replaces the Transitional Stamps that was previously in place. The Digitally Enhanced Stamps will be available from 01.09.2026.

Intended Audience

This document is intended for Affixing Operators i.e. UK manufacturers, overseas manufacturers and UK warehouse keepers who will be affixing duty stamps to vaping products in the manufacturing or packaging process.

Roles and Responsibilities

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Affixing Operator	Responsible for affixing the vaping duty stamp to vaping products as well as the safekeeping and proper storage of stamps.
Purchasing Operator	Responsible for placing orders for vaping duty stamps.

Terms and Abbreviations

TERM	DESCRIPTION
Datamatrix	A two-dimensional code consisting of black and white “cells” or dots arranged in either a square or rectangular pattern.
HRC	Human Readable Code is a unique alphanumeric code that is visible on the stamp and provides a visual check that is human readable.
VDS	The vaping duty stamps are paper-based stamps which combine physical security features with digital elements for authentication.

Conventions

The following conventions are intended to alert the user to the associated instructions:



Hint: Helpful hints and tips for using the system.



Note: Relevant information to facilitate operation or compliance, which may improve the operation of the system.

Getting Help

Always refer to this user manual first for information on using the system. If you cannot resolve the issue after reading this manual, please contact support if needed : VDS-support@cartor.com. Tel: +44 0800 229 4160.

Document Applicability

The information contained in this user manual is valid as at the date indicated on the front cover. For further releases, please contact support : VDS-support@cartor.com. Tel: +44 0800 229 4160.

2 Introduction

With the introduction of the vaping duty stamps scheme implemented in the United Kingdom, a process has been put in place to enable the Purchasing Operators to order vaping duty stamps and the Affixing Operators to apply them to their vaping products. The vaping duty stamps are paper-based stamps which combine physical security features with digital elements for authentication.

This guide describes the procedure for the correct application of the vaping duty stamps to vaping products.

Important Notes:



- Vaping duty stamp application is the responsibility of the Affixing Operator.
 - When the vaping duty stamp is attached to the vaping product, it must seal the packaging so that the product cannot be opened without damaging either the packaging or the stamp. Affixing Operators must ensure the packaging meets this requirement.
-

2.1 System Requirements

Automated stamp application and activation:

For automatic lines an automated label applicator is required to be installed for stamp application.

2.2 Stamps Ordering

Purchasing Operators may place and manage orders for vaping duty stamps issued by the supplier via the vaping duty stamps portal <https://vds-cartor.co.uk>.



Note: As soon as the duty stamps are delivered to the Affixing Operator, the supplier's risk ends, and the Affixing Operator will be fully responsible for the safekeeping and proper storage of the stamps.

2.3 Stamps Storage

An area dedicated to the storage of stamps should be defined following the local health & safety protocols as well as storage instructions described hereunder:

- Stamps must be stored away from direct sunlight and kept in their original packaging.
- The relative humidity level should be acceptable. The storage area should be air-conditioned if stamps are to be stored for a long time. An optimum relative humidity of 50% is recommended, however 40% to 60% range is acceptable.
- Recommended optimum temperature is 22°C, however, a 20°C to 24°C is acceptable. The storage area should be air-conditioned if stamps are to be stored for an extended period.
- The storage area must be free of moisture or water leak marks on the ceiling, walls, and slabs.
- The storage area must be free of pests.

2.4 Stamp Application Principles

Kindly adhere to the following stamp application principles:

- The stamp should be applied on each individual retail unit.
- Vaping duty stamps must be attached to the outermost part of the final retail packaging. This could be either to the:
 - box
 - bottle (if it's sold or supplied without an outer box).
- Only one stamp should be applied per product. No product should have more than one stamp.
- The stamp should be used once only.
- The environment where the stamp application is performed must be dry and cool (not humid, nor hot).

Not allowed:



- Dual stamp application is not allowed.
- Printing on the stamps is not allowed.
- Reusing a stamp is not allowed.

2.5 Visibility of the Stamps FLAT Zones





Important note: It is important to ensure that the flat zones of the stamp are clearly visible and not obstructed when applying the stamp onto a product's surface.

What is the flat zone?

The flat zones contain the security data. Each stamp bears identifiable flat zones, as outlined in the table below. For detailed procedures of each stamp application kindly refer to the relevant chapters that follow.

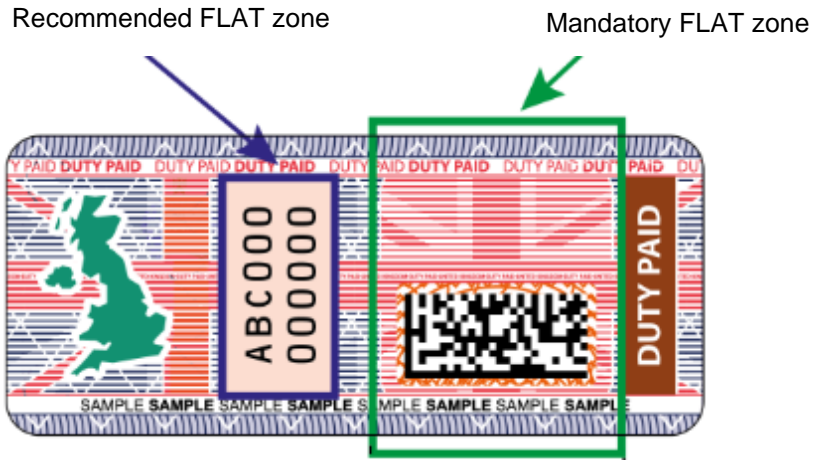
Rules:

- The flat zones must be clearly visible and not obstructed on the product.
- The flat zones must not be altered by tears/scratches/creases/folds/wrinkles.
- The flat zone must be applied with great care and precision following the instructions in this guide.

STAMP TYPE	FLAT ZONES
Digitally Enhanced vaping duty stamp (DRY)	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Recommended FLAT zone</p>  </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Mandatory FLAT zone</p>  </div> </div>

STAMP TYPE	FLAT ZONES
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Digitally Enhanced
vaping duty stamp
(WET)



3 Vaping DRY Stamps – Digitally Enhanced

3.1 Vaping DRY Stamps – Specifications

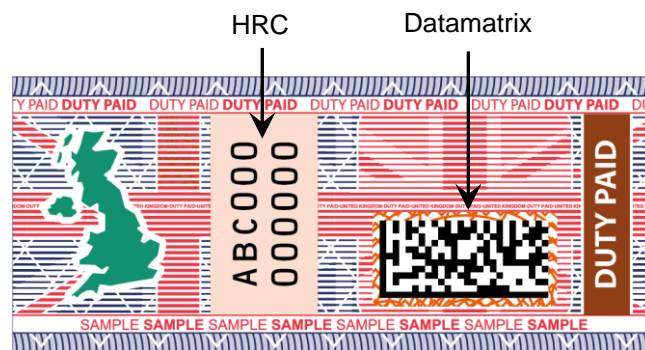


Figure 1 : Vaping DRY stamps - specifications

VAPING DRY STAMPS SPECIFICATIONS	
Paper	DRY secure paper
Label shape	Rectangular
Length of the label	42 mm
Height of the label	18 mm
Maximum number of labels per pack/reel	108,000 / pack
Pack format	108,000 pre-cuts stamps in trays
Reel format	N/A

3.2 Vaping DRY Stamps – FLAT Zones

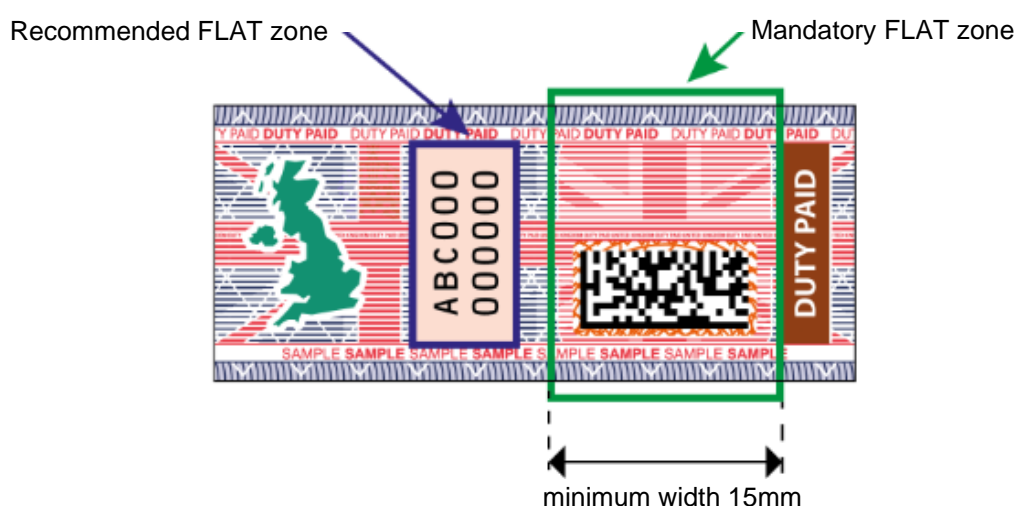


Figure 2 : Vaping DRY stamps – FLAT zones

The **mandatory flat zone** illustrated above is required to be flat; avoid wrinkles, scratches, tears, folds, or bends in this area.

The **recommended flat zone** represents the readable zone i.e., alphanumeric digits which are legible by the human eye; avoid wrinkles, scratches, tears, folds, or bends in this area.

3.3 Vaping DRY Stamps – Application

Important Notes:

- i** • Make sure that the application area is completely dry before starting the stamp application.
- To avoid issues with DRY stamps peeling off, it is recommended to allow sufficient glue when attaching stamps.

3.3.1 MIDDLE FOLDING

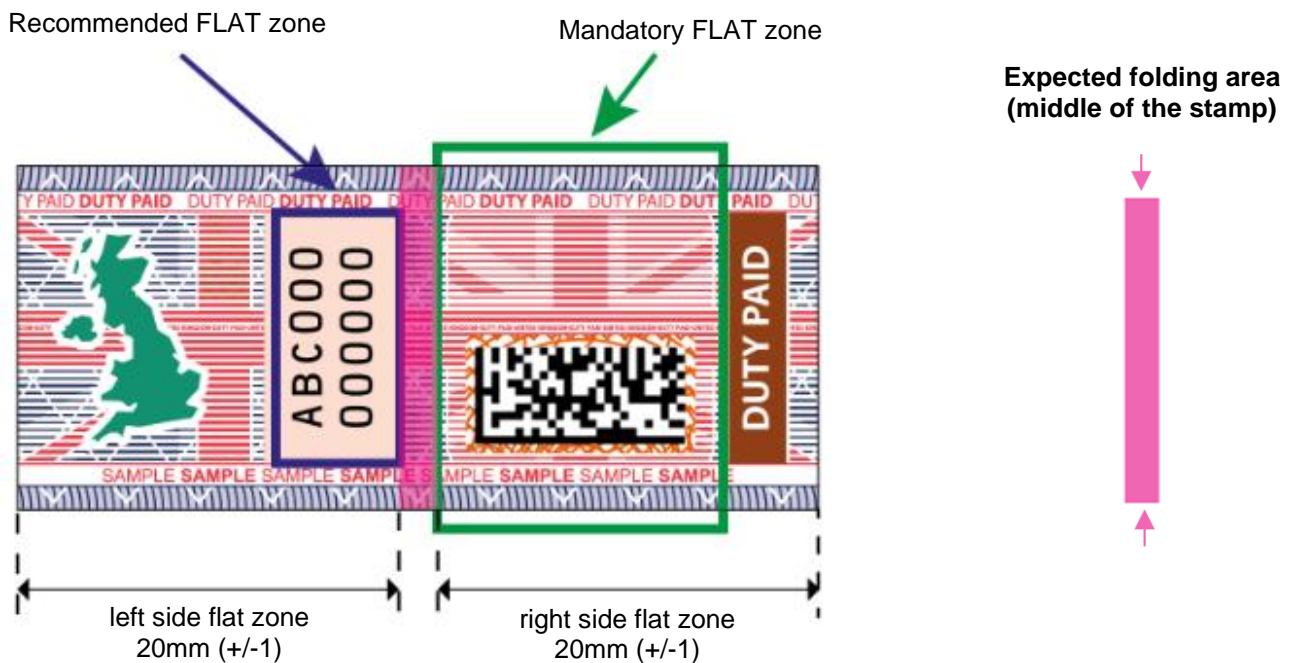


Figure 3 : Expected folding area (middle of the stamp)



Figure 4 : Sample of middle folding (1)

Using the **middle folding** the Vaping duty stamp is applied on the opening of the packaging to cover the seal. The fold must **not interrupt** the **mandatory flat zone**.

The opposite end of the packaging is also required to be sealed by the Affixing operators using their own methods.

Using the **middle folding** the Vaping duty stamp is applied on the opening of the packaging to cover the seal. The fold must **not interrupt** the **mandatory flat zone**.

The opposite end of the packaging is **also** required to be sealed by the Affixing operators using their own methods.



Figure 5 : Sample of middle folding (2)

3.3.2 DIRECT APPLICATION

For vaping products that is sold or supplied without an outer box, follow the stamp application method hereunder.



The stamp is applied on the opening of the product to cover the seal. The **mandatory flat zone should be applied on the body of the product.**

Figure 6: Vaping DRY stamps – direct application

3.3.3 VAPING DRY STAMPS – BEST PRACTISE

GOOD application :

BAD application :



Figure 7 : Sample – good



Figure 8 : Sample – what to avoid

4 Vaping WET Stamps – Digitally Enhanced

4.1 Vaping WET Stamps – Specifications

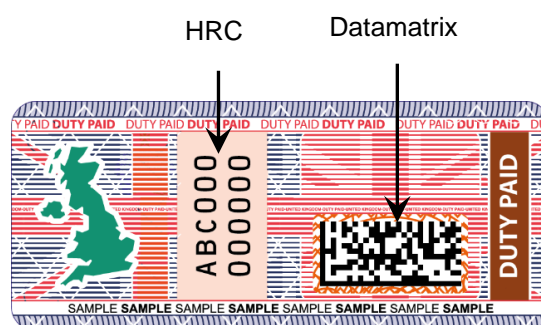


Figure 9 : Vaping WET stamps – specifications

VAPING WET STAMPS SPECIFICATIONS	
Paper	Self-adhesive Paper
Label shape	Rectangular
Width of the reel	46 mm
Length of the label	42 mm
Height of the label	18 mm
Tamper proof security cuts	Yes
Maximum number of labels per reel	20,000 per reel
Internal core diameter	76.2 mm (3 inches)
Mandrel type	Cardboard
Adhesive label direction in the reel	Landscape

4.2 Vaping WET Stamps - Unwinding Direction of the Reel

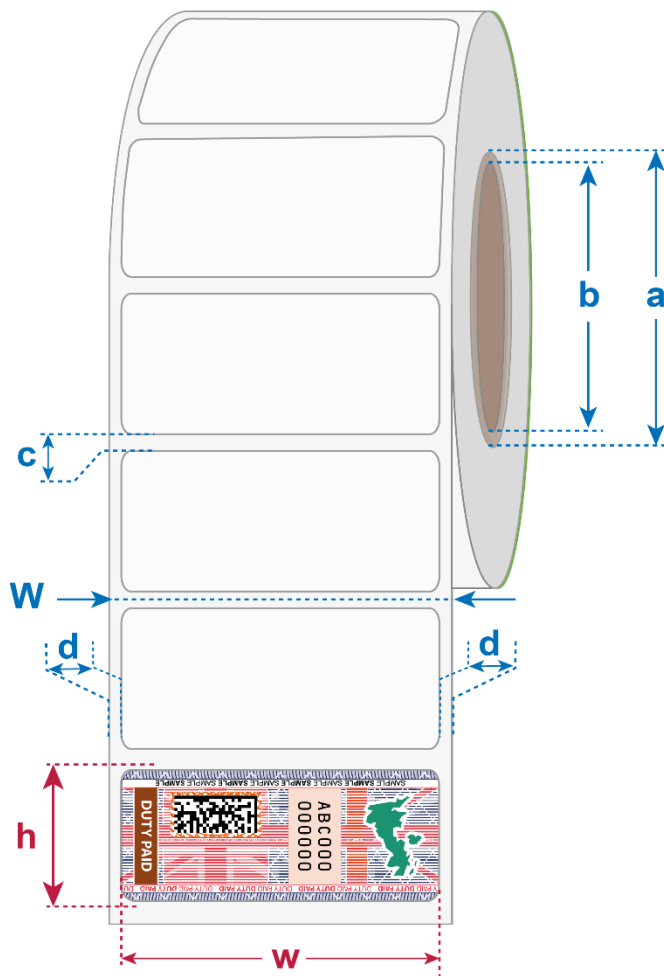


Figure 10 : Vaping WET stamps - unwinding direction of the reel

QUOTE	DESCRIPTION	NOMINAL SIZE (mm)
h	Stamp height	18
w	Stamp width	42
W	Reel Width	46
a	Core outer diameter	Minimum 90
b	Core inner diameter	76.2 (3 inches)
c	Gap between stamps	4
d	Glassine edge to stamp edge	2

4.3 Vaping WET Stamps – FLAT Zones

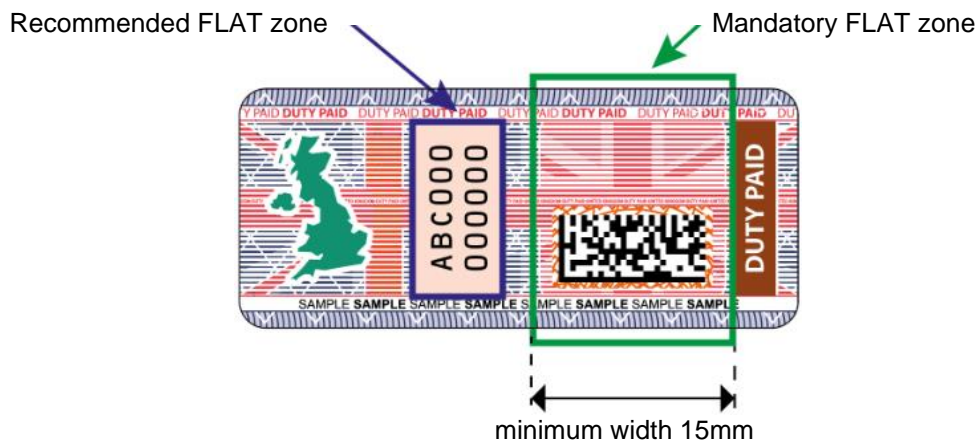


Figure 11 : Vaping WET stamps – FLAT zones

The **mandatory flat zone** illustrated above is required to be flat; avoid wrinkles, scratches, tears, folds, or bends in this area.

The **recommended flat zone** represents the readable zone i.e., alphanumeric digits which are legible by the human eye; avoid wrinkles, scratches, tears, folds, or bends in this area.

4.4 Vaping WET Stamps – Application

i Important Note: Make sure that the application area is completely dry before starting the stamp application.

4.4.1 MIDDLE FOLDING

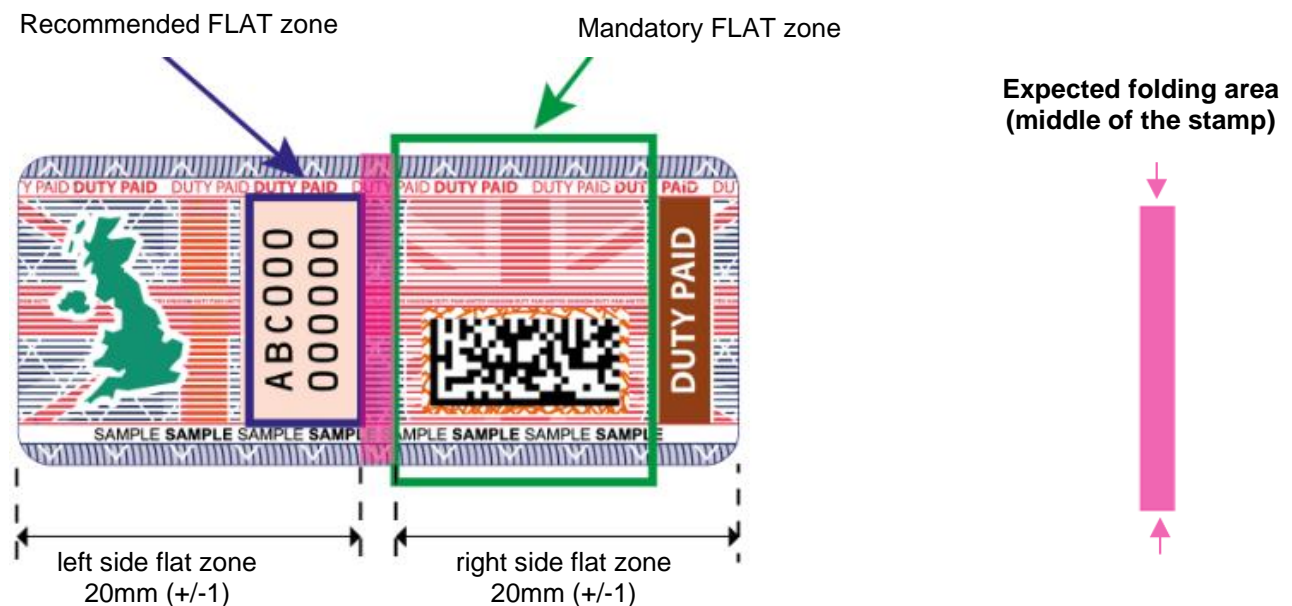


Figure 12 : Expected folding area (middle of the stamp)

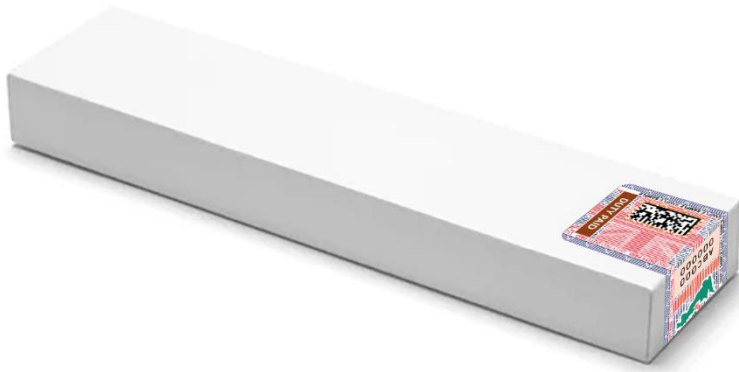


Figure 13: Sample of middle folding (1)

Using the **middle folding** the vaping duty stamp is applied on the opening of the packaging to cover the seal. The fold must **not interrupt** the **mandatory flat zone**.

The opposite end of the packaging is **also** required to be sealed by the Affixing Operators using their own methods.

Using the **middle folding** the vaping duty stamp is applied on the opening of the packaging to cover the seal. The fold must **not interrupt** the **mandatory flat zone**.

The opposite end of the packaging is **also** required to be sealed by the Affixing Operators using their own methods.



Figure 14 : Sample of middle folding (2)

4.4.2 DIRECT APPLICATION

For vaping products that is sold or supplied without an outer box, follow the stamp application method hereunder.



The stamp is applied on the opening of the product to cover the seal. The **mandatory flat zone should be applied on the body of the product.**

Figure 15: Vaping WET stamps – direct application

4.4.3 VAPING WET STAMPS – BEST PRACTISE

GOOD application :



Figure 16 : Sample – good

BAD application :



Figure 17 : Sample – what to avoid

5 Contact

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