

Private Aircraft Preclearance Procedures

Pilots of private aircraft may request preclearance of private aircraft flights from certain, specific CBP preclearance locations to a specific, designated airport in the United States.

The preclearance processing of private aircraft is accomplished through 7 steps:

1. Request for Services.
2. APIS Submission.
3. Appointment Confirmation/Notifications.
4. Preclearance Services Performed.
5. Flight Closeout and Departure.
6. Departure Notifications.
7. Flight Arrival in the United States.

It should be noted that CBP performs Point-to-Point preclearance. Unauthorized diversions are not allowed; private aircraft are precleared from the CBP preclearance port to a specific, designated airport or airport facility that is approved and capable of handling and processing international garbage as required by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

As indicated in Title 19 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), section 122.32, CBP has the authority to limit the locations where aircraft entering the U.S. from a foreign area may land. As such, aircraft must land at the airport designated in their APIS transmission unless instructed otherwise by CBP or changes to the airport designation are required for aircraft and/or airspace safety as directed by the FAA flight services.

Through the preclearance process, effective communication is critical. The preclearance port initiates and controls communication through updates with the domestic CBP offices and the pilot (or agent) requesting preclearance; ensuring that all affected parties are kept informed and apprised of the aircraft's status.

1. Request for Services

Pilot Submission of Preclearance Service Request

The preclearance process begins with the private aircraft pilot (or their representative) requesting an appointment with CBP for preclearance services. This request is made using procedures prescribed by the Preclearance Port Director. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the private aircraft pilot to provide accurate information to CBP regarding the request.

For private aircraft pilots requesting preclearance services, the following information must be provided to CBP:

- Date and Time of the Preclearance Appointment
- Tail Number- generally the number permanently affixed to the tail of the aircraft.
- Decal Number – the number of the annual user fee decal affixed to the aircraft.
- Flight Itinerary - including the U.S. airport of arrival and any foreign airports visited within the previous 24 hours. The U.S. airport of arrival must have an approved compliance agreement to handle international regulated garbage.
- Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA) – The estimated time of arrival in to the predetermined U.S. port of arrival
- Estimated Time of Departure (ETD) – The estimated time of departure from the preclearance processing location (subject to change based on CBP examination)
- Number of Travelers Onboard – Please note, the General Aviation Facility in Shannon, Ireland can only process 20 travelers per flight. If there are more than 20 travelers, CBP will determine another location where processing will take place, if available.
- Number of U.S. Citizens Onboard
- APIS Transmission Sent to CBP (Y/N) - Has APIS been transmitted to CBP at the time of the request for services (Y/N)?
- Pilot (and Handling Agent, if applicable) Information - including name, telephone number and email address, and if applicable.

Please note, additional information may be requested at the discretion of the CBP preclearance port and should be provided in order to facilitate the preclearance request. The pilot (or representative) should contact the preclearance port regarding any questions relating to port specific procedures.

2. APIS Submission

The pilot is responsible for submitting APIS manifest information to CBP no later than 60 minutes prior to the scheduled time of preclearance processing (or as instructed by the port). Failure to submit APIS data within the timeframe prescribed by the Preclearance Port Director may result in delay or denial of preclearance services.

If the APIS manifest has not been submitted at 60 minutes prior to the scheduled time of preclearance processing, preclearance services will not be performed and the aircraft will be inspected by CBP upon arrival in the U.S.

3. Appointment Confirmations and Notifications

Preclearance Appointment Eligibility

Preclearance services may be denied or discontinued at any time during the inspection process. The denial of preclearance services requires the approval of the CBP Preclearance Port Director. CBP may deny or discontinue preclearance services for reasons including (but not limited to):

- A failure to meet conditions for preclearance processing
- The pilot boards travelers or articles that have been denied entry by CBP
- The aircraft is carrying cargo or merchandise that requires post-entry processing
- A request by the CBP destination port or another DHS entity
- If the requirements of other U.S. agencies are not met (e.g. USDA handling of international garbage)
- Unexpected circumstances or urgencies affecting the preclearance port's ability to provide services
- Other instances where travelers, articles or aircraft conveyance are specifically identified as requiring post-clearance processing (e.g. warrants, lookouts, targeting, etc)

Preclearance Appointment Request/Approval

Once CBP accepts the preclearance services request, an email will be sent by CBP to the pilot or the pilot's representative. The email will contain the following information:

- Appointment Confirmation Number – (tail number-airport code-date format)
- Preclearance Processing Information – (scheduled appointment time, ETD, etc.)
- APIS Manifest Submission information – (manifest details, tail number, etc.)

4. Preclearance Services Performed

Upon arrival of the private aircraft at the preclearance facility, CBP officers and CBP Agriculture Specialists are responsible for enforcing CBP laws in addition to laws for other U.S. agencies such as the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, etc.

CBP Preclearance officers will process all travelers (passengers and crewmembers) as well as any accompanied belongings that are traveling onboard the aircraft. CBP Preclearance officers will physically inspect the private aircraft conveyance.

Traveler Processing

Upon arrival at the CBP preclearance facility, the private aircraft pilot is responsible for the following duties regarding traveler processing:

- Prior to entering the CBP Federal Inspection Service (FIS) secured area, all travelers as well as their personal articles must pass through airport security screening, if available.
- All travelers as well as their personal articles (including but not limited to: baggage, merchandise and personal items) must be presented together to CBP for examination in the FIS area.
- All travelers and articles that have been processed by CBP must be kept isolated from unprocessed travelers and articles from the time they are precleared to the time of departure.

Aircraft Inspection

A physical search or examination of the private aircraft by CBP will be conducted. In preparation for examination of the aircraft, the private aircraft pilot must ensure:

- Clear all baggage, personal articles and merchandise from the aircraft.
- Open all storage compartments.
- Power down all systems, including the engine, radio and auxiliary power unit (APU).

5. Flight Closeout and Departure

When the CBP examination has been completed, the pilot must ensure all cleared travelers and articles are onboard the aircraft. In addition, the aircraft door must be secured until the time of departure. Failure to do so may result in cancellation of the precleared status of the aircraft. Please note, it is the decision of the Preclearance Port Director to re-clear the flight or deny precleared status.

Once the private aircraft departure has been verified, an email confirmation will be sent by CBP to the pilot and the pilot's representative, if applicable.

6. Departure Notifications

Once preclearance processing has been completed and CBP has approved the aircraft for departure, CBP at the preclearance airport will coordinate communication with CBP at the U.S. airport of arrival

7. Flight Arrival in the United States

Upon arrival in to the United States, CBP Agriculture Specialists will coordinate with the private aircraft pilot (or their representative) to ensure removal of international regulated garbage.

Travelers and articles are subject to re-inspection at the discretion of the port director.

If for any reason, including emergencies or weather, an aircraft must land at an airport different than designated in the APIS transmission:

- The pre-cleared status of the aircraft is cancelled. The pilot must schedule the arrival of the aircraft in the U.S. in the same manner as if preclearance processing had not been completed.
- Notice shall be given to CBP at the intended place of first landing, (nearest international airport, or nearest port of entry) as soon as possible by the pilot, pilot's requestor, or aircraft owner.
- The Port Director whose area of responsibility covers the airport where the diverted aircraft arrived, will consider the totality of the circumstances (emergencies, weather, etc.) and determine whether re-inspection of the aircraft and its travelers is warranted.
- If re-inspection is required, the pilot should keep all travelers in a separate place at the landing area until CBP officers and CBP Agriculture Specialists arrive.
- The pilot should keep all merchandise and baggage together and unopened at the landing area until CBP officers arrive.