

Saint Lucia

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

- Passport
- Original bill of lading (OBL) or air waybill (AWB)
- Detailed inventory in English, including serial numbers for all electrical devices and appliances
- Letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (diplomats only)

Specific Information

Saint Lucia offers duty-free import of used household effects under two pathways: general used goods exemption and the returning nationals program.

General used goods exemption: Household effects that have been in the owner's use and possession for at least 12 months, are not intended for resale or exchange, and are imported within 3 months of the owner's arrival may be imported free of import duty and consumption tax. Note that a 5% customs service charge and a 1.5% environmental levy remain payable even on duty-exempt shipments. The owner must sign a declaration before a Customs officer at the time of clearance.

Returning nationals: A returning national is defined as a Saint Lucian citizen who has lived abroad continuously for a minimum of 10 years. Returning nationals may import personal effects (used or new) duty-free under the Customs returning nationals program. Tools of the trade, musical instruments, and professional equipment may also qualify for exemption for returning nationals. Contact the Saint Lucia Customs and Excise Department or the destination agent for the full list of applicable exemptions and documentation required for this category.

New goods, gifts, and souvenirs within a shipment are subject to applicable duties. Bicycles are dutiable regardless of age. Gifts and souvenirs of a value not exceeding EC\$270 may be exempt from duty as a personal baggage allowance, claimable once per year and not applicable to alcohol, tobacco, or commercial goods.

A 6% customs service charge (updated: currently listed as 5% service charge plus 1.5% environmental levy by Saint Lucia Customs) is payable on all non-exempt imports. Confirm the current rate with the destination agent at time of booking.

All solid wood packing materials must comply with ISPM 15 phytosanitary standards.

Prohibited & Restricted Items

Prohibited Items

The following items are prohibited from import into Saint Lucia:

- Counterfeit currency and coins

- Food unfit for human consumption
- Pornographic materials (indecent or obscene prints, photographs, videos, or publications)
- Illegal drugs, narcotics, and drug paraphernalia (opium, morphine, cocaine, LSD, marijuana, etc.)
- Matches containing white or yellow phosphorus
- Items associated with the occult, black magic, or witchcraft
- Products made from endangered species protected under CITES [CITES]
- Counterfeit goods (intellectual property infringement)
- Air guns and similar firing devices [PERMIT REQUIRED if applicable]
- Condoms manufactured by Monkok Latex of South Korea
- Knives and other dangerous blades [PERMIT REQUIRED]
- Shaving brushes made in or exported from Japan
- Any pistol or apparatus in the form of a pen or pencil capable of firing a shot cartridge

Restricted / Dutiable Items

Accompanied baggage allowances (duty-free):

Travelers aged 18 and over may bring in duty-free: 40 fluid ounces (approximately 1.18 litres) of alcohol; 200 cigarettes or 50 cigars or 2 kg of smoking tobacco.

Gifts and souvenirs valued at EC\$270 or less are exempt, claimable once per year and not applicable to alcohol or tobacco.

In household goods shipments:

New furniture and household goods are subject to import duties and require an original signed commercial invoice.

Precious metal objects (jewelry, coins, etc.) are dutiable unless they form part of a legitimate household goods shipment that qualifies for exemption.

Tins and food items are subject to duties.

Machines, appliances, and spare parts are dutiable.

Gifts, souvenirs, wedding trousseaux, and inheritances included in a shipment are subject to duties unless they qualify under the returning nationals exemption.

Firearms and ammunition:

Require a permit from the Commissioner of Police. The application requires a Criminal Record Form, two passport-sized photographs, and a medical certificate. Processing can take one to six weeks. Members should advise clients to begin the firearms permit process well in advance of shipment.

Plants:

A Phytosanitary Certificate is required for all plant material. Contact the destination agent to confirm current plant import restrictions, as Saint Lucia may restrict or prohibit specific species.

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.

Original bills of lading are required for household goods clearance. Ensure the inventory is detailed, accurate, and in English, with serial numbers for all electrical and electronic items. Discrepancies between the inventory and actual shipment contents can result in delays and penalties.

The duty-free exemption for used household effects requires that goods have been in the owner's use and possession for at least 12 months and that they arrive within 3 months of the owner's arrival. The owner must be present at clearance to sign the declaration before a Customs officer. Members should plan shipping timelines accordingly to meet the 3-month window.

Note that even duty-exempt shipments attract a 5% customs service charge and a 1.5%

environmental levy, payable at clearance. Clients should budget for these charges.

Returning nationals should confirm their eligibility and gather supporting documentation of continuous residence abroad (minimum 10 years) before shipment. The destination agent and the Saint Lucia Customs and Excise Department can advise on current requirements.

For diplomatic shipments, a letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is required at time of clearance.