



E-Serve No.: 31 of 2025 | Date: February 18, 2025

Sub: Automation of Refund Application and Processing in Customs

Dear Member,

CBIC has issued Circular No. 05/2025-Customs, dated 17th February 2025 ([enclosed](#)) introducing the automation of refund applications and processing under Customs. This initiative aligns with the Government's commitment to digitize all remaining Customs processes by mid-2026, to increase efficiency and reduce the time and cost associated with cross-border trade.

Currently, refund applications filed manually, outline the steps given:

- Receiving and acknowledging applications
- Notifying any missing documents (deficiency memo)
- Issuing detailed decisions (speaking orders)
- Checking for unjust enrichment (to ensure no unfair benefit)
- Conducting audits and monitoring

Audits are required as follows: - Pre-Audit for refunds above Rs. 5 lakh;
Post-Audit for refunds between Rs. 50,000 and Rs. 5lakh;
Random Post-Audit for refunds below Rs. 50,000. The manual process is time-consuming, leading to the need for automation.

Customs is digitising the refund process for better efficiency and transparency:

- Digital Submissions: Refund applications must be filed online through the ICEGATE Portal. Manual applications will only be accepted until 31st March 2025.
- Tracking and Updates: Applicants will get a Unique Application Reference Number (ARN) to track their refund status online.
- Faster Processing: The system allows quicker approvals, rejections, or queries.
- Direct Refunds: Approved refunds will be credited directly to the applicant's registered bank account.

Follow the Steps for Refund Process:

- Immediate Registration: If not already done, register on the ICEGATE portal to access the automated refund system.
- Guidelines Issuance: The DG (Systems) will issue detailed guidelines on the processing of refund applications.

- Timely Submission: Submit your pending manual refund applications before 31st March 2025 to ensure they are processed under the existing system.

For detailed information, members may kindly click on the above Circular.

Members may kindly make a note of the above.

Regards,

Dr. Siddhartha Rajagopal
Executive Director

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