

U.S. OF AMERICA

This guide is compiled from the FIDI Customs Guide for reference only. Customs regulations change frequently; please consult your Seapoe relocation consultant for the latest requirements before shipping.

Updated 2023

Removal Goods

Documents Required

- Copy of visa.
- Copy of passport.
- U.S. Customs Form 3299 (Importer's Declaration).
- U.S. Customs Service Supplemental Declaration for Unaccompanied Personal and Household Effects.
- Inventory of goods in English.
- Please do not use the terms 'Miscellaneous' or 'Contents Unknown' on the inventory.
- If 'PBO' is listed - must have descriptive of item.
- Ocean Bill of Lading or AWB.
- Stamped I-94 form for non-residents (if applicable).
- Power of Attorney form (POA)
- ISF submissions.

Customs Prescriptions

- ISF must be filed 24 hrs prior to vessel loading at last foreign port (requirements valid for all types of moves):
- U.S. Customs may add exam holds on household goods shipments which show no ISF in Customs AMS system.
- A filed ISF is only viewable by U. S. Customs if it is correctly submitted according to the published ISF guidelines.
- Please have your U.S. customs broker / agent confirm the ISF submission is valid.
- Duty free if removal goods consist of used household effects which have been in the owner's use and possession abroad for at least one year, and which will keep on being used by the owner in the new residence.
- B/L (including Express Bills of Lading) must include the following information for container movements to the USA:
- Name of the owner of the goods.
- Never include DOB / SSN / Passport# on any AWB or BL.
- Address, city, state at origin.
- Address, city, state at destination.
- Express B/L is recommended.

Remarks

- Shipper must have arrived in U.S. by the time the goods arrive. Failure to comply will result in clearance delays and possible additional charges at the port.
- Air Waybills and Ocean Bills of Lading for shipments entering USA are to be consigned to the property owner, NOT the Destination Agent.
- Consignment instructions:
- Please advise all appropriate staff of this important requirement to avoid delays and

additional charges in clearing imports consigned to agents in USA. Contact your local agent if you need additional information.

- In the Shippers box: full name, address, city, postal code and country of property owner.
- In the Consignee box: full name, address, city and state (2 letter code) with postal code of the property owner (if new home/delivery address is not available then use Employer's address or alternate contact address).
- Notify Party: The forwarder and customs broker name, address, city, state, postal code, telephone email
- and fax number.

Diplomatic goods - U.S. Citizen returning from diplomatic assignment abroad

Documents Required

- Same as "Removal Goods"

Customs Prescriptions

- Same as "Removal Goods"
- Duty Free Entry – However, exams are possible.

Diplomatic goods - non-U.S. citizen beginning diplomatic posting in the U.S

Documents Required

- DS-1504 at <https://www.state.gov/ofm/customs/1504/>.
- POA.
- Inventory of goods in English.
- Ocean bill of Lading or AWB.

Customs Prescriptions

- Duty free entry X-ray examination / Inspection is possible.
- BL or AWB should ALWAYS state "diplomatic shipment – (name of Embassy/Org.)".
- Alcohol and new items are permitted to be imported duty/tax free.

Remarks

- All exams are possible; diplomats are not exempt from X-ray or physical inspection.
- Importer's U.S. Consulate or United Nations Mission's Office must initiate the request for free diplomatic entry (DS-1504).
- A shipment belonging to a diplomatic importer should not arrive at the port of entry prior to the diplomat's start date at his/her U.S. office. The DS-1504 cannot be applied for prior to the diplomat's official start date.

Items owned less than 1 year

Documents Required

- Separate declaration on 3299 Part IV D.

Customs Prescriptions

- Subject to U.S. duties / fees.

Remarks

- Need itemized list with description, value & country of manufacture.

Inheritance

Documents Required

- Relevant extract of the will or death certificate.
- Copy of inventory.
- Letter of inheritance from the inheritor.
- 3299, Supp Dec, PP, Visa, Inventory, POA

Customs Prescriptions

- No duty if the inheritor writes a letter confirming that he grew up with the items and that these were in his immediate household.
- If the items were not in the inheritor's immediate household while he was growing up: subject to duties/fees.

Remarks

- If deceased is U.S. citizen and items are traveling as part of his/her estate, items are entitled to enter U.S. duty-free. Consign to the shipper / new owner of goods.

Works of Art, Antiques

Documents Required

- Antiques require production of a certificate of antiquity showing approximate date of production.
- U.S. Customs has the right to order antiques to U.S. Customs appraisers' stores for an independent appraisal.
- However N/A if owned for 1 year,
- personal use only, shipped with HHG.

Customs Prescriptions

- Articles must be at least 100 years old to be considered antique and admitted duty free.
- Works of art are duty free if they constitute part of household goods removal, possessed by owner for at least one year and are not intended for resale (only applicable if not HHGS shipment).

Remarks

- If owned by shipper for at least 1 year and are for personal use only, no proof of antiquity is required.

Jewellery and precious metal

Documents Required

- No separate docs required unless owned less than 1 year.

Customs Prescriptions

- Silverware and ornaments are duty free when imported as part of normal household goods (HHGs).

Remarks

- DO NOT SHIP WITH HHGS.

Computers / Electronic equipment

Documents Required

- See removal goods.

Remarks

- If owned at least 1 year (and not for resale) – no special requirements.

Boats with engines

Documents Required

- May be subject to EPA: Form – EPA 3520-21.
- Ownership title.

Remarks

- Do not ship without broker's approval.
- Trailers subject to DOT.

Scooters/Electronic bikes

Documents Required

- Manufacturer specifications
- To be sent to broker for approval.

Customs Prescriptions

- May be subject to EPA and/or DOT requirements based on size of engine.

Wine / alcoholic beverages

Documents Required

- For states that allow legal entry:
- Descriptive inventory;
- Type i.e.: White Wine / Bourbon
- Size of Bottle
- Alcohol Content
- Value per Bottle. Inventory should state, "For Personal Use Only".
- Must include:
- Manufacturer's name and address
- Production Address
- FDA Code
- Type of Packaging
- Brand Name
- Quantity
- Value of Alcohol
- State Permit may be required.

Customs Prescriptions

- Subject to various rates of duty and taxes.
- For diplomatic imports, there is no restriction on quantity imposed by US Customs, as long as the alcohol collection is not intended for re-sale and is for personal use of the diplomat and his or her family only. However, the State Department is entitled to impose quantitative restrictions based on a reciprocal basis with certain countries. Check with your country's embassy whether quantitative restrictions apply before shipping.

Remarks

- Check with final destination state for the laws that apply.
- Strongly discourage the importing of wine and alcoholic beverages. Some states prohibit entry and Customs will confiscate. In other cases, importation will increase the time, cost and exams of the customs clearance process.

Food / Pantry-Goods / Dry-Goods (spices)

Customs Prescriptions

- Since May 6, 2009 the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requires the submission to FDA of prior notice of food, including animal feed that is imported or offered for import into the United States.
- Prior notice be submitted to FDA electronically via either the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP or Customs) Automated Broker Interface (ABI) of the Automated Commercial System (ACS) or the FDA Prior Notice System Interface (FDA PNSI).
- The information must be submitted and confirmed electronically as facially complete by FDA for review no less than 8 hours (for food arriving by water), 4 hours (for food arriving by air or land/rail), and 2 hours (for food arriving by land/road) before the food arrives at the port of arrival.
- Food imported or offered for import without adequate prior notice is subject to refusal and, if refused, must be held.
- Shippers must provide the authorities with advance notice of Human and Animal food shipments.
- Once all the details of a shipment are reported the FDA will provide a registration number, which must be stated on all Bills of Lading as well as Air Way Bills.

Remarks

- Useful link: <https://www.fda.gov/food/importing-foodproducts-united-states/prior-noticeimported-foods>
- Omitting to provide the authorities with the
- required information may result in delays, fines or even seizure of the shipment by the government.
- Rules apply to beverages as well as food for both human and animals.
- Recommendation: do not ship food with household goods.
- Food can cause additional exams and delays, which ends with increased costs.
- However if food is included, it can be processed through clearances, but may cause added expense or delays.
- Some foods and spices are prohibited.

Plants and seeds

Customs Prescriptions

- Prohibited.

Firearms / dangerous goods

Documents Required

- Any firearms acquired overseas require approved U.S. Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms (ATF) permit before importing to the U.S.

Customs Prescriptions

- ATF Permit 6 can take months to obtain.
- Do not ship any firearms without permit in hand.

Remarks

- Do not ship firearms with Household Goods - ship separate via firearms dealer.
- Explosives and other dangerous goods are either prohibited or require special permits.
- If US Citizen exports firearms should file 4455 or 4457 w/ US Customs – use this for re-entry permission.
- Not recommended for import.

Pornographic material, unprocessed furs, skins

Customs Prescriptions

- Importation prohibited.
- Ivory items are prohibited.

Remarks

- Fish and wildlife items are strongly discouraged.
- May require permits and exams.

Prescription Medicine / Over-The-Counter Medicine (for personal use only)

Documents Required

- Prescription medicines are allowed if accompanied by a doctor's prescription and no more than a 3 to 6 month supply.

Customs Prescriptions

- Over the counter medicines are allowed in reasonable quantities, to be shipped with Household Goods.
- Illegal drugs are prohibited.

Fumigation of imported and exported wooden materials

Customs Prescriptions

- The USA Government adopted ISPM-15 (International standards for Phytosanitary Measures Publication 15: Guidelines for Regulating Wood Packaging Material in International Trade (aka NIFM-15) to standardise the treatment of wood packing materials used for the transport of goods.
- Effective September 16, 2005, shipments into or out of the USA in wooden packaging, have to have a Seal, which certifies that the shipment has received the required treatment (HT) Heated Treatment (a minimum wood core temperature of 56°C for a minimum of 30 minutes) or Methyl Bromide Treatment [the minimum temperature should not be less than 10°C and the minimum exposure time should not fall below 16 hours].
- The wood packing material must be marked in a visible location on each article, on at least two opposite sides of the article with a legible and permanent mark in black ink. Labels and adhesives are not allowed.
- The mark should be as follows:
- Where XX is the country code, 000 the producer number, YY the treatment type, and AAA the inspection agency logo.

Remarks

- This does not apply to wood packing materials manufactured of:
- Raw wood of 6 mm thickness or less.
- Processed wood produced by glue, heat and pressure, or a combination thereof.

- Plywood sheets & agglomerated sawdust sheet.
- Oriented wooden fibre sheets.
- Sawdust & Wooden fibre.
- If you have questions, please contact your removal agent in the USA.
- Recommendation:
- Do not use burlap coverings/bags. They will cause problems with USDA – especially air shipments.