

Jamaica

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 All Importers

- 2 copies of passport (data page and landing stamp), notarized by a Justice of the Peace (J.P.) as true copies
- Tax Registration Number (TRN)
- Inventory/packing list
- Unaccompanied Baggage Declaration Form (C.27), provided at the airport/seaport upon arrival in Jamaica
- Original bill of lading (OBL) or air waybill (AWB)
- Letter of authorization, notarized by a J.P.

For Foreign Workers/Residents

All of the above, plus:

- Work permit and letter of employment
- Residence permit (if not a Jamaican citizen)

For Returning Jamaican Residents

All of the above, plus:

- Customs Declaration Form (C.5), provided to the customs officer at the time of arrival at the airport
- Unconditional stamp (if Jamaican arriving on a foreign passport)
- Documents proving the customer has lived outside Jamaica for more than 3 years
- Document stating the customer's intention to re-establish permanent residence in Jamaica
- Tax returns for the last 3 years (W-2/1099, P-60, T4)
- Letter of separation from employer at origin
- Pension advice/Social Security letter (where applicable)
- Pay stubs, W-2, P45
- Invoices or bills from residence abroad
- Copy of retirement papers/pension advice, P60
- Evidence of disposal of property abroad
- Copy of sale/purchase agreement
- Evidence of property acquired in Jamaica
- Copy of utility bill in Jamaica (electric, water)
- Tax receipt
- Lease agreement
- Evidence of employment in Jamaica
- Letter notarized by a J.P. confirming place of residence if staying with a friend or relative, or copy of rental/lease agreement

For Returning Students

Standard documents, plus:

- Letter from institution attended
- Copy of I-20 ID
- Copy of transcript

For Diplomats

- Bill of lading
- Consular letter requesting free entry
- Inventory

Specific Information

Owner must be present: The owner of the goods must be in Jamaica during customs clearance.

C.27 form: All passengers must complete the C.27 Unaccompanied Baggage Declaration Form upon arrival at the airport/seaport if they are expecting luggage or household effects to arrive before or after them. The form is valid for 3 months and must be renewed if the shipment has not arrived. Extracts (copies of the C.27) must be obtained if more than one shipment is expected.

Electrical compatibility: Electrical and electronic equipment may not be compatible with the Jamaican system (220/110V, 50 cycle).

Inheritance: Personal effects of Jamaican citizens or persons ordinarily domiciled in Jamaica may be imported with a death certificate. Subject to examination and an affidavit from lawyers.

Diplomatic shipments: No examination required.

Duties & Taxes

Returning residents: May import one new appliance or piece of electronic equipment/computer, plus used household goods and tools of trade, duty-free. The returning resident must have lived outside Jamaica for more than 3 years.

Duty rates: Duty is determined after physical examination of goods at the stripping station, based on CIF value. Rates generally range from 5% to 40% depending on the item, plus government consumption tax (GCT) of 16.5% or approximately 23.8% compounded.

New items: Items less than 6 months old are dutiable for non-returning residents. Invoices must be provided for all new items.

Works of art and antiques: Duty-free if part of bona fide household effects. Large quantities must be accompanied by a certificate from the Antique Dealers Association of the country of exportation.

Precious metal objects: Subject to duties. Commercial or large imports require an import licence, item values, and a bank guarantee.

Carpets: Used carpets enter duty-free with the C.27 form. Goods must arrive within 2 months prior to passenger arrival or within the timeframe set by the Collector General.

Prohibited & Restricted Items

Prohibited Items

- Illegal drugs
- Knives and deadly weapons
- Firearms, explosives, and ammunition (unless prior permission obtained)
- Meat, meat products, plant and plant products (unless permission obtained from Ministry of Agriculture)
- Counterfeit money and goods

- Pornographic or offensive material
- Local currency (for non-residents importing)
- Dogo Argentino, Fila Brasileiro, Japanese Tosa, and Pit Bull Terrier dogs (and their crosses)
- Wolf hybrids and Savannah cats

Restricted / Dutiable Items

Traveller Allowances

- 200 cigarettes OR 50 cigars OR 225g tobacco
- 1 litre of spirits
- 1 litre of other alcoholic beverages
- 1 litre of wine
- 150g perfume

In Household Goods

- New items (less than 6 months old): dutiable for non-returning residents, invoices required
- Alcohol: 1 bottle of spirit and wine duty-free
- Food: only sufficient for immediate family use; duty may be payable at customs discretion; import licence and values required
- Firearms and ammunition: import permit required from the Police Commissioner of Customs, Trade Board, and Firearms & Licence Authority
- Two-way radios and specialist communications equipment: licence required from the Spectrum Management Authority
- Medicines/narcotics: import licence and drugs/poison permit required; preferably not shipped with household effects
- Plants: Ministry of Agriculture permit and fumigation/health certificate required

Currency

Jamaican residents can import unlimited local currency and unlimited foreign currency (up to the amount declared on departure). Non-residents can import unlimited foreign currency but no local currency.

Special Categories

Unverified Items

- Current GCT rate and additional levies could not be verified against a current Jamaican government source (TAJ website was unreachable). The 16.5% GCT rate from the FIDI guide (2020) may have changed.
- The FIDI guide's Trade Board import licence portal URL could not be verified (returns a login page, which is expected behaviour).
- Whether the 5-year vehicle age limit has been adjusted since 2020 could not be independently confirmed. The destination agent should verify current limits.

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.

C.27 form is critical: Must be completed upon arrival at the airport/seaport. Without this form, customs clearance cannot proceed. The form is valid for 3 months; renew if the shipment is delayed. Obtain extracts if multiple shipments are expected.

Owner must be in Jamaica for clearance. This is non-negotiable for non-diplomatic shipments.

Vehicle import licence: Must be obtained from the Trade Board BEFORE the vehicle is shipped. Failure to have this licence on arrival will cause significant delays.

Pet pre-notification: Required twice (3 weeks and 72 hours before arrival). The preliminary application must be approved before proceeding with parasite treatments.

Physical examination: All non-diplomatic shipments are physically examined at the stripping station. Duty is assessed based on what customs finds, not just what the inventory states.