Importing and exporting cannabis

Guide for cannabis licence holders under the *Cannabis Regulations* on how to apply for an import or export permit in the Cannabis Tracking and Licensing System (CTLS).

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About this guide

This document provides guidance to licence holders based on the *Cannabis Act* (the Act) and *Cannabis Regulations* (the Regulations). You will find information on:

- how to obtain an import or export permit for cannabis
- how to manage a permit
- how to request a permit change
- reporting requirements
- permit application refusals

Who this guide is for

Use the content in this guide to apply for an import or export permit for:

- micro-cultivation, nursery and standard cultivation licences
- micro-processing and standard processing licences
- sale for medical purposes licences
- analytical testing licences
- research licences
- cannabis drug licences

This guide doesn't cover industrial hemp licences.

Foreword and disclaimer

Foreword

The Act sets out that a licence holder must file an import or export permit application in the form and manner set by the Minister of Health. The application must include all the information required. This guide to importing and exporting cannabis sets out:

- the application process, including the requirements of a permit application
- the information that the licence holder must submit

Under the Act, Health Canada may require more information to process your permit application. If you don't submit the information requested, the Minister may **refuse to consider your application**.

Disclaimer

Read these pages along with the Act and the Regulations. If there are differences between these pages and the legislation, the legislation is correct. If there are differences between the CTLS and these pages, these pages are correct.

Health Canada's CTLS is a secure web portal and a single point of access for permit application submissions. You may access the CTLS directly at Health Canada's secure web portal. You should become familiar with this system and refer to the CTLS getting started guide for more information.

What can be imported or exported

Health Canada will only issue import and export permits for medical or scientific purposes.

You may apply for a permit to import or export any type of cannabis:

- plants and seeds
- dried and fresh
- edible
- topical
- extracts
- drug containing cannabis
- synthesized phyto-cannabinoid

Before issuing a permit, we consider if:

- Canada would be following its obligations under international treaties
- the application is consistent with the Act and Regulations
- the cannabis will be used solely for medical or scientific purposes
- the country of final destination of the export has issued an import permit
- there are risks to public health given that imported cannabis may not subject to the same strict production standards or Health Canada inspections
- there are risks to public safety, including the risk of diversion
- the import or export of a drug containing cannabis meets the requirements of the *Food and Drugs Act*

Import and export of cannabis by licence holders under the Cannabis Regulations

Process for permit application

The following steps outline what you need to do to get an import or export permit. A permit is required for each shipment, so you'll need to go through these steps for each permit application.

- Step 1: Prepare your information
- Step 2: Create a permit application in the CTLS
- Step 3: Submit your application
  - Make changes to your application
  - Withdraw your application
- Step 4: Pay your application fee, if applicable
- Step 5: Health Canada reviews your application and makes a final decision
- Step 6: After getting your import or export permit

Important: Certain licence holders need to pay a fee to apply for an import or export permit. Payment doesn't guarantee Health Canada will issue your permit. Fees are non-refundable. You need to pay the fee before we start to process your permit application. Import or export application fees apply to:

- micro-cultivation, nursery and standard cultivation licences
- micro-processing and standard processing licences
- sale for medical purposes licences

Step 1: Prepare your information

You need a permit for each shipment, whether it consists of 1 or more cannabis type (class of product). This permit can only be used once.

Before applying, you must know the following information about your shipment:

- type of cannabis being received or shipped
- quantity of cannabis (per unit and total volume of the shipment)
- THC and CBD concentrations of the shipment (per unit and total volume of the shipment)
- Whether the cannabis is for medical or scientific purpose
- modes of transportation used
- foreign importing or exporting country
- address of the port of entry for imports and the port of exit for exports, in Canada
- country of transit or trans-shipment, if applicable
- any country where the shipment will transit between Canada and the final destination
- for export permits:
  - foreign address of the customs office, sufferance warehouse or bonded warehouse that will receive the shipment, if applicable
  - documents required by the country of origin, such as an import permit or a non-objection letter issued by foreign competent authority, if applicable

Important: When applying for an export permit, the need for a foreign import permit is determined based on whether the cannabis is controlled by the importing country. Contact the appropriate foreign authority to confirm their requirements.

Step 2: Create a permit application

Important: Only the responsible person or alternate responsible person may submit a permit application in the CTLS.

All applications are reviewed by Health Canada against the application requirements outlined in this guide. Permits may be issued once you meet all applicable requirements.

To create an import or export permit application, follow these steps:

1. In the CTLS, select "Licensing" using the left-hand navigation bar.
2. Select "Licence applications".
3. Select "New licence application".
4. Select "Import/Export permit" as the licence class.

Make sure you fill out all the mandatory fields for each section of the application. We may require more information based on the cannabis class (type) being imported or exported.

Required information

Licence holder

Select your licence ownership:

- individual
- corporation
- academic institution or research centre
- partnership or cooperative

Under "Submitted by/Requested by", specify the name of the responsible person or alternate responsible person for your licence.

Under "Licence ID", select the cannabis licence under which you're applying for a permit.

Mailing address and site details

The information is filled automatically from your licence profile. Simply verify that it's correct.

Transit details

Submit information on:

- name of importer or exporter
- importer or exporter address details
- permit issued by importing country, if applicable
- address of the port of entry for imports and the port of exit for exports, in Canada
- country of transit or trans-shipment, if applicable
- For exports: the address of the customs office, sufferance warehouse or bonded warehouse that will receive the shipment, if applicable
- modes of transportation used

Upload documents relevant to your transit details.

Shipment details

Note: The CTLS only allows you to have up to 5 different types or batches of cannabis in 1 shipment. If you would like to add more, create a document with the relevant information and submit it in the "Supporting documents" section.

Table 1. Mandatory fields based on cannabis type (class)

Product class details	Plants	Seeds	Dried cannabis	Fresh cannabis	Extracts	Edible	Topicals	Drugs containing cannabis	Synthesized phyto-cannabinoids
Product form	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required
Producer	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required
Brand name	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required
Package or container type	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required
Number of units	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required
Volume per unit	Not required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required
Total volume	Not required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required
Concentration and percentage of THC and CBD	Not required	Not required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required
Total quantity of THC and CBD	Not required	Not required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required

Mandatory fields are identified for all cannabis types/classes. Depending on the cannabis type/class, you'll need to submit more information. Table 1 summarizes the fields that are mandatory based on the cannabis type/class selected.

Submit the information about:

- product type (class)
- product form
  - for plants: select other and write "plants"
  - for seeds: select other and write "seeds"
- product producer
- brand name, if applicable
  - If the product doesn't have a brand name, indicate "N/A"
- package or container type
- number of units
- volume per unit and its unit of measure
  - for plants: leave this field blank
- total volume for this cannabis product and its unit of measure

Click "Save" at the bottom of the page to make the next 2 sections active.

Concentration and percentage w/w (THC and CBD)

For plants and seeds: You don't need to fill out this section.

Submit the following information in this section:

- THC %
- THC mg/g or mg/ml
- CBD %
- CBD mg/g or mg/ml

For specific cannabinoids, submit this additional information:

- other cannabinoid %
- other cannabinoid mg/g or mg/ml

If your cannabis doesn't contain any THC or CBD, you need to indicate 0.

Total quantity of shipment (THC and CBD)

Submit the total amount of THC and CBD in grams per cannabis class.

If your cannabis doesn't contain any THC or CBC, you need to indicate 0.

Click "Save & Add new".

If you have more than 1 type/class or product in your shipment, repeat the "Shipment details" section for each.

Step 3: Submit your application

Make sure your permit application is accurate and reflects your intended activities with cannabis. After submitting, you may only make minor changes without having to withdraw and resubmit your application. Any changes can delay the processing time.

You won't be able to view the details of the application once it's submitted. You may want to keep track of the submitted information.

Changes to your application

Once you submit your application, you can't make further changes in the CTLS. If a change is required, email import-export-cannabis-importation-exportation@hc-sc.gc.ca. Use the subject line "Changes to APP #". Include information on the change you want to make. Health Canada will let you know if it's possible and the next steps.

Withdrawing an application

You may withdraw your permit application at any time during the process. To withdraw, click on the delete button on the "Licence application" page in the CTLS. You can't reverse this action. Health Canada won't return or transfer information and documents to a new application.

Important: If you've already paid your fee, it isn't reimbursable. If you create a new permit application later, you **will** have to pay another transactional fee.

Step 4: Pay your fee, if applicable

If you have to pay fees, Health Canada will invoice you for the import or export permit fee. You'll need to pay your fees in full and on time.

Important: Health Canada can only begin processing the permit application after you've paid your fee.

After you've paid your fees, your permit application status will change to **"In progress"**. At this point, Health Canada begins the review processes.

Payment doesn't guarantee that a permit will be issued. All fees are non-refundable.

Refer to How to pay your fees for more information on the possible payment methods.

For the following licences, the application will automatically move to the review process:

- analytical testing licences
- research licences
- cannabis drug licences

Step 5: Health Canada processes your information

After you've submitted your permit application in the CTLS, Health Canada will process your information as follows.

Review process

Our service standard for issuing a decision is 30 business days or 6 weeks after Health Canada receives your payment, if applicable. This doesn't include the time spent waiting for you to respond to our information requests.

Requests for more information

It's your responsibility to meet all the permit application requirements. If what you've submitted in your application is unclear or doesn't show how it meets the requirements, we may ask you to submit more information.

The CTLS status for your permit application will change to "**Pending information**" during this time.

We will send official communications and requests for more information to the responsible person at the email address entered in the CTLS. You generally need to respond within 7 days.

When you respond to a request for more information:

- reply to all sections of the request for more information and submit complete answers
- don't resubmit a revised version of the original information you've submitted unless that's what you were asked to do

Give specific answers to the questions asked and include as many details as possible. Incomplete answers or information may lead to a delay in processing or a refusal to consider an application.

Health Canada makes a final decision

Once we have reviewed all of your submitted information, we'll make a final decision. If we issue the permit, we'll email the electronic version of the permit to the responsible person.

Refusals

We may refuse to consider an application if you don't send the necessary information in response to a **request for more information**. We may also refuse your application for the reasons in subsection 62(7) of the *Cannabis Act* and section 206 and section 215 of the Regulations.

In these cases, we'll send a notice of intent to refuse. It will explain the reasons for refusal and give you a timeframe to respond, after which Health Canada will decide.

If we decide to refuse your permit application, we'll send you a notice of refusal and close your application.

If you wish to submit a new permit application, we'll process it. However, you'll have to re-submit all the required information. What you've submitted before won't be transferred to your new application. You'll also have to pay the import or export permit fee again, if applicable.

After getting your permit

Getting started on your import or export

A permit is valid for up to a maximum of 6 months or until the earliest of the date on which the:

- shipment is imported or exported
- permit expires or is revoked
- licence expires or is revoked
- import or export permit is revoked by the competent authority of the country of export or import pertaining to the shipment

Permits allow you to conduct the following to the extent necessary to import or export the shipment of cannabis within your authorized activities.

- For import:
  - possess
  - transfer
  - transport
  - send
  - deliver
- For export:
  - possess
  - transfer
  - transport
  - send
  - deliver
  - sell

If you're exporting plants, you'll need a phytosanitary certificate issued by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

Modifying your permit

Note, only active permits can be modified. Once it has expired, no changes can be made.

You can submit some types of changes to a valid permit through the CTLS. Only your responsible person or their alternate can submit the change request. You can only have 1 active or draft request per permit at a time.

To submit a permit change request in the CTLS:

1. Under "Licensing", select "Licences" in the left-hand navigation bar.
2. Beside the permit for which you would like to submit the change request, select "Manage" (blue gear icon) in the "Actions" column.
3. Click "Create licence change" and select the applicable type of "Licence change":
   - transit details
   - shipment details
   - expiry date extension for an import or export permit
4. Click "Save and next".

You can edit a draft change request by selecting the "Edit" button.

Once created, the change request will automatically be populated with the information that's currently in the CTLS. You can now edit the information in the section you selected.

For any change request, submit a document containing the reason for the change in the "Supporting documents" section. Review any previously uploaded documents to ensure that all information is correct and up to date.

Transit details

You can modify the:

- address of the customs office
- modes of transportation used
- country of transit or trans-shipment
- Canadian port of exit or entry

Shipment details

To modify quantity, submit all updated information:

- number of units
- volume for this cannabis
- quantity of THC and CBD
- total volume for the entire shipment
- total quantity of THC and CBD for the entire shipment

For export, you can only modify the quantity and concentrations if the amount is equal to or lower than what was authorized on the accompanying import permit.

Expiry date extension for an import or export permit

You can request to modify the expiry date if:

- the associated import permit is still valid
- a new import permit is provided, if applicable
- your cannabis licence was renewed and has a new expiry date.

Health Canada will issue permits for a maximum of 6 months.

Your change request needs to be accurate and reflect your intended activities with cannabis. After submitting, you won't be able to view the details of the application once it's submitted. You may want to keep track of the submitted information.

Withdrawing a change request

You can withdraw a change request at any time. On the "Licensing page", beside the permit you'd like to withdraw, select "Withdraw".

Reporting requirements

You must confirm shipment details within 15 days of importing or exporting. You may need to submit supporting documentation to provide further information. The person who submitted the original permit application or a report on your licence can submit the confirmation. Once submitted, you won't be able to view, change or withdraw it in the CTLS.

To submit your report in the CTLS:

1. Under "Reporting", select "Shipment endorsements" in the left-hand navigation bar.
2. Select "New shipment endorsement" and then the applicable permit.
3. Review the information and enter the shipment release date. If you need to modify information, click "Edit" (green pencil icon).
4. Click "Save and continue" to submit.

If you have an outstanding confirmation of shipment, you may not be able to submit a new permit application.

If you have questions or concerns about the shipment detail confirmation, email import-export-cannabis-importation-exportation@hc-sc.gc.ca. Use the subject line "Submitted confirmation for IMP # or EXP #".

If your permit isn't used or expires

If you don't use your permit, you must submit a confirmation and enter a value of "0" in the CTLS. You must provide this information within 15 days of the permit expiring.

Contact us

For questions about a specific permit application, email import-export-cannabis-importation-exportation@hc-sc.gc.ca. Use the subject line "Questions about APP #".

For questions about the CTLS, email ctls-sscdl@hc-sc.gc.ca.

For questions about your cannabis licence, email licensing-cannabis-licences@hc-sc.gc.ca.

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