

More than 2,000 Canadians are currently imprisoned abroad for various offences. Keep in mind that, while in a foreign country, you are subject to its laws and regulations. Ignorance is no defence, and your Canadian citizenship offers you no immunity.

If you are arrested or detained, you can request the arresting officer to inform the nearest Canadian mission. You will need a lawyer, and the mission can refer you to one who speaks English or French. In the meantime, be aware that what you say can be used against you. Avoid making any statements unless your lawyer is present. Do not sign anything in a language you do not understand without the permission of your lawyer.

Returning to Canada

Departure Tax

Some countries impose a departure tax or service fee at the airport or point of departure. Prior to leaving such a country, make sure you set aside enough money, in local funds, to pay this tax.

Drugs

Most countries impose severe penalties for the possession of even a minuscule amount of illegal drugs. Even prescription drugs and syringes used for legitimate medical purposes come under intense scrutiny and should therefore have proper accompanying documentation. As previously mentioned, keep all drugs in their original containers and carry the necessary prescriptions with you.

Choose your travelling companions wisely. Never agree to take across a border any parcel that is not yours.

For more information, visit DFAIT's Anti-Drug Information Program's Web site (<http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/english/travel/adip-pia/>).

Settling Your Obligations Before You Return

It is important that you settle all your obligations before you leave your host country. For example, make sure that you pay all your local bills or make acceptable arrangements to do so. It may also be a good idea to obtain a letter of release from domestic or other