

**GRAPEVINE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
CERTIFICATE OF ORIGIN
INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS**

Certificate of Origin Policy

The Grapevine Chamber of Commerce has revised its policy on the issuance of Certificates of Origin effective August 1, 2009.

The changes are as follows:

1. The Certificate of Origin must be filled out completely and notarized before being presented to the Grapevine Chamber of Commerce.
2. An Affidavit of Origin and Indemnification Agreement must be signed by a company officer and presented to the Grapevine Chamber of Commerce. For those businesses that are members of the Chamber of Commerce, this document can be signed yearly and will be kept on file with the membership investment records. For a non-member business, an Affidavit of Origin and Indemnification agreement must accompany each Certificate of Origin. This document must be provided to the Chamber before a Certificate of Origin will be issued.
3. There will be a fee of \$10 per certificate (or per use of stamp) for Chamber members and \$25 for non-members. For bulk users, an annual fee of \$300 for Grapevine Chamber member businesses or \$600 for non-Chamber businesses is available. Any time a business asks for an invoice to receive a stamp that will be charged at the same rate as the certificate.

Please adhere to the following steps to ensure timely processing of your Certificates of Origin:

1. Make sure you are filling out the proper Certificates of Origin for the country to which you are exporting.
2. Make sure you fill out the Certificate completely and accurately.
3. Make sure that the product information listed is verbatim to what is on the invoice. Do not leave off product numbers, quantities, or descriptions.
4. Do not alter the Certificate in any way.
5. Have the Certificate notarized before having the Chamber sign it.
6. Do not wait until the day of your shipment to bring in your certificate.
7. Check with the Chamber office anytime during or near the holidays to confirm holiday hours.

The Chamber staff member has the right of refusal for any document that they feel does not meet the Grapevine Chamber's guidelines.

There are other Chambers that have provided this service in the past. If you are not able to meet the Grapevine Chamber of Commerce requirements, please feel free to contact your local Chamber of Commerce or one of the following:

Cleburne – Members Only
Hurst-Euless-Bedford (HEB)
Mesquite
McKinney

Denton
Hillsboro
Plano
Richardson

DeSoto
Irving
Rockwall
Oak Cliff

Duncanville
Longview
Waxahachie

Certificate of Origin Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why is the Chamber implementing these revisions?

A: Our policy changes were promoted by lawsuits incurred by other Chambers in the U.S. that issued Certificates of Origin that accompanied shipments where the exporter of record misrepresented the actual origin of the materials or when a Chamber's Certificate of Origin was falsified. These cases resulted in fines, monetary settlements, travel expenses and associated liability insurance premiums, causing all Chambers to review existing policies. These changes were reviewed and directed by a member attorney.

Q: Why do I need a Certificate of Origin to ship my product?

A: There are a number of reasons why governments require a Certificate of Origin. The United States has numerous trade agreements with many foreign countries, and under the terms of many of these agreements, American products receive lower tariff rates. The foreign customs office verifies product qualifications for these preferential duty rates by accompanying Certificates of Origin. Also, some countries have banned certain products from countries that have been caught dumping. The Certificate of Origin helps prove that the product is allowed into that particular country.

Q: What are the differences in Certificates of Origin?

A: There are several types of Certificates of Origin. The descriptions are as follows:

- 1) **General Certificate of Origin:** This form is used for almost all exports. There are several versions available because the government has updated the form on numerous occasions, but older versions are still valid. Also, a number of private companies produce the forms and they each have slightly different formats.
- 2) **NAFTA Certificates of Origin:** This form is used only for products that are made in the U.S., and are being shipped into Mexico or Canada. The form must be included with the shipment or else the manufacturer will have to pay the tariffs and duties imposed on non-NAFTA countries. It can be used only for goods produced in the U.S., and not just passing through from another country. The chamber is not required to sign this form.
- 3) **Mexican Certificate of Origin:** This form differs from the NAFTA form as its purpose is to prevent Asian textiles and footwear from being dumped into Mexico via the U.S. The law took effect September 15, 1994, and affects foreign origin goods entering Mexico from the U.S. If the goods being shipped are from textile or footwear industries, the Mexican Consulate must notarize the form. If the products are from any other industry, only the shipper must sign the form. The Chamber is not required to sign this form.
- 4) **Israeli Certificate of Origin:** This form is a result of a trade agreement between Israel and the United States, which requires the use of this form for all American goods shipped into Israel, if the shipper wishes to take advantage of the tariff and duty breaks allowed to U.S. products under the terms of the agreement. The Chamber of Commerce must sign these forms.
- 5) **Japanese Certificate of Origin:** This form is required only if exported goods have been assigned preferential tax treatment under GATT. The Chamber of Commerce must sign these forms.
- 6) **South African Certificates of Origin:** This form is required when the goods qualify for a lower rate of duty or when the goods are liable to antidumping or countervailing duty. The Chamber of Commerce is usually required to sign these forms.
- 7) **Turkey Certificates of Origin:** This form is required when the goods qualify for a lower rate of duty or when the goods are liable to antidumping or countervailing duty. The Chamber of Commerce is usually required to sign these forms.

Q: Why is the Chamber of Commerce in the business of signing Certificates of Origin?

A: Through world trade agreements on an international level, it has been determined and agreed upon by all countries that local Chambers of Commerce are reputable, and are in the best position to know the local companies and their product lines. In several other countries, Chamber of Commerce membership is a requirement of doing business, and is not voluntary.

Q: Does the Certificate have to be notarized?

A: All certificates, with the exception of the NAFTA Certificate, require a notary signature and stamp. The Grapevine Chamber of Commerce now requires that the Certificate be notarized before we sign it. Also, the company employee named at the top of the Certificate is the person who must sign the Certificate in front of the notary.