

# SOUTH AFRICA

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 2026

## Removal goods – HHG/PE

### Documents Required

- DA 304 and P. 1.160.
- Original passport including page with date of entry and exit stamp in South Africa.
- Affidavit (to be completed in South Africa by the customer) This is applicable for a returning and temporary resident.
- Permanent residence documents or temporary residence permit with a work permit/visa.
- Detailed packing inventory for attestation.

### Customs Prescriptions

- Returning residents must have been out of South Africa for an unbroken period of at least 6 months to qualify for duty free entry.
- If the returning resident has not been out of the country for an unbroken period of at least 6 months, customs will apply duty and taxes and the returning resident will have to apply for an import permit for each commodity of household goods i.e., electrical appliances will be one permit, wooden furniture will be another permit, so you could have up to 6 different types of import permits. Then duties and taxes will be calculated.
- No duty-free import will be allowed on a tourist / visitor visa even if there is a pending work / resident permit application.

### Remarks

- Owner of the shipment must be in South Africa at least 10 days prior to the shipment arriving at port, in order for Customs clearance can take place for both air and sea shipments.
- Subject to random customs inspections.
- Customs require shipper to present themselves with original completed customs forms for attestation at their nearest customs office in South Africa.

## Diplomats' removals – HHG/PE

### Documents Required

- Detailed packing inventory.
- Diplomatic clearance.
- Certificate from relevant Embassy in South Africa and countersigned by South African Department of Foreign Affairs.

### Customs Prescriptions

- Duty free.

## Wedding trousseaux

## Documents Required

- Invoice required.

## Customs Prescriptions

- Subject to payment of duties.

## Inheritance

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### Documents Required

- Copy of Death Certificate.
- Copy of will of deceased or certified relevant extract there from or copy of Probate from the Court, if the deceased died interstate. An English translation is necessary if document is not in English.
- Inventory (if copy Will or other document does not specifically detail the goods to be imported) with supporting declaration from the lawyer confirming that the goods to be imported are the legatee's rightful share of the estate.
- Import permit might be required.
- Declaration from the Legatee confirming that he is a permanent resident in South Africa and a beneficiary under the Will of the deceased.
- Special application must be made to Customs.

### Customs Prescriptions

- Duty free entry if the legatee is permanently residing in South Africa.
- Duty is payable on motorcars, motorcycles and mopeds. A "Letter of Authority" (LOA) is to be issued by the South African Bureau of Standards in Pretoria.

### Remarks

- The goods should not be dispatched until the Customs have given authority for duty free entry.

## New furniture, Household Items, Presents & Souvenirs

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### Documents Required

- Detailed inventory with values.
- Import permit required.

### Customs Prescriptions

- Subject to payment of full duties.

## Works of art & Antiques

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### Customs Prescriptions

- Duty free entry if:
- Works of art are forming a part of a bona fide household removal, or
- Articles are over 100 years old.
- These articles have been in the use and possession of the owner for more than 12 months and
- Are not for sale or other disposal.

## Precious metal objects

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### Customs Prescriptions

- Duty free entry is allowed on the same basis and under the same conditions as furniture and other articles.

## Motor cars, motorcycles, mopeds, power-driven boats with inboard engines

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### Documents Required

- Customs form DA 304/A.
- Registration papers.
- Document showing that the vehicle has been in the owner's use and possession abroad for more than 365 days before the importation of the vehicle.
- Original purchase invoice and copy insurance certificate.
- Import permit issued from the Department of Trade and Industry in South Africa has to be submitted to Customs at the time of clearance of all vehicles imported into South Africa.
- A Letter of Authority (LOA) issued by the National Regulator for Compulsory Regulation in Pretoria – South Africa has to be submitted to Customs at the time of clearance of all motor vehicles and motorcycles.

### Customs Prescriptions

- Duty free entry if the vehicles (cars, motorcycles, mopeds) will not be sold or otherwise disposed of for 2 years after the date of importation.
- Value Added Tax at current rate is assessed on the imported value of the vehicle.
- A fee of R1800.00 per vehicle payable to the National Regulator is applicable.
- There is an environmental levy on all vehicles, caravans, trailers, scooters and motorcycles being imported into South Africa of ZAR 15.00 per tyre.

### Remarks

- Temporary residents must pay a cash Customs Bond to cover full duties and taxes and can only apply for a refund from the South African Department of Customs & Excise of this Cash Bond on proof of reexport of the motor car from South Africa.
- Returning residents pay full duties and taxes, unless proving no intention to return – one vehicle duty free per family.
- Temporary residents must provide a customs bond to cover full duties and taxes, and do not need an Import Permit.
- Foreign Diplomats pay no duties or taxes, subject to provision of diplomatic clearance certificate, and proof of value.
- No left-hand drive motor vehicles new or used purchased after January 1, 2000, are allowed to be imported in South Africa.
- If the left-hand drive motor vehicle is purchased prior to January 1, 2000, it is a customs requirement for the motor vehicle to have been registered in South Africa. If not registered in South Africa, customs will not grant customs clearance.
- The vehicle must not be dispatched from origin until you receive the Import Permit from the Department of Trade and Industry and a Letter of Authority from the National Regulator for Compulsory Regulation.

## Caravans & Trailers

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### Documents Required

- Import permit required (see notes under 'cars' – same process applies).

### Customs Prescriptions

- Subject to payment of duties.

## Dangerous Goods, Firearms

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### Documents Required

- Import permit.
- South African Police Firearm Registrar Certificate SAP 312.

## Plants & Vegetable Products

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### Documents Required

- Phytosanitary certificate.

## Cats, Dogs, Birds

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### Documents Required

- Rabies vaccination certificate.
- Health certificate.
- Import permit.

### Customs Prescriptions

- Import permit granted after the owner has made arrangements for the period of quarantine.
- Required for pets travelling from most, but not all countries.

## Wine, Liquor, Alcohol

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### Documents Required

- Import permit from Department of Agriculture, Directorate Plant Health and Quality.
- Liquor removal certificate.

### Customs Prescriptions

- Duties and taxes are applicable.
- Diplomats are required:
- To obtain a wine exemption certificate from Department of Agriculture to avoid duties and taxes.
- To get the Certificate A or B endorsed.

### Remarks

- Department of Agriculture, Directorate Plant Health and Quality:
- telephone number +27 11 970 3130/1
- fax +27 11 970 3132.
- It is necessary to fulfil these conditions before the arrival of the shipment.
- In order the permit to be submitted, the customer will need to supply the following information:
- Type of alcohol.
- Trade Name of maker/ winery.
- % alcohol.
- Year of Manufacture.
- Seal number/ codes on each bottle.
- Number of bottles, each type/ make.
- Value for customs purposes.

## Prohibited items

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### Customs Prescriptions

- Narcotics, Drugs, Incitements.
- Pornographic books and magazines.
- "Walkie-talkie" radios.
- Certain feathers, furs, skins, tusks, etc. of animals coming under the protected species regulations.

## Fumigation of wood packaging

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### Customs Prescriptions

- All wood packaging utilised on Import Shipments to South Africa must be "ISPM 15" certified at origin.
- This means that each wooden crate that
- comes into the country must be treated against plagues and marked in accordance with the requirement of ISPM 15.
- Inspectors from the South African Department of agriculture will inspect import shipments at South African Ports to determine if this requirement has been adhered to. Shipments containing wood packages not having the ISPM 15 mark will not be allowed into South Africa.
- We therefore urge you to research this requirement with your suppliers of wood / timber packaging materials at origin to ensure that this South African regulation is complied with.