



U.S. Customs and Border Protection

CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE AND EXPERTISE TRADE PROCESS DOCUMENT

**RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES FOR IMPORTERS,
BROKERS, AGENTS, OR FILERS**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

BACKGROUND	3
CENTER ORGANIZATION	3
IMPORTER AND FILER RESPONSIBILITIES	4
CENTER TEAM DESIGNATION	4
CARGO RELEASE/ENTRY PROCESS	5
ENTRY SUMMARY PROCESSES	5
Electronic Document Submission	6
Snow Days	6
Revenue Collection	6
Summary Rejection or Cancellation	7
Census Warnings	7
Center Review of Entry Summaries	7
Foreign Trade Zones (FTZ)	7
Vessel Repair Entries	7
United States Virgin Islands (USVI)	7
POST-SUMMARY PROCESSES	7
Issuance of Request for Information and Notice of Action	7
Post-Summary Adjustments	8
Internal Advice Requests	8
Liquidation	8
Protests and Petitions	8
ENFORCEMENT PROCESSES	8
Prior Disclosures	8
APPENDIX	9
81 FR 92978	9

BACKGROUND

The Centers of Excellence and Expertise (Centers) applies U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBPs) trade expertise to a single industry using account-based principles and operational skills to authoritatively facilitate trade. The Centers serve as resources to the broader trade community and to CBP's U.S. government partners. Center personnel are strategically located at the Ports of Entry across the nation and answer questions, provide information and develop comprehensive trade facilitation strategies to address uniformity and compliance concerns.

By redirecting work to the centralized, industry-specific Centers, the Ports of Entry are able to more effectively focus their resources on high-risk shipments and importers that may pose a danger to U.S. border security, harm the health and safety of consumers, or violate U.S. trade laws and intellectual property rights, which are critical to our nation's economic competitiveness. Furthermore, Centers reduce transaction costs for the trade community, facilitate legitimate trade through risk segmentation, increase agency expertise and delivers greater transparency and uniformity of action within a given industry.

Local based processing functions, such as collections and broker licenses continue to be processed at the Ports of Entry by the appropriate Center or Port personnel. However, Centers are fully responsible for post-release processes such as all summary, protest, and post entry amendment/post summary correction reviews for entry summaries nationwide. The Centers also processes prior disclosures within their industry. Further information regarding prior disclosures is available under the Enforcement Processes section of this document.

The Centers are permanent organizations that have regulatory authority through amendments to the Code of Federal Regulations (19 CFR). These amendments ended the Center test; therefore, CBP no longer accepts applications for participation. Importers who were accepted continue to be processed at the account level and must conduct business according to the regulations set forth in 19 CFR. A link to the final Federal Register Notice (FRN) may be found in the appendix section of this document.

CENTER ORGANIZATION

The 10 Centers and their respective industries are:

- Agriculture & Prepared Products, managed by the Miami Field Office, specializes in agriculture, aquaculture, animal products, vegetable products, prepared foods, beverages, alcohol, tobacco or similar industries.
- Apparel, Footwear & Textiles, managed by the San Francisco Field Office, specializes in wearing apparel, footwear, textile mill, textile mill products, or similar industries.
- Automotive & Aerospace, managed by the Detroit Field Office, specializes in automotive, aerospace, or other transportation equipment and related parts industries.
- Base Metals, managed by the Chicago Field Office, specializes in steel, steel mill products, ferrous and nonferrous metal, or similar industries.
- Consumer Products & Mass Merchandising, managed by the Atlanta Field Office, specializes in household goods, consumer products, or similar industries and mass merchandisers of products typically sold for home use.
- Electronics, managed by the Los Angeles Field Office, specializes in information technology, integrated circuits, automated data processing equipment, and consumer electronics.

- Industrial & Manufacturing Materials, managed by the Buffalo Field Office, specializes in plastics, polymers, rubber, leather, wood, paper, stone, glass, precious stones and precious metals, or similar industries.
- Machinery, managed by the Laredo Field Office, specializes in tools, machine tools, production equipment, instruments, or similar industries.
- Petroleum, Natural Gas & Minerals, managed by the Houston Field Office, specializes in petroleum, natural gas, petroleum related products, minerals, and mining industries.
- Pharmaceuticals, Health & Chemicals, managed by the New York Field Office, specializes in pharmaceuticals, health-related equipment, and products of the chemical and allied industries.

IMPORTER AND FILER RESPONSIBILITIES

CBP and the trade community continue to work together as CBP modernizes trade processes and provides for national processing. To realize the benefits of an industry-focused and account-based processing concept, importers are strongly encouraged to make full use of the existing automated tools and systems such as the Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) for transmission of entry summaries, the ACE portal for transmitting supporting documentation and the Document Image System (DIS), where applicable, for transmission of supporting documentation. While the trade is encouraged to use the electronic methods identified above, document submissions to the port location remain available. However, the trade must adhere to the requirements set forth in 19 CFR.

Filers and Custom House Brokers are integral to the trade process and CBP’s transformation efforts. As part of the trade community they play an important role assisting their clients in meeting import and export requirements set forth in 19 CFR, as well as assisting the trade in the most efficient methods and processes for conducting customs business. For post-entry activities filers interact with the appropriate Center on behalf of their importer accounts. This Center Trade Process Document provides operational processes for account-based processing within the Centers.

In January 2017, 19 CFR was updated providing Center Directors with full authority to make certain trade decisions. While the procedures in this document have not significantly changed with the establishment of the Centers, they have allowed CBP to streamline trade processes. This document serves to provide clarifications of the entry summary processes performed by Center trade personnel and also to provide instructions such as methods of communication with the Center, and post summary processes. The trade is required to adhere to all regulatory and statutory requirements.

CENTER TEAM DESIGNATION

The Centers have been assigned unique team codes for identification purposes. These team codes serve as the primary indicator for identifying the Center assignment of an importer of record, a particular entry summary or a post-summary activity. Below are the respective teams for each of the Centers as well as the Field Offices where each is managed from:

Center	Team Codes	Email Address	Managed From
Agriculture & Prepared Products	002, 012, 022, 032, 042, 052, 062, 072, 082, 092	CEE-Agriculture@cbp.dhs.gov	Miami

Apparel, Footwear & Textiles	004, 014, 024, 034, 044, 054, 064, 074, 084, 094	CEE-Apparel@cbp.dhs.gov	San Francisco
Automotive & Aerospace	003, 013, 023, 033, 043, 053, 063, 073, 083, 093	CEE-Automotive@cbp.dhs.gov CEE-Aerospace@cbp.dhs.gov	Detroit
Base Metals	005, 015, 025, 035, 045, 055, 065, 075, 085, 095	CEE-Basemetals@cbp.dhs.gov	Chicago
Consumer Products & Mass Merchandising	008, 018, 028, 038, 048, 058, 068, 078, 088, 098	CEE-Consumer@cbp.dhs.gov	Atlanta
Electronics	007, 017, 027, 037, 047, 057, 067, 077, 087, 097	CEE-Electronics@cbp.dhs.gov	Los Angeles
Industrial & Manufacturing Materials	009, 019, 029, 039, 049, 059, 069, 079, 089, 099	CEE-Industrialmaterials@cbp.dhs.gov	Buffalo
Machinery	010, 020, 030, 040, 050, 060, 070, 080, 090, 180	CEE-Machinery@cbp.dhs.gov	Laredo
Petroleum, Natural Gas & Minerals	006, 016, 026, 036, 046, 056, 066, 076, 086, 096	CEE-Petroleum@cbp.dhs.gov	Houston
Pharmaceutical, Health & Chemicals	001, 011, 021, 031, 041, 051, 061, 071, 081, 091	CEE-Pharmaceuticals@cbp.dhs.gov	New York

Supervisors and managers within each Center are posted on cbp.gov by their respective team number. This directory is available for instances when issues need to be elevated to a supervisor for assistance. The directory can be found at: [Center Directory](#). Another option is to email inquiries directly to the Center email address identified above.

CARGO RELEASE/ENTRY PROCESS

The release and cargo entry procedures remain the same and are processed by the applicable Port of Entry. The trade does not need to change existing shipping patterns and may continue to import through the Ports of Entry as they have in the past, regardless of the Center. The trade should submit any necessary documentation for release purposes to the port and adhere to current regulations. Cargo release issues related to cargo holds and examination authority, including agriculture-related inspections and processing, fall under the authority of the Port Director.

Entry release deletion requests (known as entry release cancellations in ACE) should be sent to the port for processing. Entry summary cancellation requests are separately discussed in the Entry Summary Processes section of this document.

ENTRY SUMMARY PROCESSES

Reconciliation, Drawback, Duty Deferral, Trade Fair and Permanent Exhibition Bond entry summaries should continue to be transmitted to the Automated Commercial System (ACS), until such time as they have been deployed to ACE. The Centers will process applicable entry summaries within their industry regardless of the Port of Entry. All other entry summary types should be electronically transmitted and processed in the Automated Commercial Environment (ACE).

The ACS team number assigned on the entry summary is displayed on the daily statement report which provides visibility regarding the submission of documents. Document submissions may be in an electronic or paper format, regardless of team assignment. ACE filed entry summaries continue to indicate “ACE” on the daily statement report in the team field until ACE Statements is deployed, which would provide for the Center team code on the statement.

Upon receipt of a “docs required” message, an electronic transmission of the necessary documentation should be sent to the ACE portal, the DIS, or submission in paper to CBP at the Port of Entry. For the electronic transmission of documents, the date and time of the document submission out-going message from the filer to CBP, whether by portal or the DIS, serves as the functional equivalent of the physical date and time stamp at the port office. The required documents and the regulatory or statutory timeframes for submission have not changed.

Electronic Document Submission

There are two methods of electronic document submission to the Centers: the trade may submit documentation to the ACE portal or the DIS. The ACE portal remains the means to electronically submit and receive Requests for Information (CBP Form 28), Notices of Action (CBP Form 29), etc. Information concerning which documents may be submitted as well as how documents are transmitted to the DIS may be found at: [DIS info](#). The trade should make every effort to transmit the required documentation electronically to the Center.

Snow Days

Circumstances ranging from system transmission issues to natural disasters, which close a particular port are known as “snow days.” Since revenue processing is conducted at the Ports of Entry, snow days do not impact the Centers for collection purposes. Center personnel monitor snow days to ensure that liquidated damages are not issued for late files. Filers may communicate with the Center if a snow day arises.

The trade should continue to file Electronic Invoice Program/Remote Location Filing (EIP/RLF) entry summaries as usual, which will be processed by the appropriate Center.

Revenue Collection

The trade should submit payments to the respective Port of Entry for all entry/entry summaries, Non-Automated Broker Interface (ABI) entry summaries, ABI non-statement (ABI/N) and ABI Statement (ABI/S). Those that use Periodic Monthly Statement processes may continue to do so. Any request for a “docs required” should be transmitted electronically to the Center or in paper at the Port of Entry. Documents transmitted electronically require a cashier/record copy of the entry summary (or equivalent) along with the check and/or statement to be submitted to the Port of Entry for collection. Paper Automated Clearing House (ACH) importer statement copies do not need to be submitted to the Port.

All entry summaries identified with ABI non-statement (ABI/N) in block 2 of the CBP Form 7501 will be placed into CBP status. Entry summaries that have zero money due should be submitted in paper at the Port of Entry where they will be accepted into CBP status. For entry summaries where money is due, the payment along with the cashier copy of the entry summary (or equivalent) should be submitted at the Port of Entry for collection processing. The entry summary should be transmitted electronically to the ACE portal or the DIS, or in paper at the port for review and processing.

Statements that are paid using ACH (ABI/A), the statement must be submitted to the Port of Entry if there is a documents required message received. Any entry summary that receives a documents required message must be sent electronically to the ACE portal or the DIS, or in paper at the Port of Entry. However, if all summaries are paperless and there is no money due, then the statement does not need to be submitted.

Revenue collection continues to be handled at the port location by Center or Port personnel. Resolution of discrepancies in the amount of monies presented and/or cashier documents as well as assessment and collection of liquidated damages continue to be handled by the Entry Units.

Summary Rejection or Cancellation

If an entry summary is rejected, the rejection notice will be issued by the Center as they are performing the review and processing of the entry summary. However, rejections for collections reasons, i.e., resolution of discrepancies in the amount of monies presented and/or cashier documents mentioned above, will continue to be issued by the Entry Units. The trade should continue to submit requests for entry summary cancellations electronically to the DIS or submit the requests in paper at the port.

Census Warnings

If a Census reject occurs for an ACS entry summary for Drawback, Duty Deferral or Reconciliation entry summaries, the entry summary package including the invoices and the census resolution form must be electronically transmitted to the DIS or the ACE portal in order to resolve the Census issue. The timeframes concerning the submission of these documents remain the same.

Center Review of Entry Summaries

Reconciliation, Permanent Exhibition under Bond (PEB) and Trade Fair entry summaries are not automated in ACE, and should continue to be submitted in paper at the port.

All other entry summary types have been deployed in ACE and will be processed by the Centers. Responses to document requests should be transmitted electronically to the ACE portal or the DIS, or submitted in paper at the port. Responses to CBP Form 28 and CBP Form 29 should be provided either in paper at the Port of Entry or to the ACE portal.

Foreign Trade Zones (FTZ)

Ports continue to retain existing responsibilities involving the supervision of Foreign Trade Zones (FTZ), as required by 19 CFR Part 146 and 15 CFR Part 4. FTZ Compliance Reviews continue to be conducted by port personnel, as per established procedures. Enforcement actions involving the trade utilizing an FTZ will be administered by the ports with coordination with the Center, such as the issuance of liquidated damages or penalty actions.

Vessel Repair Entries

Vessel Repair entries remain the responsibility of the Vessel Repair Unit.

United States Virgin Islands (USVI)

Entry summaries filed at U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) Ports of Entry should continue to be filed accordingly. Entry summaries filed at USVI ports have not been transitioned to the Centers and will continue to be processed by the Port of Entry as usual.

POST-SUMMARY PROCESSES

Issuance of Request for Information and Notice of Action

The trade community will receive Requests for Information (CBP Form 28) and Notices of Action (CBP Form 29) from their respective Center. The trade is responsible for timely responding to a request for information directly to the Center either in paper at the Port of Entry or to the ACE portal. Until a fully automated method is developed, the Centers will send courtesy copies by mail or as an attachment to an email to the broker contact listed in the importer's portal account.

Post-Summary Adjustments

Post-Summary Corrections

The trade should transmit Post-Summary Corrections (PSCs) as they normally do through ABI, and the Center will process accordingly. Once a PSC is transmitted to ACE and documents are required, the documents should be electronically transmitted to the ACE portal or the DIS. If the trade submits payment for a PSC, the payment along with the first page of the corrected copy CBP Form 7501 or the CBP Form 7501A, must be presented to the Port of Entry for collection of the money.

Post-Entry Amendments

The trade may submit Post-Entry Amendment (PEA) paperwork in paper at the Port of Entry or to the Center to the DIS for ACS entry summaries. The Center reviews and processes PEAs per current procedures. Payment resulting from a PEA should be presented to the Port of Entry, along with the first page of the corrected copy of the CBP Form 7501 or the CBP Form 7501A for collection of the money; otherwise, a bill will be issued.

Internal Advice Requests

The trade should submit a request for internal advice to the appropriate Center. The Center will then coordinate with the Office of Trade, Regulations and Rulings. Once the internal advice request is answered, the Center will share the decision with the requestor.

Liquidation

The bulletin notice of liquidation (CBP Form 4333) is uploaded to CBP's website at: [CBP Bulletin Notice](#).

Protests and Petitions

The trade should file protests electronically to the ACE Protest Module. The Center will process the protests in accordance with current procedures. Protests handled by CBP's Office of Trade, Regulations & Rulings, such as requests for further reviews and requests to void the denial of the protest, remain with Regulations and Rulings.

If the trade chooses not to file a protest electronically to the ACE protest module, the paper protest should be submitted to the Port of Entry along with all supporting documentation. The protest information will be entered into the ACE protest module and a copy of the numbered protest will be returned to the trade once the protest number is assigned. The Center will process the protest, i.e., review, decisions, etc. Additional information concerning ACE protests is available at: [ACE Protests](#)

ENFORCEMENT PROCESSES

Enforcement actions such as notices of detention and seizure continue to be issued by CBP's Fines, Penalties and Forfeitures Office (FP&F) in close collaboration with the Center. The local FP&F Office, where the liquidated damage claim or penalty was issued will handle case adjudication with the assistance from the Center personnel, who may provide insight into an industry, and importer's history, etc. The trade should respond to enforcement FP&F actions to the Port of Entry from which they originated.

Prior Disclosures

The trade may submit their prior disclosure to either a Port or a Center. It is recommended that filers only send the prior disclosure to one location. CBP has internal procedures to route the prior disclosure to the proper Center team for collaboration, review and action with FP&F. Requirements concerning the filing of a prior disclosure, as well as the timeframes for filing remain the same.

APPENDIX

Below is a link to the Federal Register Notice implementing the regulatory amendments that transfer certain trade authority from Port Directors to Center Directors.

81 FR 92978

<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-12-20/pdf/2016-29719.pdf>