



What to Expect: Secondary Services and Inspections

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This document is available in alternative formats upon request.

Aussi offert en français sous le titre : Services et inspections secondaires : À quoi devez-vous vous attendre

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The CBSA is Canada's border services agency. We work to ensure Canada's security and prosperity by managing the access of people and goods to Canada.

At any point during your interactions with our officers at a port of entry, you may be referred to our Secondary Services and Inspections area.

We understand that travellers may feel anxious when crossing the border and want you to know that secondary referrals should not be viewed as an indication of wrongdoing. They are a normal part of the cross-border travel process, which any returning resident or visitor to Canada may experience.

Why you may be referred for Secondary Services or Inspection

You may be referred for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to:

- verifying your declaration and/or documentation;
- answering more in-depth questions about yourself or presenting your goods for inspection;
- determining your admissibility to Canada or the admissibility of goods in your possession;
- paying duty and taxes;
- undergoing a random inspection;
- reporting currency or monetary instruments equal to or greater than CAN\$10,000, when entering or exiting Canada;
- completing or processing paperwork to support your entry or the entry of your goods to Canada.

Our officers are subject to the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Referrals are not made on any discriminatory basis, such as race, nationality, religion, age or gender.

Our commitment to you

- Respect and courtesy
- Bilingual service
- Fair application of the law
- Accurate information
- Privacy and confidentiality
- Review of our actions and decisions

What to expect

If you are referred for Secondary Services or Inspection, an officer may:

- ask you to provide detailed information about your plans while visiting Canada, or the time you spent abroad;
- make further enquiries, check records, or conduct research to verify your declaration;
- confirm the guardianship of children travelling with you;
- process the payment of duty and taxes;

- inspect your luggage, purse or wallet, electronics (including laptops and cell phones), your vehicle and any additional goods you are transporting;
- conduct a visual examination of your pet or any animals travelling with you;
- ask you to produce evidence of the money you have available to fund your visit to Canada;
- request that you produce receipts to account for expenses you incurred or purchases made abroad; or
- count your cash or travellers cheques, in your presence.

While the majority of travellers we inspect are in compliance with Canadian laws and regulations, we do encounter individuals who are intent on breaking the law and attempt to avoid detection. For this reason, the officer may not always answer specific questions regarding a Secondary Inspection.

What we ask of you

You are obligated by Canadian law to present yourself to an officer, respond truthfully to all questions, accurately report your goods, and, if requested, present your goods for examination, which may include unpacking and repacking the contents of your luggage or vehicle.

Your cooperation and patience is appreciated while you wait and we conduct our duties. To help us get you on your way as quickly as possible, we ask that you:

- treat our employees in a fair, courteous and respectful manner;
- recognize that all travellers and goods are subject to review and examination; and
- be aware of and comply with the legislation, regulations and policies we administer.

Our authorities

We administer more than 90 acts, regulations and international agreements, many on behalf of other federal departments and agencies, the provinces and the territories, including the [Immigration and Refugee Protection Act](#), the [Customs Act](#), and food, plant and animal regulations.

Our officers are authorized by these laws and regulations to conduct Secondary Inspections, including the inspection of travellers and goods, at Canadian ports of entry. While we appreciate that in some cases Secondary Inspection may appear intrusive, it enables us to ensure compliance with Canada's customs, immigration, and food, plant and animal laws and regulations.

Client service improvement

Your feedback is important to us. It has a direct influence on the development and review of our policies and programs.

If you have questions, would like clarification, or have feedback about the service you received, please ask to speak with the supervisor on duty before leaving our service area.

You can also submit your comment, complaint, or compliment in writing by

- completing our online feedback form, which can be found on the Comments, Complaints, and Compliments page of our Web site at www.cbsa.gc.ca; or
- writing to us at:

Canada Border Services Agency
Recourse Directorate
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0L8

For more information on our programs and services, please visit our Web site at www.cbsa.gc.ca, or contact the Border Information Service from within Canada at **1-800-461-9999** (toll-free). From outside of Canada, call 204-983-3500 or 506-636-5064 (long distance charges may apply). Should you require more in-depth information related to a topic, you can speak directly to an officer during regular business hours, Monday to Friday (08:00 - 16:00 local time, except holidays). TTY (for people with hearing or speech impairments) is also available within Canada at **1-866-335-3237**.