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International Cruise (Sea) Passenger Fee

Last Modified:

The AQI program inspects international cruise vessels and their passengers arriving from outside the customs territory of the United States.

International cruise passenger fee regulations are listed in [7 CFR 354.3\(f\)](#).

The Cost and What It Covers

The current international cruise passenger fee is **\$1.68** ([7 CFR 354.3\(f\)](#)). This fee covers the direct and indirect costs to inspect international cruise vessels and their passengers, including:

- Analyzing incoming passengers before arrival
- Inspecting or preclearing passengers for agricultural products
- Inspecting passenger baggage using U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agriculture canines and specialized nonintrusive inspection equipment
- Inspecting the ship to ensure it is free of contaminants, prohibited articles, or invasive pests
- Inspecting the ship's stores to ensure there are no prohibited items or that any prohibited items are properly safeguarded

- Monitoring the storage and removal of the ship's regulated international garbage to ensure compliance with all regulatory requirements

Exemptions

Some categories of passengers are exempt from paying an AQI user fee (see [7 CFR 354.3\(f\)\(2\)](#)).

Paying the Fee

The ticket or travel document issuer is responsible for collecting and remitting the appropriate international cruise passenger user fees as described in [7 CFR 354.3\(f\)](#). APHIS provides a [Remittance Worksheet](#) to assist with this process. APHIS personnel run periodic audits to verify compliance.

How To Set Up a Payment Account

To set up a payment account with APHIS' Financial Management Division, send a completed [New Account Packet - Cruise Lines](#) to the location indicated on the worksheet.

Companies need a separate APHIS account for each user fee type, such as international air passenger, treatment monitoring, reimbursable overtime, and other types.

Refunds

As specified in [7 CFR 354.3\(f\)\(5\)\(ii\)](#), remitters may take a "refund" of collected user fees, in conjunction with unused tickets or travel documents, by netting the amount against the next remittance. Remitters must note on their documentation that they are taking a refund and provide documentation for passengers receiving refunds directly from the remitter. An [Account Credit Request Worksheet](#) is available to help with this process.

Additionally, account holders may request in writing a refund due to overpayment. You must include proof that any applicable exemption criteria were met and that you paid the user fee(s). The request should include the following:

- Company name, address, and phone number
- Contact person
- Taxpayer identification number (TIN)
- Carrier name (if applicable)
- All certified supporting documentation

Send inquiries and refund requests to APHIS' Accounts Receivable Team at ABSHelpline@usda.gov. The team will review each refund request on a case-by-case basis. Customers should receive a refund check within 4-6 weeks after the Accounts Receivable Team processes the refund.

Reimbursable Overtime Services

Customers may request and receive AQI services associated with activities typically covered by an AQI user fee outside the normal tour of duty of the employee(s) providing the requested service. In such cases, overtime charges may be assessed as outlined in [7 CFR 354.1](#).

APHIS Reimbursable Overtime Services

Refer to the [APHIS Reimbursable Overtime Services](#) web page for additional information including how to pay the reimbursable overtime fee.

CBP Reimbursable Overtime Services

Any requests for agriculture reimbursable overtime will be made in accordance with CBP port policy. Please contact your [local CBP Port of Entry](#).

Frequently Asked Questions

Can companies remit payments more frequently than specified in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)?

To minimize administrative costs, please remit payments as outlined in [7 CFR 354.3\(f\)](#).

Are companies required to open a separate account at their bank to handle USDA fee collections?

No. Companies must account for user fee collections separately from their other business within their own accounting methods and systems.

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