

Chile

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 Chilean Citizens

- Original bill of lading (OBL) for sea shipments / air waybill (AWB) for air / inland BL for land
- Inventory list, correctly registered and typed, in English or Spanish only
- Travel Certificate (Certificado de Viajes) issued in Chile by Interpol (valid for 30 days)
- Photocopy of passport (identification page with clear photo)
- Last entrance stamp to Chile visible in passport
- Set of customs forms (supplied by Chilean destination agent)

For Foreign Citizens (Non-Citizens)

- Original bill of lading (OBL) / air waybill (AWB) / inland BL
- Inventory list, correctly registered and typed, in English or Spanish only
- Photocopy of passport (identification page)
- Last entrance stamp to Chile visible in passport
- Photocopy of Work Visa or Temporary Resident Visa, with a minimum of 365 days, stamped in passport
- Set of customs forms (supplied by Chilean destination agent)

For Diplomats and International Officials

- Original bill of lading
- Inventory list
- Photocopy of passport
- Exoneration Form issued by the Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs (obtained through the corresponding embassy or international organization)
- Set of customs forms (supplied by Chilean destination agent)

Specific Information

Diplomatic shipments: Fully exempt from duties and taxes. The exemption form must be obtained from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Diplomatic status does not exempt shipments from Customs verification or SAG (agricultural) inspection.

120-day import window: The shipment must arrive in conjunction with, or within 120 days before or after, the beneficiary's arrival in Chile. If this deadline is missed, the entire shipment is subject to full duties and taxes.

Definitive importation deadline: Definitive importation of the goods must be completed within 90 days.

All shipments are subject to physical inspection by Customs and the Agricultural and Livestock Service (SAG). This can cause delays; plan accordingly.

ISPM 15 (wood packaging): Mandatory. All wood packing and wood items must comply with ISPM 15 standards. Shipments arriving without the required ISPM 15 seal will be returned to the country of origin at the shipper's/origin agent's expense. The Agriculture Office (SAG) may also order fumigation for wood furniture that has not been previously treated (though wood furniture itself is not required to have prior fumigation).

Air shipments over 300 kg: Since November 2018, air shipments weighing 300 kg or more require an additional thorough inspection at airport facilities (in addition to standard Customs inspection). This adds 1-2 days to clearance and increases destination and storage charges. All air shipments, regardless of weight, require a fully detailed packing list specifying: clothing (number of pants, shirts, shoes, etc.), electronics (type, brand, model, serial number), wooden items, and which items are in which crate.

Inventory language: The inventory list is accepted only in English or Spanish. Other languages will not be accepted by Chilean Customs.

Duties & Taxes

Duty-free allowances for returning Chilean citizens depend on length of stay abroad:

- Between 6 and 12 months abroad: up to US\$675 FOB, duty-free (no interruptions allowed)
- Between 1 and 5 years abroad: up to US\$4,050 FOB, duty-free (30 days interruption per year allowed)
- More than 5 years abroad: up to US\$6,750 FOB, duty-free (60 days interruption per year allowed)
- Only 1% duty is charged on CIF value for goods within the exemption threshold
- This benefit is available once every 3 years

Duty-free allowances for foreign citizens (non-citizens):

- Must have a work visa or temporary resident visa valid for at least 1 year (365 days)
- May import up to US\$6,750 FOB tax-free
- Shipments over US\$6,750 FOB are subject to customs duties on the excess amount
- If the visa is still being processed, clearance is possible under bonded storage at the importer's residence; the official visa stamped in the passport must be presented to Customs within 90 days, otherwise the entire shipment becomes subject to full duties
- A maximum of two shipments may be imported under this exemption from the same origin (one with personal effects, one with household goods); the combined value must not exceed US\$6,750 FOB
- This benefit is available once every 3 years

When no exemptions apply:

- Used household goods: approximately 30% duty over CIF value (6% customs duty + surcharges + 19% VAT)
- New items: approximately 28% over CIF value
- Customs valuation considers depreciation for use (10% per year, up to 70% maximum discount)

Prohibited & Restricted Items

Prohibited Items

- Arms, ammunition, and dangerous objects (sporting firearms allowed with DGMN permit)
PERMIT REQUIRED
- Used motorcycles
- Used tires
- Plants, soil, and seeds (subject to SAG controls)
- Narcotics and illegal drugs
- Pornographic materials, movies, or publications

- Medicines without National Health Service approval PERMIT REQUIRED

Restricted / Dutiable Items

Alcohol:

- Adults over 18 may import 2.5 liters of alcohol duty-free (including wine)
- Amounts exceeding 2.5 liters are subject to duties and taxes of 27% or more (wines: 20.5% on CIF + duties; liquors: 31.5% on CIF + duties)
- SAG limits: 30 liters of wine, 10 liters of spirits, 30 liters of beer
- Importing more than 24 bottles of the same brand requires SAG to take 4 sample bottles for composition analysis (not returned), at the importer's expense
- Importing more than 30 liters requires a separate import permit from the SAG Alcohol Division (Av. Presidente Bulnes 140, Santiago) before the shipment arrives

Foodstuffs: Only non-perishable food, canned or sealed, in quantities limited to personal use. SAG inspection is stringent; it is recommended not to ship food items.

Firearms: Only sporting firearms (hunting or target shooting) may be imported, with prior authorization from the General Directorate of National Mobilization (DGMN). Full customs duties and taxes apply plus an additional 15%. Firearms must be released to Customs upon arrival until the permit is granted.

Medicines: Subject to approval by the National Health Service, which may take several weeks. Medicines will be removed from the shipment until cleared. It is recommended not to ship medicines; bring them in personal luggage with a doctor's prescription instead.

Safe boxes: Subject to duties unless small and manually transportable. Keys and/or passcode must be available during Customs inspection; if not, the safe will be confiscated until opened.

Consignment Instructions

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

Dispatch times after customs clearance:

- Air and land shipments: 3 working days
- FCL (full container load): 5 working days
- LCL (less than container load): 7 working days

Travel Certificate (returning citizens): The customer must be physically in Chile to obtain this document, as the latest passport entry stamp must be presented. The certificate is valid for 30 days. This is issued by Interpol in Chile.

Visa timing (foreign citizens): If the work visa is still being processed at the time of the shipment's arrival, the goods may be cleared under bonded storage at the importer's residence. The official visa must be presented within 90 days, or the entire shipment reverts to full duties.

Two-shipment limit (foreign citizens): A maximum of two shipments may be imported under the duty-free benefit from the same origin. Combined value must not exceed US\$6,750 FOB.

120-day window: All shipments must arrive within 120 days before or after the beneficiary's arrival. This deadline is strictly enforced.

Detailed packing list for air shipments: All air shipments must include item-by-item detail, including clothing counts by type, electronics with brand/model/serial numbers, and identification of wooden items. If goods are in multiple crates, the list must indicate which items are in which crate.

ISPM 15 enforcement: Chile will return non-compliant shipments to origin. This is not a fine-and-fumigate situation; the shipment goes back at the shipper's expense.

Port of entry: Principal sea freight port is Valparaiso (San Antonio also used). Air freight arrives at Santiago Arturo Merino Benitez International Airport (SCL).