



*Ozona
Bank*



TARIFF REFUNDS

What You Need to Know

Presented by
Ozona Bank

Opportunity is More Than A Refund

For many small businesses, tariff refunds represent something rare—an unexpected infusion of capital. Whether your business receives a modest reimbursement or a substantial refund, how those funds are deployed can have a lasting impact on your company's financial health.

While it may be tempting to view a tariff refund as "extra money," successful businesses treat unexpected cash differently. They view it as an opportunity to strengthen operations, improve liquidity, reduce financial risk, and position themselves for future growth.

At Ozona Bank, we've worked with Texas businesses for more than a century, helping owners make sound financial decisions through changing markets and economic cycles. Here are several strategies to consider as you plan how to use your refund.



Getting Ready for Your IEEPA Tariff Refund

If your business paid tariffs under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), you may be eligible to recover those funds. The refund process requires action by the Importer of Record (IOR) or its authorized customs broker through U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) using the CAPE refund process. Refunds are not automatic, and businesses should begin preparing now. ([U.S. Customs and Border Protection](#)) Follow this Simple Preparation Checklist:

1. Confirm Your Eligibility

- Determine whether your company was the Importer of Record (IOR).
- Identify which imports may qualify for an IEEPA tariff refund. ([U.S. Customs and Border Protection](#))

2. Gather Your Documentation

Work with your customs broker to compile:

- Entry summaries (CBP Form 7501)
- Import entry numbers
- Tariff payment records
- Commercial invoices
- Shipping documentation

3. Verify Your ACE & ACH Registration

Ensure your business has access to the CBP ACE Portal and is registered to receive refunds electronically through ACH, as refunds are paid electronically. ([U.S. Customs and Border Protection](#))

4. Coordinate with Your Advisors

Your customs broker, CPA, and legal counsel can help determine eligibility, prepare CAPE declarations, and ensure claims are submitted accurately.

5. Plan Before the Funds Arrive

Instead of waiting until the refund is received, develop a strategy now. Consider how the proceeds could:

- Strengthen working capital
- Reduce debt
- Fund equipment or facility improvements
- Support expansion
- Build cash reserves

How Ozona Bank Can Help

While Ozona Bank does not prepare or file tariff refund claims, we can help you maximize the financial impact once those funds are received. Our commercial bankers can work with you to evaluate financing opportunities, optimize cash flow, enhance treasury management, and develop a long-term growth strategy that turns a one-time refund into lasting value for your business.

This information is provided for general educational purposes only and should not be considered legal, tax, or customs advice. Businesses should consult their customs broker, CPA, or legal advisor regarding eligibility and filing requirements.

Put Your Money to Work



Strengthen Your Working Capital

Healthy cash flow gives businesses flexibility. Rather than immediately spending every dollar, consider using a portion of your refund to improve your working capital position.

Additional liquidity can help:

- Purchase inventory at favorable pricing
- Manage seasonal fluctuations
- Cover payroll during slower periods
- Reduce reliance on short-term borrowing

A stronger cash position often creates more opportunities than many business owners realize.

Reduce High-Cost Debt

One of the highest-return investments may be paying down expensive debt. Reducing interest expense improves monthly cash flow while strengthening your balance sheet and borrowing capacity for future projects.

An Ozona Bank commercial lender can help evaluate whether refinancing existing debt could further improve your financial position.

Invest in Productivity

Businesses that invest during periods of financial strength are often better positioned for long-term success.

Consider investments such as:

- Equipment upgrades
- Technology improvements
- Facility renovations
- Automation
- Fleet replacement

Evaluate the Right Options



Build a Financial Cushion

Unexpected opportunities—and unexpected challenges—are both part of running a business. Maintaining adequate reserves allows your company to respond confidently to:

- Supply chain disruptions
- Economic uncertainty
- New hiring opportunities
- Expansion opportunities

Business savings accounts, money market accounts, and CDs can help your funds remain secure while earning interest.

Evaluate Expansion Opportunities

A tariff refund may provide the equity needed to pursue larger strategic initiatives. Examples include:

- Purchasing owner-occupied real estate
- Opening an additional location
- Expanding warehouse space
- Purchasing commercial property
- Acquiring another business

Improve Cash Management

As your business grows, managing cash efficiently becomes increasingly important. Treasury Management services can help:

- Improve cash flow visibility
- Reduce fraud risk
- Streamline receivables
- Simplify vendor payments
- Improve operational efficiency

Your Banking Partner Matters

At Ozona Bank, we believe business banking is about more than loans and accounts. It's about understanding your business, your goals, and your vision. Our experienced commercial banking team provides:

- Commercial Lending
- SBA Lending
- Treasury Management
- Merchant Services
- Business Deposit Solutions
- Local Decision-Making
- Relationship Banking

Whether you're improving liquidity, financing growth, or planning your next investment, we're here to help you make informed financial decisions with confidence.

Let's Build What's Next.

Contact an Ozona Bank commercial banker today to discuss how your business can make the most of today's opportunities while preparing for tomorrow's success.

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