

# Returning Nationals Secretariat

## Policy, Procedures, et al

*“A One Stop Shop ~ Striving to Serve All Returning Nationals in Every Way Possible”*

The establishment of the Returning Nationals Secretariat serves to facilitate the smooth flow of essential information, to provide critical guidance, and to help curtail the red-tape associated with relocating.

The Government has always been aware of the important role returning nationals have played in the socio-economic development of St. Kitts and Nevis. Thus, the Secretariat was instituted to assist returning nationals in obtaining up-to-date information to make their resettlement process less stressful. Assistance is given to persons who are eligible to receive duty-free concessions on selected personal and household effects imported into the country, also in relaying pertinent information to obtaining housing, land, investment, counselling, etc.

### Who Can Benefit?

Returning Nationals – Any national of St. Kitts and Nevis who has lived abroad for at least ten years and is desirous of relocating to his/her birthplace, along with his/her spouse and dependant(s).

Deportees – The Returning Nationals Secretariat will provide support to nationals returning home as Deportees from the United States, Canada, St. Maarten, and any other country. The Secretariat will offer assistance in finding jobs, locating housing, and utilising other social services. Provisions will be made for counselling, wherever deemed necessary.

- Duty Free Concessions
- Small Business
- Investments
- Employee Assistance
- Employee Referral Service
- Housing
- Counselling
- Health
- Pension

### POLICY FOR GRANT OF CONCESSION

- 1) A returning national is any citizen of the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis who lived abroad for a continuous ten years or more and has decided to return home, permanently.
- 2) Grace periods for duty-free concessions on imported goods: three (3) months prior and three (3) months after returning home, or six (6) months after returning home, or at any other time at the discretion of the Comptroller of Customs.

- 3) If at any time there is doubt as to the worthiness of an applicant, a deposit will be collected. If at a later date, the applicant is deemed worthy, duties will be refunded.
  - 4) Returning Nationals bringing automobiles in to the Federation will be required to pay the following charges:- 12% Customs Service Charge plus the Environmental Levy – For cars imported in year of manufacture up to 24 months after the date of manufacture, \$1,000.00; For cars imported after two (2) years but less than four (4) years after the date of manufacture, \$3,500.00; For cars imported four (4) years or more after the date of manufacture, \$5,000.00.
  - 5) Only one vehicle is allowed for duty-free concession.
  - 6) The vehicle must be owned by the returning national for at least six (6) months prior to arriving in the Federation and must be accompanied with a copy of the title from the country of origin.
  - 7) The returning national must be 18 years of age or older and be a holder of a valid driver's licence in the country of origin.
  - 8) The vehicle must be cleared from Customs within six (6) months after the arrival in the federation from the country of origin of the returning resident in accordance with Condition 2), above.
  - 9) The vehicle must be cleared from Customs either at the same time when the returning national's personal and household effects are being cleared or else at a time prior to or subsequent to the clearance of the said personal and household effects provided, however, that the vehicle is cleared in conformity with Condition 8), above.
  - 10) The ownership and/or control of the vehicle must not be transferred within three (3) years of the grant of concession. Anyone selling a vehicle, within three (3) years, on which concession has been granted should advise the buyer and notify the Competent Authority, so that the appropriate duty could be collected at the time of sale.
  - 11) Where at any time within three (3) years of the grant of concession, the authority finds that the condition above has been contravened, the returning national may be ordered to pay on demand the applicable duty and taxes as determined by the Customs Department.
- NB: Returning students who have been abroad for less than ten (10) years are required to show (for grant of concession) to the Customs Officer, some form of documentation from the college/university they attended. Concession is given at the discretion of the Comptroller of Customs. Returning students do not have to complete the form.

### CONDITIONS FOR OBTAINING GRANT OF CONCESSION

- 1) That the returning national intends to return home within a period of six (6) months from the date of application to take up permanent residence.
- 2) That the items imported duty-free under the policy will not be sold before informing Customs and making arrangements to pay the duty on the residual value.
- 3) That the items are for the applicant's use and will not be transferred to another party whether as a gift or for sale.
- 4) To be considered as residing in St. Kitts and Nevis for the purpose of this purpose of this policy, a returning national, during the first three (3) years of his/her return, must NOT return abroad and reside there for a continuous period of more than three (3) months.
- 5) Failure to comply with the above may result in the levying of duties on all items imported.

#### PROOF OF ELIGIBILITY

- Valid Passport
- Proof of Nationality
- Employment Letter
- Document(s) showing length of stay abroad
- Retirement Letter
- Pension Letter
- Airline Ticket

### PROCEDURES FOR CLEARING CUSTOMS

- When returning nationals arrive in St. Kitts and Nevis, they should first visit the Returning Nationals Secretariat (in St. Kitts), or the Ministry of Finance (in Nevis) for the proper procedures for clearing their personal and household effects and/or automobile through the Customs.
- The returning national will be interviewed by the Administrator to determine their eligibility for the concession.
- The returning national will complete an application for the concession, and if the requirements have been met, the Administrator will certify this to the Comptroller of Customs. Prior to the recommendation, a background check will be done on the information provided by the applicant. This may require a day or two.

- The returning national will then proceed to the Customs and should be able to clear their goods with relative ease.
- Returning nationals will be required to file for the concession in person at the office of the Returning Nationals Secretariat. The Administrator may waive this requirement under very extreme circumstances at his/her discretion. A letter from the returning national authorising an agent or representative to act on his/her behalf will be required.

NB: Only one application is to be granted.

*Household & Personal Effects that may be imported with Grant of Concession*

Beds	Glassware
Chinaware	Stoves
Refrigerators	Stereo Sets
Televisions	Chairs
Washing Machines	Tables
Dressing Tables	Computers
Radios	Cutlery
Kitchen Utensils	Kitchen Linen
Bed Linen	Table Linen
Video Recorders	Books
Tools of Trade*	Clothing

*\* (Tools of Trade are instruments, tools, equipment and machinery used in the normal course of a person's profession, trade or occupation without utilising additional labour. The 12% Customs Service Charge will be collected on these items.)*

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