

Cuba

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.

Required Documents

Cuba's household goods import regime is governed by Decree-Law 22/2020 (Ley General de las Aduanas de la República de Cuba). The right to import household goods duty-free is strictly limited to specific categories of persons and is a one-time entitlement.

For foreigners acquiring permanent residency

- Valid passport with Cuban permanent residency visa
- Proof of permanent residency status
- D'Viajeros customs declaration form (mandatory for all arriving passengers)
- Detailed packing list in Spanish including: package numbers, description of contents, brand/model/serial number for all electronics, and declared values
- This is a one-time entitlement

For foreigners purchasing or renting homes through authorized Cuban agencies

- Valid passport
- Proof of property purchase or rental through an authorized Cuban real estate agency
- D'Viajeros customs declaration form
- Detailed packing list in Spanish (same requirements as above)
- This is a one-time entitlement

For Cuban nationals returning permanently after residence abroad

- Cuban passport
- Proof of cancellation of foreign residence permit
- Must have resided abroad for 2 or more years
- D'Viajeros customs declaration form
- Detailed packing list in Spanish (same requirements as above)
- This is a one-time entitlement

For Foreign Service officials with MFA franchise

- Diplomatic credentials
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs franchise documentation
- D'Viajeros customs declaration form

Specific Information

Tariff debt and duties on non-exempt goods: All tariff debt is calculated in Cuban pesos (CUP) based on the USD import value using ad-valorem rates. The exchange rate as of early 2026 is approximately 1 USD = 120 CUP. Non-exempt goods within shipments are subject to customs

duty.

Essential goods allowance (February 2026 regulatory update): As of February 2026, essential goods including food, hygiene products, medicines, and medical supplies have special duty-free allowances for arriving travelers. These allowances are subject to periodic revision by the Cuban customs authority.

Packing list requirements: The packing list must be in Spanish. It must include package numbering, a detailed description of contents, brand name/model/serial number for all electronic items, and declared values for all items. Failure to provide a compliant packing list will delay or prevent customs clearance.

D'Viajeros form: All passengers arriving in Cuba must complete the D'Viajeros customs declaration form. This is mandatory regardless of whether goods are being imported.

New goods within shipments: Any new or unused items found within a household goods shipment that are not covered by the duty-free entitlement will be subject to customs duty.

Duties & Taxes

Duty-free conditions: Household goods may be imported duty-free only by the categories of persons listed above, and only once per person per category. "Household goods" is defined under Cuban customs law as domestic articles, furniture, and equipment for domestic use. The definition explicitly excludes: pumps, motors, food products, construction materials, spare parts, motor vehicles, boats, and aircraft.

Prohibited & Restricted Items

Prohibited Items

- Narcotics and controlled drugs — strictly prohibited; severe criminal penalties
- Firearms, weapons, explosives, and ammunition — prohibited without specific government authorization PERMIT REQUIRED
- Pornographic material — prohibited
- Seeds and fresh animal or vegetable products — prohibited without Ministry of Agriculture approval PERMIT REQUIRED
- Items considered contrary to the interests of the Cuban state — broad prohibition enforced at customs discretion
- Counterfeit currency and goods — prohibited

Restricted / Dutiable Items

Traveler Allowances

Personal effects: 25 kg of personal effects are admitted free of duty.

Beyond the 25 kg allowance: Additional goods up to CUP 1,000 in value or 100 kg (whichever is reached first) are subject to duty at ad-valorem rates.

Tobacco (18+): 400 cigarettes or 50 cigars.

Alcohol (18+): 2 bottles of alcoholic beverages.

Currency: Foreign currency up to USD 5,000 may be imported without declaration. Amounts exceeding USD 5,000 must be declared. Cuban pesos (CUP) up to CUP 2,000 may be imported.

Restricted Items

- Satellite dishes and satellite receivers — restricted; subject to confiscation
- Radio communication equipment and GPS devices — restricted; may require authorization
- Food products — only industrially elaborated and hermetically sealed food products are permitted; fresh food, homemade food, and non-sealed items are prohibited
- Medicines — reasonable quantities for personal use permitted; commercial quantities restricted

- Electronic equipment in large quantities — may be assessed as commercial imports and subject to higher duties

U.S. Sanctions Considerations

Cuba is subject to comprehensive U.S. sanctions administered by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC). Key implications for movers and customers:

- Cuba is a Column 2 country under the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTSUS), meaning higher duty rates apply to any Cuban-origin goods entering the U.S.
- U.S. persons (citizens, permanent residents, persons in the U.S.) are subject to OFAC regulations regarding transactions with Cuba, including shipping and moving services
- U.S. credit and debit cards do not function in Cuba
- Commercial imports from Cuba to the U.S. are broadly restricted, with limited exceptions for goods from independent Cuban entrepreneurs
- Movers handling relocations involving U.S. persons and Cuba should consult OFAC guidance: OFAC Cuba Sanctions — verified 200

Consignment Instructions

Contact the destination agent to ensure all requirements have been met prior to import. This is especially important for Cuba given the limited availability of official government information online and the unique regulatory environment.

Packing list in Spanish: This is a hard requirement. The packing list must include package numbers, content descriptions, brand/model/serial numbers for electronics, and declared values. An English-only packing list will not be accepted.

Timing: Household goods should arrive with or after the importer. Shipments arriving before the importer's documented residency or entry may face delays or denial of duty-free treatment.

Inventory and inspection: Cuban customs authorities may conduct thorough physical inspections of shipments. All items should match the declared packing list exactly. Undeclared items will be subject to duty and may be confiscated.

Currency for duties and expenses: All customs duties are assessed in Cuban pesos (CUP). Given that U.S. credit/debit cards do not work in Cuba and foreign currency access is limited, customers should plan for cash payment of any duties or fees. Euros and Canadian dollars are more readily exchangeable than U.S. dollars in Cuba.

Port of entry: Most household goods shipments enter through the port of Havana. Confirm port and warehouse logistics with the destination agent, as port handling times and procedures can be unpredictable.

Unpredictable expenses: Warehouse storage fees, handling charges, and inspection delays are common. Budget for additional costs beyond the stated duty rates.