Country Guide (IAM)

Angola

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

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Documents

Documents required for importing used household goods, personal effects, and related shipments.

For Returning Angolan Citizens (Including Returning Angolan Diplomats)

- Copy of valid passport
- Copy of visas at origin (residence visa, work visa, student visa, diplomatic card) and/or copy of Algerian Consulate registration card at origin
- Proof of entry into Angola (emigration stamp)
- Copy of assignee's Angolan Tax Card (Cartao de Contribuinte), duly updated
- Signed, dated, valued inventory list in USD, confirming if items are secondhand or new
- Detailed inventory list in Portuguese, valued in USD
- 3 original bills of lading (OBL) or original AWB
- Original CNCA certificate (Loading Certificate) for sea shipments
- Packing list in Portuguese
- When applicable: original declaration from employer in Angola stating position and length of overseas assignment
- For returning Angolan diplomats: original declaration from Diplomatic Mission at origin confirming length of assignment abroad and value of goods

For Foreign Diplomats

- Copy of diplomatic passport
- Copy of Angolan Diplomatic ID
- Proof of entry into Angola (emigration stamp)
- Copy of assignee's Angolan Tax Card (Cartao de Contribuinte), duly updated
- Original Nota Verbal and Declaration from MIREX (exemption documents), prepared by the host diplomatic mission in Angola
- Detailed inventory list in Portuguese, valued in USD
- 3 original bills of lading (OBL) or original AWB
- Original CNCA certificate (Loading Certificate) for sea shipments
- Packing list in Portuguese

For Expatriates

- Copy of valid passport
- Proof of entry into Angola (emigration stamp)
- Copy of Angolan work visa or Ministry "parecer"
- Copy of assignee's Angolan Company Tax Card (Cartao de Contribuinte), duly updated (alternatively, the hosting company's Tax Card may be used)
- Signed, dated, valued inventory list in USD, confirming if items are secondhand or new
- Detailed inventory list in Portuguese, valued in USD
- 2 original bills of lading (OBL) or original AWB

- Original CNCA certificate (Loading Certificate) for sea shipments
- Packing list in Portuguese

Specific Information

Import licence requirement: For sea and air shipments where the total value of goods on the detailed inventory is USD 5,000 or greater, an import licence is required by Angolan Customs. This applies to all categories (returning citizens, diplomats, and expatriates).

CIF value threshold: A separate 2% tax may apply to CIF values exceeding USD 10,000, in addition to the USD 5,000 import licence requirement described above. This could not be independently confirmed as still in effect; confirm current thresholds with the destination agent.

CNCA Loading Certificate: All sea freight shipments to Angola require a Loading Certificate (Certificado de Embarque) issued by the National Council of Angolan Shippers (CNCA) authorised agent in the country of origin. In the United States, the CNCA agent is OIC Services Inc.

Pro-forma invoice requirements: Must include quantity, description, value, and condition (used or new) for all items. Must include CIF value (FOB + freight + insurance). Must be on the letterhead of the origin agent, stamped and signed, with the owner and consignee details clearly noted. All electrical appliances, equipment, and bicycles must have markings and brand names shown.

Pre-inspection: A pre-inspection in the country of origin was historically required for tobacco, drinks, plants, chemical products, toys, motorbikes, used cars, bicycles, and food items, regardless of CIF value. Non-compliance results in a 100% CIF value fine. Diplomatic shipments containing these items are exempt from pre-inspection. Current guidance indicates pre-shipment inspections are no longer mandatory (per Presidential Decree No. 63/13), but traders may voluntarily use them for fast-track "green channel" access. Confirm current status with the destination agent.

Customs inspections: Common on sea shipments and systematic on air shipments for all categories.

Cartao de Contribuinte: The Angolan Tax Card can only be obtained after the owner has obtained their work permit. Without this card, customs clearance cannot proceed.

Document language: All documents must be in Portuguese.

Duties & Taxes

Duty-free conditions — Returning Angolan citizens: Returning citizens who can prove they have been living abroad for 6 months or more are exempt from duties and taxes on household goods. However, customs Stamp Duty (approximately 3% of CIF value) and VAT on importation (14% of CIF value) are still levied.

Duties and taxes — Expatriates: Expatriates are subject to customs Stamp Duty (approximately 3% of CIF value) and VAT (14% of CIF value). In case of a false declaration or duplicate items, the owner will pay a fine of 50–70% of the CIF value on top of the Stamp Duty.

Diplomatic exemption: Diplomatic consignments are exempt from duties and taxes provided the complete set of documents is submitted. Diplomatic shipments are easier to clear when consigned to the Diplomatic Mission rather than to the individual diplomat. Customs may occasionally require inspection of diplomatic consignments, usually done at the place of delivery.

Prohibited & Restricted Items

Prohibited Items

- Firearms, ammunition, and deadly weapons PERMIT REQUIRED — Permission from the Ministry of Interior required

- Fireworks and explosives PERMIT REQUIRED — Authorization from the Ministry of Interior required
- Illegal drugs — Strictly prohibited
- Alcohol RESTRICTED — Prohibited within household goods shipments; beverages are subject to high-security tax stamps and inspection; alcoholic beverages face duties of up to 52.9%
- Plants and plant materials — Prohibited without phytosanitary certification; subject to pre-inspection
- Gold — Prohibited in shipments
- Jewellery — Prohibited in shipments (beyond personal wear)
- Pornographic materials — Prohibited
- Counterfeit items — Prohibited
- Communication equipment without INACOM licence — Prohibited (see Restricted Items above)
- Used and retreaded tyres — Prohibited
- Animal offal products RESTRICTED — Wide range prohibited under 2024 tariff schedule
- Items subject to US/international embargoes — Prohibited
- Endangered species CITES — Restricted

Restricted / Dutiable Items

Items Requiring Pre-Inspection or Special Treatment

- Tobacco, drinks, plants, chemical products, toys, motorbikes, used cars, bicycles, and food items may require pre-inspection at origin (confirm current requirements with destination agent; pre-inspection was abolished in 2013 but may still be applied in practice)
- All electrical appliances, equipment, and bicycles must have brand names and markings on the pro-forma invoice

Communication Equipment (CRITICAL)

Import of communication equipment (new or used) is prohibited unless a licence is obtained from the Angolan Ministry of Telecommunications (INACOM). This includes: telephones (fixed or mobile), fax machines, voice message recorders, walkie-talkies, tablets, antennas, routers, switches, CCTV, servers, internet devices, and security systems. The client must present valid invoices or certificates for the devices to the Ministry of Telecommunications to obtain the INACOM licence. The licence should be obtained and submitted to the local agent before the goods are shipped to avoid customs delays and fines.

Currency

- Angolan kwanza (AOA) is the official currency
- Cash must be declared upon arrival; amounts exceeding 3,000 DZD or foreign currency exceeding 1,000 EUR equivalent must be declared
- Foreign currency export cannot exceed the amount imported; proof of bank withdrawal required for amounts over 7,500 EUR equivalent
- Credit cards are rarely accepted outside major hotels in Luanda

Consignment Instructions

Recommended: Contact the destination agent to ensure all requirements have been met prior to import, especially for differences regarding air / sea shipments.

Inventory requirements: A detailed, valued inventory must be in Portuguese and valued in USD. Items must be identified as secondhand or new. Electrical appliances must show make, model, and serial number. The pro-forma invoice must be on origin agent letterhead, stamped and signed.

CNCA Loading Certificate: Required for all sea freight shipments. Must be obtained from the CNCA authorised agent in the country of origin before shipping.

Import licence: Required when the total inventory value is USD 5,000 or more. Also required for any consignment containing a vehicle, regardless of value.

Inspection: Customs inspections are common on sea shipments and systematic on air shipments.

Owner presence: The owner or their authorised proxy should be available for customs clearance purposes.

Clearance timelines (all documents submitted in advance):

- Air shipments, diplomatic: 10–15 working days
- Sea shipments, diplomatic/returning citizens: 15–20 working days
- Sea shipments, expatriates: 20–30 working days
- Diplomatic franchise processing: 2+ weeks before clearance can begin

Late clearance penalties: A customs fine of 5% of CIF value applies for clearance beyond 30 days after arrival due to missing documentation. Additional fines of approximately EUR 500 from day 22 after arrival, EUR 500 from day 31, and EUR 500 per month thereafter may apply; confirm current penalty structure with the destination agent.

Seizure risk: Shipments not released from customs within the allocated time may be seized after 2 months and 21 days, and sold at auction after 4 months.

Port charges: Port charges, storage charges, VAT, detention, demurrage, and customs duties are unavoidable in Angola. Contact the local agent for advice on carriers to avoid (some carriers have higher detention charges).

Port of entry: Luanda (primary port for both sea and air freight). Quatro de Fevereiro International Airport for air shipments.

Special note — identical items: If identical items are imported (suggesting commercial intent), the client faces fines of 50–70% of CIF value on top of standard Stamp Duty.

Regulatory Updates

- April 2024: Presidential Legislative Decree No. 1/24 issued a new Customs Tariff Schedule, significantly raising import duties on staple foods and introducing prohibitions on animal offal products. Vehicle age restriction updated to 5 years (from previous 3 years).
- 2024: Import licence threshold confirmed at USD 5,000 and vehicle duty rate at 60%.
- October 2019: VAT implemented at 14%, replacing the former Consumption Tax.
- 2013: Pre-shipment inspections abolished (Presidential Decree No. 63/13), though voluntary inspections still available for green channel access.