



FedEx Regulatory Alerts & Updates

Regulatory Alert: Shipping Gifts to the U.S. via FedEx Express 2020

October 29, 2020

Background

The U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) defines “bona-fide gift” as an article formerly owned by a donor who gave it outright in its entirety to the recipient without compensation or promise of compensation. CBP allows bona-fide gifts to be entered and released duty free, provided they qualify as gifts for the purposes of Customs processing:

- Must be from an individual to an individual or from a company to an individual.
- Note - Shipments from business to business are considered as commercial shipments, not gifts.
- Valued at \$100 USD or less per recipient per day. Gifts exported from the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam and American Samoa cannot exceed \$200 USD per recipient per day.
- Clearly marked as ‘gift’ on the outside of the box.

Required Documentation

- Air waybill and commercial invoice must indicate that the shipment is an unsolicited gift, not for resale.
 - Complete name, address and phone number of both the shipper and the consignee.
 - Detailed description of the items, including if the item is homemade or store-bought (i.e. homemade walnut fudge for personal consumption; not for resale).
 - Consolidated gift shipments (gifts for more than one person consolidated in the same shipment) addressed to one consignee will be treated as one importation. The commercial invoice must list the names of each individual receiving the gift, each individual’s gift item(s) and the value of each item.
 - Example: Ellen Rainey – 2 pounds of store bought nut mix in an enclosed tin, \$35 USD.
 - Example: Joshua Rainey – One 100% cotton NHL jersey, total value \$90 USD.
- Important** – If any single gift article exceeds the gift allowance, the entire shipment will be dutiable.

Special Requirements - Food

- Perishable foodstuffs are prohibited from FedEx International Express Service.
- Non-Perishable food items when homemade or store-bought and shipped from one individual to another individual valued under \$200 USD do **not** require submission of FDA Prior Notice.

Content Intended for FedEx Express Customers Only

- Specialty baskets and items ordered through an online commercial establishment and sent to an individual require submission of Prior Notice to the FDA if a company name is shown anywhere on the air waybill.
- If shipped from person to person, the air waybill and commercial invoice must clearly show the shipper and consignee as an individual.
- Shipments from a business to an individual, individual to a business or business to business will require the FDA Prior Notice regardless of value.

Special Requirements - Other

- Quota limitations on textiles and apparel items do **not** apply to gift shipments.
- Alcoholic Beverages, Cigars and Cigarettes from an individual to an individual are prohibited from FedEx International Express Service. Cuban cigars are prohibited entry into the U.S..
- Perfumes containing alcohol are excluded from the gift provision and require formal entry and may be subject to duty/tax assessment.
- Personal and Household effect articles purchased solely for the personal use of an individual and shipped unaccompanied will be entered under separate customs provisions, not as a gift.
- Articles originating from wildlife or containing wildlife parts may incur Fish & Wildlife clearance and fees. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service defines “wildlife” as “any living or dead wild animal, its parts, and products made from it. Wildlife not only includes mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish but also invertebrates such as insects, crustaceans, arthropods, and coelenterates. Examples of “products made from wildlife” might include shirts with buttons made of ivory or a purse or belt made of skin from a protected animal species.

Non-compliance Ramifications

- Potential service delays
- Duty/tax may be assessed if not declared as gift or eligible for processing under gift provisions

References

19 CFR 10.152 Bona-fide Gifts

<https://ecfr.io/Title-19/Section-10.152>

19 CFR 10.153 Conditions for Exemption

<https://ecfr.io/Title-19/Section-10.153>

FDA Prior Notice Policy for Sending Gifts

<https://www.fda.gov/food/importing-food-products-united-states/prior-notice-policy-sending-gifts-your-friends-and-family>

Importing Your Commercial Import Shipment (Fish & Wildlife)

<https://www.fws.gov/le/commercial-wildlife-shipment.html>

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