



HM Revenue & Customs

The Customs Declaration Service – act now to avoid future disruption.

Dear customer,

All businesses should now move all their export declarations from our Customs Handling of Import and Export Freight (CHIEF) system to the Customs Declaration Service (CDS).

Even if you won't be submitting export declarations in the coming months, you still need to take action to make sure you can export in future.

You have until Tuesday 4 June 2024 to move to the CDS. After this date, unless you have been granted permission by HMRC, you will no longer be able to submit new customs declarations through CHIEF. With less than one month to go, we recommend you prepare for making export declarations on the CDS as soon as possible.

What you need to do

If you have not already done so, you must follow the steps within our [declarant checklist for CDS exports](#). This includes:

1. [Apply for an Economic Operator Registration and Identification \(EORI\) number](#) beginning with 'GB'.
2. [Subscribe to the Customs Declaration Service](#) so you will be able to submit export declarations from your software to the Customs Declaration Service. If you have already subscribed to CDS for imports, you do not need to subscribe again to CDS for exports.
3. Contact the software provider you will be using to submit your export declarations through CDS to see if:
 - you can authorise your software so that you are ready to submit export declarations through CDS; and
 - start using their software to access the free [Trader Dress Rehearsal](#).
4. If you do not have a software provider, you can find details of [software providers providing CDS exports software](#). You can also choose to use the new free-to-use HMRC '[Make and Manage an Export Declaration Online](#)' service to submit declarations yourself.
5. Once you are comfortable submitting export declarations in the Trader Dress Rehearsal Service you should then start submitting all your export declarations through CDS.

If you do not submit export declarations regularly, you may prefer to use the new HMRC '[Make and Manage an Export Declaration Online](#)' service. This GOV.UK service is free-to-use and will replace the NESweb service currently used by small and medium sized businesses to submit export declarations through CHIEF.

Alternatively, you can hire a [person or business to complete customs declarations](#) on your behalf.

Limited exceptions process now available

You can apply for a limited month-long exception period if you are unable to move to the CDS by 4 June 2024. An exception will only be granted if you can't move your export declarations to the CDS due to a HMRC IT issue that is stopping your migration and won't be resolved in time for you to migrate by 4 June. You will not be granted an exception for any other reason. For example, we will not consider needing more time for business preparations or difficulty using a workaround.

If you are confident your migration to the CDS is currently blocked due to a HMRC IT issue, you can apply for an exception. To apply for an exception, you will need to send an email with the following information to chiefextension@hmrc.gov.uk.

You will need to provide:

- the name of your business
- your contact details – including your name and phone number
- your business' EORI number
- the reason you are applying for an exception
- confirmation you have tried to migrate and the reason this was unsuccessful - including any references or notifications received from HMRC
- any other relevant supporting information – including any previous emails from HMRC relating to the HMRC IT issue that is blocking your migration

Applications should be submitted as soon as possible to ensure your application can be assessed before the 4 June 2024 deadline. If you are granted an exception, you will have until 4 July 2024 to move all your export declarations to the CDS. By providing these details, you consent to HMRC retaining this information and using it for a reasonable period.

If your move to the CDS is not blocked by an existing HMRC IT issue, but other factors are impacting your ability to be ready for 4 June 2024, please email chiefextension@hmrc.gov.uk for further help and support.

Help and support

You can find further guidance and resources to help you prepare for your move to the CDS on the [CDS guidance pages](#) on GOV.UK and in the supporting [CDS communications pack](#). This includes:

- [a declarant checklist for CDS exports](#) – providing a step-by-step guide to the key actions you will need to take.
- [example declarations for exports from Great Britain to the rest of the world](#) - to help you complete your CDS export declarations.
- [CDS customs clearance instructions for exports videos](#) – taking you through the key steps required to complete an export declaration.
- [CDS known error workarounds](#) – please check this document for details of ongoing workarounds to help you submit customs clearance requests or customs declarations through the CDS.

We also recommend that you use the free [Trader Dress Rehearsal service \(TDR\)](#) which allows you to practice submitting CDS export declarations in a safe test environment. People who use this service are more successful in submitting live declarations through the CDS.

Further information

If you have any questions, including help with subscribing to the CDS and moving your exports [please contact us using one of these channels](#), or speak to your Account Manager or Customer Compliance Manager if you have one.

You can also [report a problem when using the CDS](#) on GOV.UK. If your problem is considered urgent, you'll receive a response within two hours. All other problems will be responded to within 24 hours.

We will continue to provide information and guidance to support your business for making export declarations through the CDS. To receive updates and notifications about the CDS, please make sure we have your [preferred email address](#).

Yours faithfully,

HM Revenue & Customs