

American Samoa

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 U.S. Citizens and Permanent Residents

- Copy of passport (some ports require passports for all family members listed on the CF-3299)
- Customs Form CF-3299 (Declaration of Free Entry of Unaccompanied Articles)
- Supplemental declaration (required by most ports)
- Detailed inventory in English
- Copy of permanent resident card (if applicable)
- I-94 stamp/card (for foreign nationals; indicates length of admission)
- Copy of bill of lading (OBL) or air waybill (AWB)
- Importer Security Filing (ISF) — must be filed prior to vessel sailing from last foreign port

For Foreign Nationals

- All of the above, plus:
- Copy of visa (must be a long-term visa; not B1/B2 visitor's visa for duty-free import of household goods)
- American Samoa entry permit (required for all non-U.S. nationals; apply at <https://legalaffairs.as.gov/visitor-visa-home> at least 72 hours in advance)

For Diplomats

- Form DS-1504 (submitted to the Department of State by the Consulate/Embassy at least 10 days prior to arrival of shipment)
- A-1 visa
- Brokers are not allowed to clear Customs on CF-3299 entries for foreign diplomats holding A-1 visas

Specific Information

New items within shipments: Items used less than 12 months must be listed in detail on the back of Customs Form CF-3299, including item description, quantity, material composition, value paid in USD, and country of origin.

Importer Security Filing (ISF): Critical for all ocean shipments. The ISF must be filed prior to the vessel sailing from the last foreign port. Failure to file timely results in penalties.

Customs examination: Customs and other government agencies can require examinations that cost USD 200–1,700 or more per full container load (FCL) shipment.

Inventory requirements: Do not indicate "packed by owner" (PBO) or use miscellaneous descriptions on the detailed inventory.

Biosecurity: American Samoa has strict biosecurity regulations enforced by the Department of Agriculture. All agricultural products (meat, poultry, seafood, dairy, fruits, vegetables, plants,

seeds, honey) must be declared. Outdoor and sports equipment must be thoroughly cleaned and free from soil and biological material. A US\$25 penalty applies for undeclared agricultural items, plus a US\$5 permit fee.

Duties & Taxes

Duty-free conditions: Household goods must have been used at least 12 months in the foreign household prior to shipment from the origin country. The owner must hold a proper long-term visa (not a B1/B2 visitor's visa). Short-term visitors can only import personal effects (clothing, camping gear, toiletries, etc.). Most household items used less than 12 months will require duty.

Prohibited & Restricted Items

Prohibited Items

- Illegal drugs and drug paraphernalia — Strictly prohibited
- Pornographic materials — Prohibited
- Counterfeit items or items inappropriately using a federally registered trademark — Prohibited
- Products made from dog and cat fur — Prohibited
- Flavoured cigarettes, including cloves — Prohibited
- Cuban cigars — Prohibited (subject to US embargo; confirm current status)
- Blank tapes and CDs from Iran — Prohibited (subject to US embargo; confirm current status)
- Haitian animal hide drums — Prohibited
- Absinthe (containing thujone) — Prohibited
- Tuna — Prohibited for import (American Samoa has its own tuna cannery industry)
- Firearms, explosives, and ammunition PERMIT REQUIRED — Complex rules apply:
- Firearms previously owned and shipped from the USA may be re-imported if the owner can prove to Customs they were originally sent from the USA (best method: register with Customs prior to export)
- Foreign-purchased weapons require import via a Federal Firearms permit holder; some exceptions allow individuals to apply directly to ATF (apply at least 6 weeks in advance; the application must name the Customs broker)
- Not all weapon types can be imported
- Ammunition should not be shipped as it is a hazardous good

Restricted / Dutiable Items

Duty-Free Allowances (Travellers)

- Alcohol: 1 bottle of spirits (includes wine), plus 1 case of beer
- Tobacco: 1 carton of cigarettes
- Quantities exceeding these limits are subject to duty calculated as a percentage by Customs upon arrival

Restricted Items

- Plants and seeds PERMIT REQUIRED — Import permit required from Department of Agriculture
- Soil PERMIT REQUIRED — Import permit required
- Meats and meat byproducts (including bouillon soups) — Must be declared; restrictions apply
- Fruits and vegetables — Must be declared; subject to quarantine inspection
- Medications — Prescription medications over 30 days' supply require a doctor's note (preferably in English)
- Game and hunting trophies — Subject to restrictions

- Gold — Restricted
- Merchandise from embargoed countries PERMIT REQUIRED — License from the Office of Foreign Assets Control required
- Textiles and clothing — May be subject to duty
- Fish and wildlife products (ivory, skins, feathers, shells) CITES — Regulated by Fish and Wildlife Service; many require CITES permits or are prohibited; permits cannot be issued after shipment leaves origin
- Alcohol within household shipments — Governed by both federal and territory laws; if Customs deems the amount excessive, a licensed alcohol importer must file a commercial entry
- Food items — Import strongly discouraged; requires detailed inventory for food and drug filings and duty payments
- Weapons — See Prohibited Items; complex rules for previously US-owned firearms vs. foreign-purchased firearms

Antiques, Artefacts, Carpets, Paintings

- Antiques must be at least 100 years old (recently purchased antiques should show circa date on invoice); antiques are duty-free
- Carpets of Iranian origin used in the foreign household for at least 1 year and imported with household goods are generally approved, but large quantities or new carpets are discouraged due to the US embargo on Iranian-origin goods
- Paintings of nominal value can be shipped with household goods
- Artefacts should not be shipped without first checking with the USA agent and the country of export, as CITES treaties may apply

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 inventory in English must be prepared at the time of packing. Items purchased abroad and used less than 12 months should be individually itemised on the back of CF-3299 with description, quantity, material, USD value, and country of origin.

ISF filing: The Importer Security Filing must be filed prior to the vessel's departure from the last foreign port for all ocean shipments. This is the origin agent's responsibility.

Biosecurity inspection: All shipments are subject to quarantine/biosecurity inspection by the Department of Agriculture. Equipment, outdoor gear, and agricultural products will be inspected. Items must be clean and free of soil and biological material.

Routing / transit: American Samoa is extremely remote, located in the South Pacific approximately halfway between Hawaii and New Zealand. The main port of entry is Pago Pago Harbor (Tutuila Island) for sea freight and Pago Pago International Airport for air freight. Shipping options are limited. Hawaiian Airlines operates bi-weekly flights from Honolulu. Samoa Airways and Talofa Airways offer flights from Apia (Samoa) and Tonga. The Samoa Shipping Corporation operates a weekly ferry between Samoa and American Samoa. Sea freight from the US mainland is typically routed via Honolulu.

Customs examination costs: Government examinations can cost USD 200–1,700+ per FCL shipment.

Currency: The US dollar (USD) is the currency. Cash economy predominates outside hotels; credit cards are limited.

Health declaration: All travellers must complete a health declaration (available online at travel.doh.as or on paper upon arrival).

Special territories: American Samoa consists of five main islands (Tutuila, Aunu'u, and the Manu'a group: Ta'u, Ofu, Olosega) plus two coral atolls (Swains Island, Rose Atoll). Most infrastructure and port services are on Tutuila (Pago Pago). Inter-island transport to Manu'a is limited.

Regulatory Updates

- 2021–present: American Samoa requires all imported dogs and cats to be spayed or neutered, enforced via executive order and ongoing quarantine regulations.
- 2021: Service animals and emotional support animals were permitted for import under new emergency rules, following a federal ADA lawsuit. Specific quarantine and documentation requirements apply.
- 2016: Executive order established moratorium on importation of unaltered (not spayed/neutered) pets.
- Pit Bull ban: American Samoa prohibits the import of Pit Bull breeds, their crosses, and American Bull Terriers. This prohibition has been in effect for multiple years and remains active.