

Ghana

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.

Required Documents

- Copy of valid passport with entry visa
- Packing list
- Original bill of lading (OBL), no express release / air waybill (AWB)
- Detailed valued inventory in English, signed and dated by the owner of the goods
- Letter from the employer stating the client is starting a new contract in Ghana
- PUBD form (Personal Unaccompanied Baggage Declaration), to be filled out at the airport of arrival. Failure to complete this form will attract heavy penalties and delays in customs clearance.
- Invoice for electrical and hi-fi appliances and for all items purchased less than 6 months before the shipment's arrival

Specific Information

PUBD form is critical: The Personal Unaccompanied Baggage Declaration must be completed at the airport when the owner first arrives in Ghana. This form is presented to customs when clearing the household goods shipment. Without it, the shipment faces heavy penalties and significant delays. Movers must advise clients to complete this form upon arrival even if their shipment is weeks or months away.

Diplomatic shipments: Require the exemption certificate from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Original documents (including the original AWB) must be provided to the agent at least 14 days before the shipment's arrival. The OBL/AWB must be marked "Diplomatic shipment."

Document lead time: Agents must have all customs documents at least 15 days before the shipment's arrival in Ghana.

ECOWAS membership: Ghana is a member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The Common External Tariff (CET) applies to imports from outside the ECOWAS zone.

Currency: Ghanaian cedi (GHS).

Language: English is the official language. All documents should be in English.

ISPM 15: Wood packaging materials should comply with ISPM 15 standards.

Duties & Taxes

Duty-free conditions: Diplomatic shipments can be imported duty-free with the appropriate exemption certificate. For non-diplomatic shipments, duties may apply depending on the goods. Contact the destination agent for current duty-free eligibility and requirements for private individuals and corporate transferees.

VAT: Ghana's standard VAT rate is 15% (the Ghana Revenue Authority applies this to dutiable

imports). Additional levies may apply.

Prohibited & Restricted Items

Prohibited Items

- Used refrigerators, used air conditioners, and used deep freezers (regardless of the owner's status -- this is strictly enforced and catches many relocating families off guard)
- Unlawful drugs and narcotics
- Foreign cigarettes without health warning notice
- Mercuric medicated soap
- Toxic waste and contaminated goods
- Animals, plants, and seeds infected with disease
- Foreign soil
- Pornographic, defamatory, or obscene articles and publications
- Dangerous weapons (including flick knives and paper knives)
- Firearms and ammunition without authorization (PERMIT REQUIRED)
- Protected species products (CITES)

Restricted / Dutiable Items

Alcohol within shipments: "Fond de Cave" (personal wine collection) is acceptable and duty-free, maximum 20 bottles.

Alcohol in personal luggage: Maximum 10 bottles. Duties levied on the excess.

Tobacco (traveller allowance per VisaHQ): 400 cigarettes OR 1 pound (approximately 450 grams) of tobacco.

Firearms and ammunition: Authorization from the territorial administration required.

Rough or uncut diamonds: License from the Ministry of Finance required.

Live plants and plant products: Permit from the Ministry of Agriculture required.

Poultry products: Permission from the Ministries of Trade and Agriculture required for imports from certain countries. Contact the destination agent for specifics.

Currency limits: Maximum GHS 1,000 in local currency can be exported. Maximum USD 5,000 equivalent in foreign currency can be exported without declaration.

Consignment Instructions

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

PUBD form: This is the single most important procedural step for any shipment to Ghana. The owner MUST complete the Personal Unaccompanied Baggage Declaration at the airport when they first arrive in Ghana. Without this form, customs clearance faces heavy penalties and delays. Movers should provide written instructions to the client about this requirement well before travel.

Document lead time: All customs documents must reach the destination agent at least 15 days before the shipment arrives. For diplomatic shipments, original documents (including original AWB) are required 14 days before arrival.

Port of entry: Tema port (near Accra) is the primary sea freight port. Kotoka International Airport in Accra handles air freight. Takoradi port handles some cargo in the western region.

Used appliance prohibition: The ban on used refrigerators, air conditioners, and deep freezers is frequently overlooked. These items must be removed from shipments before export, or they will be confiscated at customs. This applies to everyone, including diplomats.

Inventory requirements: Detailed valued inventory in English, signed and dated by the owner. Items purchased less than 6 months before the shipment require original invoices.