Frequently Asked Questions – Tariff and Customs Advisory Program (TCAP)

1. What is the Tariff and Customs Advisory Program (TCAP)?
The TCAP provides Atlantic Canadian businesses with up to $10,000 of subsidized consulting support from customs brokers, international trade consultants, or trade lawyers. It is designed to help businesses navigate U.S. tariffs, customs challenges, and supply chain issues.

2. Who is eligible for the program?
To be eligible, companies must:

- Be a registered company, headquartered in Atlantic Canada, with exportable products and services, impacted by tariffs and retaliatory tariffs.
- Be in good standing with CRA and TCAP's federal and provincial partners.
- Have exported to the United States in the last 12 months.

3. How much does it cost to participate?
You will be responsible for 25% of your total project cost. There is also a one-time administration fee of $99 (no tax). This is payable after your application is approved and can be paid via cheque, e-transfer, credit card or direct deposit.

4. What kinds of support can I get through this program?
Support may include:

- Understanding U.S. tariff impacts on your products.
- Exploring ways to minimize duties and penalties.
- Improving trade compliance and customs documentation.
- Optimizing supply chain strategies.
- Getting legal advice on trade restrictions or disputes.
- Understanding trade agreements and compliance
- Navigating customs and regulatory requirements
- Identifying cost-saving opportunities like duty drawbacks and free trade zones
- Understanding the tariff impacts of diversifying to a new market

5. How do I apply?
You can apply through the program's Application Portal. The program is administered by the Nova Scotia Association of Community Business Development Corporations (NSACBDC) and reviewed in partnership with ACOA and provincial government representatives.

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis until December 31, 2026, or until funding is fully committed. We anticipate a high level of interest in this program so recommend you apply early as spaces are limited.

6. Who are the consultants?
Program participants may choose their own consultants, with expertise in customs and tariffs (custom brokers, trade professionals and trade lawyers). NSACBDC has created a directory to help you find the right expertise. Priority is given to providers based in Atlantic Canada.

NOTE: Before choosing a consultant, each business must complete a short consultation call with one of the program's trade experts, who will help them evaluate their options.

7. Can I work with a consultant I already know?
Yes, if the consultant is a licensed customs broker, trade lawyer, or international trade professional they are eligible to provide the consulting.

8. What happens after I'm approved?
Once your application is approved:

- You'll receive a confirmation email and an invoice for the $99 fee.
- You will receive a meeting invitation from one of the TCAP program's trade experts.
- After that meeting, you'll receive a conditional letter of offer, outlining the financial support you'll receive from the TCAP program.
- If you wish to accept the offer, you will then choose the consultant you wish to work with and notify your TCAP representative.
- After consulting is complete, you will pay your consultant directly and complete a short evaluation form. Then, you will submit the paid receipt to your TCAP program representative and you'll be asked to complete a short program evaluation.

9. When is the deadline to apply?
The application deadline is December 31, 2026, however it may end sooner if funding is fully committed.

10. When does the program end?
All consulting services must be completed and invoiced by February 28, 2027.

11. How do I know if my company needs this program?

If your company exports goods or services to the U.S. and faces challenges related to tariffs, customs compliance, or supply chain costs, TCAP can provide valuable insights and solutions.

12. What industries can benefit from the program?

TCAP is beneficial for various industries, including:

- Manufacturers exporting goods to the U.S.
- Food & Beverage companies affected by agricultural tariffs.
- Retailers & Distributors exporting consumer goods.
- Tech & Industrial companies navigating complex trade policies.

13. Is my business information kept confidential?
Yes. All program administrators and government committee members participating in the program are required to maintain confidentiality and will not share any proprietary or strategic business information without your consent.

14. Who do I contact if I have questions?
For more information, contact:
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The Tariff and Customs Advisory Program (TCAP) is delivered by the Nova Scotia Association of Community Business Development Corporations and is an initiative of the Atlantic Trade and Investment Growth Strategy (ATIGS), funded in part by the Government of Canada and the four Atlantic provinces.

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