

Dominican Republic

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.

Updated 2026-09-05

Documents

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

For non-citizens (foreigners)

- Passport copy
- Dominican Republic resident carnet, or documentation from the Migration Office certifying that the residence application is in process (if applying for the Law 146-00 partial tax reduction)
- Original bill of lading (OBL) or air waybill (AWB)
- Inventory list in Spanish or English

For returning Dominican residents

- Valid passport and proof of residence abroad for 2 or more years
- Original bill of lading (OBL) or air waybill (AWB)
- Inventory list in Spanish or English
- Residence carnet or Dominican ID (cédula)

For diplomats

- Original bill of lading (OBL) or AWB
- Detailed inventory in Spanish or English
- Letter of transfer
- Contact at the embassy
- The consignee must be the name of the embassy along with their RNC (tax registration number)

Additional documents as applicable

- Marriage or divorce certificate (if applicable)
- Commercial invoice (if new furniture and household goods are included)

Specific Information

Shipper presence: The shipper's presence is not required during shipment inspection unless the shipper requests it, or the shipper has Dominican residency and is applying for an exemption from taxes and duties on used electrical appliances and furniture.

Demurrage charges: All shipments without exception must pay demurrage charges for use of the container, including storage at the port/airport/warehouse, fumigation fee, and marine line charges.

Works of art and antiques: Require a commercial invoice and packing list with pictures if shipped separately. No additional documents required if included as part of the household goods shipment.

ISPM 15: Wood packaging materials must comply with ISPM 15. Heat treatment (HT) to a minimum core temperature of 56°C for 30 minutes, or fumigation with methyl bromide (MB) at a minimum temperature of 10°C for a minimum 16-hour exposure. The mark must be visible, legible, permanent, in black ink (not red or orange), on at least two opposite sides. Labels and adhesives are not allowed.

Currency: Dominican peso (DOP). Approximately 1 USD = 60 DOP.

Duties & Taxes

Partial tax exemption (Law 146-00): Both foreigners and returning Dominican residents who have been outside the country for more than 2 years with less than 180 days visited to the Dominican Republic during that time may apply for Law 146-00 to obtain a partial reduction of taxes and duties on used household goods. The Dominican Republic resident permit is not necessary for the basic importation of household goods, but is required to apply for the Law 146-00 tax reduction. The exoneration is partial, not full.

Taxes on appliances: New and used electric appliances are subject to taxes and duties. Electrical appliances must have serial number and brand declared on the inventory.

New furniture and household goods: Require a commercial invoice and are subject to full payment of duties.

Inheritances: Subject to payment of duties (same documents as removal goods plus inheritance documentation).

Wedding trousseaux: Duty-free entry, same documents as removal goods plus marriage certificate.

Carpets: Subject to payment of duties even if part of household goods.

Prohibited & Restricted Items

Prohibited Items

- Firearms, ammunition, explosives, and dangerous goods — customs will seize the entire shipment if any are found, and the shipper could face imprisonment
- Pornographic and subversive materials — prohibited
- Illegal drugs — strictly prohibited; severe criminal penalties including deportation
- Precious metal objects (jewelry) within shipments — prohibited
- Money/currency within shipments — prohibited
- Gas, gasoline, and batteries within shipments — prohibited
- Chemical products within shipments — prohibited

Restricted / Dutiable Items

Traveler Allowances

Per VisaHQ:

- 200 cigarettes, or 1 box of cigars (not exceeding 50)
- 2 litres of alcoholic beverages
- Gift articles not exceeding USD 100 in value
- Perfume for personal use
- Personal belongings in reasonable quantities

Restricted Items

- Alcohol and wine within shipments — only small quantities for personal consumption permitted; if more than 24 bottles, a detailed separate inventory is required listing type, alcoholic content, value, and capacity of each item; diplomats may have exceptions regarding bottle limits (check with embassy before shipping)
- Food items and tinned goods — restricted; only small quantities for personal consumption

permitted

- Medicines, narcotics, and drugs — duty-free entry if prescribed by a doctor (prescription required); otherwise strictly prohibited and the shipper may face criminal prosecution, penalties, or deportation
- Live plants — phytosanitary certificate from origin required prior to arrival plus a permit from Dominican Agriculture after arrival; plants should NOT be sent as part of the household goods shipment or risk confiscation/destruction upon arrival
- Firearms — military permit for personal firearms must be obtained in person after the owner's arrival but prior to shipment arrival; unauthorized firearms found in the shipment will result in criminal prosecution and penalties PERMIT REQUIRED
- New furniture and household goods — commercial invoice required; subject to duties
- New electrical appliances — subject to duties
- Appliances, spare parts, and machines — subject to duties on customs valuation
- Precious metal objects (jewelry) — prohibited within shipments
- Money/currency — prohibited within shipments
- Gas, gasoline, and batteries — prohibited within shipments
- Chemical products — prohibited within shipments

Consignment Instructions

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

Demurrage is unavoidable: All shipments without exception must pay demurrage charges for container use, port/airport/warehouse storage, fumigation fees, and marine line charges. These costs should be factored into every relocation quote.

Clearance timeline: Expect 2-3 weeks from shipment arrival to dispatch for standard shipments. Diplomatic shipments clear in 3-4 days once the exemption is processed.

Inventory detail for electrical appliances: Every electrical appliance must have its serial number and brand declared on the inventory. Failure to do so will delay clearance and may result in additional duties.

Alcohol inventory requirements: If alcohol exceeds 24 bottles, a detailed separate inventory is mandatory listing type, alcoholic content, value, and capacity for each item.

Do not ship plants with household goods. They require separate phytosanitary certification and a Dominican Agriculture permit obtained after arrival. Including them in the household goods shipment risks confiscation and destruction.

Do not ship firearms without prior arrangement. The military permit must be obtained in person after the owner's arrival but before the shipment arrives. This requires careful timing coordination with the destination agent.

Vehicle shipping requires advance coordination. Contact the destination agent before shipping any vehicle. The 5-year age limit is strictly enforced.

Apostille requirement for pet health certificates (U.S. origin): Per BringFido, the health certificate must be certified by the Agriculture Department of the originating state and apostilled. This adds processing time that must be planned for.