1. Container Security

Container integrity must be maintained to protect against the introduction of unauthorized material and/or persons. Factory-loaded full containers must have written and verifiable processes for the requirements outlined below.

A. Pre-inspection of Containers:

NORDSTROM factories are required to perform a seven-point inspection process designed to verify the physical integrity of the container.

7-Point Inspection:

1. Front wall: Ensure that interior corner blocks are visible and not false. Verify that the front wall is made of corrugated steel. Inspect the front panels, the corners posts, and markings.

2. Left side: Inspect side panels, top and bottom rail and forklift packet entrances; the corner posts and markings. Verify that ventilation holes are visible and uncovered. Covered or missing ventilation holes could indicate a false wall.

3. Right side: Same as stated above.

4. Interior/Floor: Inspect roof panels; floor, side and front panels; door panels and frame; corners, ventilators and markings.

5. Ceiling/Roof: Inspect the panels, roof bows, corner fittings, and markings. Floors of unaltered containers should be flush with the door frame. If the floorboards protrude above the level of the frame, or appear to be new, unlevel, or slant upward, then it is possible that a false floor may exist.

6. Undercarriage: The undercarriage of the container should be ribbed with support bars approximately every 18”-36”. If the bottom appears to be sealed or the support bars are missing, there may be a false floor.
7. Doors: Inspect door panels, locking bars/rods, locking bar cams, hinge components, door gaskets and retaining strips, upper and lower corner fittings, and rain gutter. Verify that the door lock functions and adequately secures the container shut. If any of the above examples or other signs of tampering are discovered, the facility security officer, as well as the appropriate ocean carrier, should be contacted immediately.

B. Container Storage:

1. Empty containers that are dropped at the facility for loading at a later time must be parked either door-to-door or stored securely using other methods to prevent tampering.

2. Under no circumstance should a loaded container be stored without a seal affixed to the doors or without the doors secured.

3. Containers must be stored in a secure area to prevent unauthorized access and/or manipulation. Procedures must be in place for reporting and neutralizing unauthorized entry into containers or container storage areas.

4. Do not permit loaded containers to remain at the facility overnight under normal circumstances. If there is no alternative, the containers must be stored in a secure area, usually a fenced-in parking area, preferably with security guard/watchman.

C. Container Seal Standards:

1. Any seal affixed to a NORDSTROM container at the point of origin must meet or exceed ISO17712 standards for a high security seals, which bear the following characteristics:

   • Under normal usage, seals should be strong and durable enough to prevent accidental breakage, early deterioration or undetectable tampering.

   • Seals should be made to be easily and quickly affixed.

   • Identified by unique marks and numbers that are clearly legible; designed and constructed to prevent removal or undoing without breaking, or allow tampering without leaving obvious traces.

   • Designed for one-time use and constructed to prevent copying or counterfeiting.

D. Container Seal Process—Factory Load:

   (Information below does not apply to non-factory loaded containers)

1. Factories must contact the NORDSTROM-designated consolidator to receive PO verification and approval.
2. On approval, the consolidator will contact the ocean carrier to create a booking and arrange for a container to be positioned at the factory location.

3. At the time a container is released for loading by the ocean carrier, the ocean carrier will supply the driver with a high security seal.

4. The seal number will be noted on the driver’s paperwork and verified by the factory.

5. Factories are required to use the ocean carrier supplied seal—no other seals may be substituted.

6. On completion of loading, the seal will be affixed to the container. The seal number will be noted on the driver’s documentation and passed to the ocean carrier for verification on return to the container yard.

7. Transit time from factory to consolidator/pier should be monitored. Any anomalies should be researched and recorded.

8. If replacement seal is used for any reason (ie. Customs exam), please advise Nordstrom.

E. Container Seal Monitoring:

1. The seal number must be noted on all related shipping documentation. The information must be verified by each of the companies that handle the container. For security purposes, only designated personnel should be authorized to distribute container seals.

Security Quick Tips: Container Inspection Guidelines from Carrier Initiative Program

False Front Walls:

• Upon examination of a normal front wall of a dry van container, both corner blocks and the corrugation between the marking panels and the front wall are visible. False walls have been detected where a smuggler has manufactured corner blocks but the false wall was flush against the marking panel.

• A false wall may be made from the same type of corrugated metal as the legitimate front wall.

• Inspectors should look for signs of alteration such as: fresh paint, welding burns on either the interior or exterior of the container wall, variances in wall texture or lack of corrugation, the odor of fresh paint, burnt wood or body filler.
False Floors:

- Floors in unaltered containers are normally flush with the front door frame. If the floorboards protrude above the level of the frame, appear to be new, unlevel or slant upward toward the front wall of the container, a possible false floor may exist.

- Another method of detecting a false floor is to reach for the ceiling of the container upon entering and then walk towards the front wall. A change in height or the ability to touch the ceiling should be evident if the floor has been altered.

False Ceilings:

- Construction of a false ceiling may be either internal or external.

- An external false ceiling, or false roof, can be detected by observing the distance between the top of the corner block and the top of the roof.

- Normally, the roof is slightly below or flush with the top of the corner blocks. If the roof is above the corner blocks, then a false roof is possible.

- An internally-constructed false ceiling can be detected by reaching for the ceiling.

- If a false ceiling—or floor—exists, a change in height or the ability to touch the roof should be noticed.

- Additional signs of false ceilings include: fresh paint, obscured corner blocks, or welding burns.
Container Frames:

- Contraband hidden inside container frames is the most difficult to detect.

Other Methods to Detect Concealment Include:

- Running a stick along all sides of the container to check corrugated walls for inconsistencies. If any portion of corrugation does not sound hollow, further inspection is required.

- If refrigeration capable containers are used, both the refrigeration area and unit must also be inspected for tampering.