

Greenland

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

- Passport or valid national ID
- Detailed inventory/packing list with descriptions and values
- Proof of employment in Greenland or documentation of reason for relocation
- Bill of lading or air waybill
- Any weapons permits (if shipping firearms; see Section 5)

Specific Information

Exemption for used personal effects: Personal belongings that are more than six months old are generally exempt from customs duties and taxes, provided the owner can demonstrate prior use. Documentation such as purchase receipts, photos, or similar evidence of ownership and use may be requested. However, port and airport handling fees still apply.

New goods: New and unused items within a household shipment may be subject to import duty. Items purchased new in Denmark shortly before moving may qualify for a Danish VAT refund (on purchases over DKK 300) since Greenland does not charge VAT, provided the items are unused, in original packaging, and the invoice shows a Greenlandic address or a tax-free form was issued.

Shipping logistics: All sea freight to Greenland must go through Royal Arctic Line (RAL), departing from the Port of Greenland in Aalborg, Denmark. RAL also assists with customs clearance. Air freight is handled by Air Greenland, though capacity is limited and costly.

Employer-assisted moves: In most cases, the employer in Greenland arranges and pays for relocation logistics. If your employer is managing the move, coordinate with them and the freight carrier on customs documentation requirements.

Alcohol, tobacco, and perishables in shipments: Household goods shipments may NOT contain wine, spirits, cigarettes, or easily perishable food items. These must be brought separately within personal duty-free allowances or purchased locally.

Dangerous goods: Shipments may not contain certain chemicals, solvents, paints, gas cartridges, or other dangerous goods without proper declaration and safety data sheets.

ISPM 15: Wood packaging materials must comply with ISPM 15 standards for international shipments entering Greenland.

Duties & Taxes

Customs duty on all imports: Unlike EU member states, Greenland charges customs duty on all imported goods, including household effects arriving from Denmark and the Faroe Islands. There is no blanket duty-free exemption for household goods in the way EU countries typically

provide one.

Prohibited & Restricted Items

Prohibited Items

- Illegal drugs and narcotic substances (PROHIBITED)
- Weapons, explosives, and ammunition without prior permission from Greenlandic authorities (PERMIT REQUIRED)
- Knives and deadly weapons (PROHIBITED)
- Counterfeit currency (PROHIBITED)
- Pets and animals without proper import permits (RESTRICTED; see Section 3)
- Fighting dogs and muscle dog breeds (PROHIBITED)
- Dogs in sled dog districts (north of Kangaamiut and East Greenland) without exemption (PROHIBITED)
- Plants, seeds, fruit, and plant products (including cut flowers) from countries outside the EU, without phytosanitary certification (RESTRICTED)
- Endangered species and products derived from them without CITES permits (CITES)
- Easily perishable food items within household goods shipments (RESTRICTED)
- Certain chemicals, gas cartridges, and dangerous goods without proper declaration (RESTRICTED)

Hunting rifles: A permit from the carrying airline is required to bring a hunting rifle to Greenland, and hunting is only permitted on special trips organized by authorized tour operators approved by the Home Rule Government.

Restricted / Dutiable Items

Duty-Free Allowances on Personal Entry (persons aged 18+)

The following duty-free allowances apply to all travelers entering Greenland, including from Denmark and the Faroe Islands (per Executive Order No. 19, effective August 17, 2016):

Tobacco products (choose one category only):

- 200 cigarettes, OR
- 100 cigarillos (max. 3 g each), OR
- 50 cigars, OR
- 250 g smoking tobacco
- Plus: 200 cigarette rolling papers or tubes

Alcoholic beverages:

- 1 liter of spirits over 22%, OR
- 2 liters of fortified wine under 22%
- Plus: 2.25 liters of table wine (not exceeding 15%)
- Plus: 2 liters of beer
- Plus: 2 liters of carbonated soft drinks

Other goods:

- 50 ml perfume
- 250 ml eau de toilette
- Cosmetics and toiletries up to a value of DKK 1,000
- 4 kg of chocolates and sweets

Age restriction: Tobacco and alcohol allowances apply only to persons aged 18 or older.

Additional Dutiable Items

Alcohol, tobacco, food products, and vehicles are all subject to specific import duties beyond the duty-free allowances. Rates vary by product category. The Greenlandic tax authority

(Skattestyrelsen) publishes detailed duty rate schedules.

Currency: No specific restrictions noted, but amounts should be declared if required by the origin country's export regulations.

Special Categories

Important Context

Greenland is an autonomous territory within the Kingdom of Denmark. It is NOT part of the European Union (Greenland left the EEC in 1985) and maintains its own customs regime. Customs duty is payable on essentially all goods imported into Greenland, including from Denmark and the Faroe Islands. The sole sea freight carrier to Greenland is Royal Arctic Line (RAL), operating from the Port of Greenland in Aalborg, Denmark. Air freight goes through Air Greenland. Greenland has no VAT, but import duties and excise taxes apply. The population is approximately 56,000, and logistics are heavily constrained by geography, climate, and limited infrastructure.

Discrepancies and Clarifications

Unverified Items

- Exact current customs duty rates for used household goods (the "generally exempt if over 6 months old" claim needs confirmation with Skattestyrelsen)
- Specific motor vehicle import duty rates and calculation method
- Whether the 20% import tax rate cited by FreightAmigo applies to household goods or only commercial shipments
- Complete list of dog breeds classified as "fighting dogs or muscle dogs" under Greenlandic law
- Current processing times for animal import permit applications through Greenland Representation

Consignment Instructions

Recommended: Contact the destination agent or Royal Arctic Line (RAL) to ensure all requirements have been met prior to import. Greenland's remote location and limited infrastructure mean that errors in documentation can cause severe delays and significant additional costs.

Sea freight: All sea freight must be handled by Royal Arctic Line (RAL) from their facility at the Port of Greenland in Aalborg, Denmark. RAL provides customs clearance assistance. Plan for long transit times, particularly to remote settlements.

Air freight: Air Greenland handles air cargo. Capacity is limited and costs are high. Contact Air Greenland well in advance, especially if transporting animals or oversized items.

Inventory requirements: A detailed declaration of contents (nature of goods, value, quantity) should be prepared in English or Danish. All items should be clearly described for customs assessment.

Timing and weather: Shipping schedules to Greenland are affected by Arctic weather, sea ice conditions, and seasonal accessibility of certain ports. Some settlements may only be accessible by sea during summer months. Plan shipments well in advance and build in buffer time.

Unpredictable expenses: Storage fees, demurrage, weather-related delays, and customs assessment charges can add significantly to costs. Greenland's remote logistics mean that any documentation error or delay compounds quickly.

Special considerations: Most employer-assisted relocations include logistical support for shipping. If relocating independently, engage a freight forwarder experienced with Greenland logistics and work closely with RAL.