



Kelowna Chamber of Commerce

544 Harvey Avenue

Kelowna, BC V1Y 6C9

Phone: (250) 861-3627

E-mail: colleen@kelownachamber.org

www.kelownachamber.org

**Reference Guide To
Document Certification**

(Certificates of Origin)

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Introduction

For many years, chambers of commerce and boards of trade have been asked by Canadian companies to certify a wide variety of documents. Many of these documents pertain to export shipments by companies in their communities or regions.

Such certifications are generally based on the documentation regulations or requirements of various countries (often reflecting the terms of sale or the underlying letter of credit). They do not reflect any requirement of the Canadian government. Nevertheless, failure by an exporter or a company to obtain these certifications can result in costly delays and could hold up payments.

Certificates of Origin - Definition

A **certificate of origin** is a document stating the origin of goods being exported. In customs terms, determining the “origin” of a good can be a complicated and contentious procedure. However, determining the origin of an exported good is one of the key bases for applying tariff and other import criteria.

Whether the exporter needs a certificate of origin depends on a variety of factors, e.g., where the goods are being shipped, what the goods are, if it is requested by the bank or financial institution involved in the export sale, etc...

The burden of determining whether a certificate of origin is necessary does not fall on a chamber- this is the exporter’s responsibility.

It is also the exporter’s responsibility to obtain the certification of origin form. Since these have often been difficult to find, the Canadian Chamber has developed its own form. A copy can be given to exporters from which they can make photocopies. Copies of that form are available at the Chamber Office.

Notarization

To reinforce the fact that the Kelowna Chamber of Commerce is not responsible for the accuracy of the information provided on certificates of origin, we require that these documents be notarized before we sign them (**note: supporting documents, e.g. invoices and other shipping documents, do not have to be notarized as long as the primary document has been).**

What is notarization?

This is a process by which a lawyer or notary public (i.e., someone who can take sworn statements) certifies from a person's sworn statement that the facts described in her/his signed documents are true.

As a matter of policy and for reasons of liability, the Chamber of Commerce requires that all documents must be notarized before we put our stamp on them. If documents have not been notarized, the client must ensure that this is done before the chamber can proceed with certification. A notarized document that is noted as being valid for a specific period of time can also be provided and left on file with the Kelowna Chamber.

Why does the chamber insist that documents be notarized?

The Chamber cannot verify if every detail in the document is indeed correct. Our alternative is to ask that the document be notarized. When a document is notarized, the burden of responsibility falls on the exporter, since it is the exporter that has sworn before a public officer that the document and its contents are indeed true. When the chamber certifies the document, its basis for believing that the contents of the document in question are true, is that fact that it has been notarized. In other words, the chamber relies on the sworn word of the exporter, through the process of notarization, to confirm the document's truthfulness.

Kelowna Chamber of Commerce Certificates of Origin Policy

Any company requesting a Certificate of Origin from the Chamber must fulfill the following:

1. The company must be a member in good standing of the Kelowna Chamber and must have been a member for at least two (2) years or at the discretion of the CEO for the purposes of determining the reputation of the business.
2. New members or non-members seeking a Certificate of Origin will be requested to provide a statutory declaration prior to completion of a Certificate of Origin. For new members this documentation will be kept on file. Non-members may be required to submit each time.
3. The company must fill in the Certificate of Origin Document (see appendix B).
4. The company must have a declaration prepared on their company letterhead and notarized by the proper authority (see appendix C). This documentation can be kept on file with the Chamber but should be periodically (every two years) updated at the sole discretion of the Kelowna Chamber.
5. The company must allow the Chamber three (3) working days in which to process an initial request after the declaration and certificates of origin are received.
6. On an ongoing basis the Chamber strives to turn around certificates of origin within the same day as the request whether the request is for hard copy or an e-certification.

7. The Chamber also makes itself available to complete certificates during weekends and holidays if given advance notice of the likely need. Extra charges may occur on Holidays or if short notice is given.

APPENDIX A

Document Certification Checklist (Certificates of Origin)

FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY

Company name: _____

Date: _____

Shipment destination: _____

Chamber signee: _____


Receipt number or Customer number: _____

Check List

- Documents originals?
- Notarized or letter of waiver?
- Exporter's name and address?
- Consignee's name and address?
- Goods match those listed on invoice?
- Country of origin listed and matches that on invoice?
- Place and date included?
- Company official's signature?
- No "boycott" clause?

APPENDIX B

Certificate of Origin Sample

Certificate of Origin / Certificat d'origine		
Exporter- Exportateur <u>NAME AND ADDRESS OF COMPANY SHIPPING THE GOODS</u>	Consignee – Destinataire <u>NAME AND ADDRESS OF COMPANY RECEIVING THE GOODS</u>	
Numbers – Numéros <u>OPTIONAL – CAN BE USED TO NOTE CORRESPONDING PACKING SLIPS OR INVOICES</u>	Particulars of Transport (where required) <u>OPTIONAL – by air, sea, train, truck, etc. can be very detailed, e.g. give air line & flight number, or can be left blank</u>	
MARKS & NUMBERS; NUMBER & KIND OF PACKAGES; DESCRIPTION OF THE GOODS	QUANTITY QUANTITÉ	GROSS WEIGHT POIDS BRUT
<u>INFORMATION SIMILAR TO THAT ON INVOICES; IF IT IS LENGTHY, SUMMARIZE AND REFER TO ATTACHED INVOICE BY NUMBER</u>		
Name of Authorized Trade Association 	Kelowna Chamber of Commerce (Est. 1906) 544 Harvey, Ave. Kelowna, B.C. Canada V1Y 6C9	
The undersigned has examined the Manufacturer's invoice or Shipper's Affidavit concerning the origin of the merchandise, and according to the best of his/her knowledge and belief finds that the products named originated in the country specified. <u>SIGNATURE OF CHAMBER REP & SEAL</u> _____ Authorized Signature	It is hereby certified that the above-mentioned goods originate in: <u>COUNTRY OR COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN OF THE GOODS</u> _____ Country / Pays <u>CITY AND DATE</u> _____ Place and Date / Lieu et Date <u>SIGNATURE OF SHIPPER</u> _____ Authorized Signature	

APPENDIX C

Letter of waiver template

*The following text must be typed on **your company's letterhead**. Please forward to the **Kelowna Chamber of Commerce** following commissioning by a Notary Public or Justice of the Peace. (It is important that the Notary Public, etc... put her/his official stamp or seal to this document.)*

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This will certify that declarations or certificates of origin and/or prices certified by the **Kelowna Chamber of Commerce** relating to export shipments by _____ (company name, complete address, and phone number) _____, based on information supplied by _____ (company) _____, are and will be upheld by _____ (company) _____.

Full responsibility is also hereby accepted by _____ (company) _____ for any errors or inaccuracies in such declarations and/or documents pertaining thereto, and _____ (company) _____ agrees to indemnify and save harmless the **Kelowna Chamber of Commerce** from all claims, actions, and costs arising out of such declaration and/or documents pertaining thereto.

Sworn before me in the city of: _____
on the ___ day of ___, 202_

Company Officer _____
(signature)

Name and Title _____
(print)

(Notary, Justice of the Peace, etc.)

(Affix Corporate Seal)