

Madagascar

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

Madagascar's customs regulations are complex and the documentation requirements differ significantly depending on the importer's status. The list below is not exhaustive; Malagasy customs reserves the right to request additional documentation. Always confirm the full requirements with the destination agent before shipping.

For Returning Malagasy Citizens and Malagasy Diplomats

- Client's passport (more than one year old); foreign passport if dual nationality
- Original or copy of plane ticket with original boarding pass and/or baggage ticket, or email confirmation from the airline or travel agency
- Original detailed inventory in French, valued, dated, and signed by the Madagascar Embassy or Malagasy Consulate in the country of departure
- *All effects must be valued. Electronics must state make, model, and serial number.*
- Signed list of all books, CDs, and DVDs
- Packing list (original, issued at origin on the day items are collected)
- 2 original bills of lading (OBL), or telex release / sea waybill / airway bill (AWB)
- *Express release is generally not accepted for sea shipments*
- Madagascar Embassy / Malagasy Consulate Relocation Certificate (FDD) from the country of departure, or a Ministry of Foreign Affairs non-representation certificate in Madagascar
- Certificate of change of residence from the town hall of the city of departure
- Visa or residence permit in the country of departure (more than one year before final arrival date)
- Handwritten letter to the Head of Customs Regulation and Legislation Department requesting tax exemption
- Letter of commitment, legalized by Malagasy town hall (form provided by destination agent)
- Free-of-charge letter, legalized by Malagasy town hall (form provided by destination agent)
- Residence certificate in Madagascar
- Copy of JIRAMA bill (electricity and water) at the same address as the inventory
- Certified copy of passport from the Malagasy town hall
- Copy of Malagasy identity card
- If applicable: proof of any passage in Madagascar during the 12 months before final arrival, and proof of break of stay if the client travelled outside Madagascar after final arrival

For Accredited Foreign Diplomats

- Copy of passport and visa, certified by the assignee's organization
- Valued inventory signed by the assignee
- Attestation de Destination (official duty exemption permit)

- Work certification / MIDAC
- Title document (original or certified copy) if importing a vehicle
- *Diplomatic containers are scanned at the port but are not subject to customs inspection except in cases of force majeure.*

For Foreign Citizens

All of the documents listed for returning citizens above, plus additional documents depending on status:

- *Expatriate workers:* Employment authorization from EDBM Madagascar, certificate of employment, copy of work contract
- *French teachers / AEFE development workers:* Certificate of non-employment from EDBM Madagascar, certificate of employment, copy of work contract, employment contract or transfer for more than one year, copy of AEFE contract
- *Investors:* Certificate of non-employment from EDBM Madagascar, certificate of employment, copy of work contract, letter of nomination for employment, certified copies of the company's status documents
- *Family reunion visa holders:* Long-stay visa for family reunification, marriage certificate or family record book, original foreign identity card
- Long-stay visa or resident card (strictly more than one year) in Madagascar for tax exemption

Specific Information

Timing: All shipments must arrive within 4 months of the client's arrival in Madagascar. For sea shipments, the container can only reach the final port of destination approximately 1.5 months after the assignee's definitive arrival. For air shipments, the origin agent should only dispatch the shipment once the permanent visa is confirmed ready.

Customs exemption limit: The customs exemption on importation of personal effects is permitted only once per person.

Owner presence: The client must be present in Madagascar during the customs clearance process. All shipments are physically inspected.

Documentation language: All inventories and customs documentation must be in French.

GASYNET / BSC: All non-diplomatic shipments are subject to the SGS-managed cargo tracking system (CTN / BSC, Bordereau de Suivi de Cargaison). The origin agent must provide the destination agent with the final sea or air waybill and a valued export customs declaration as soon as the shipment has departed. While the destination agent assists with tracking, it is ultimately the shipper's responsibility to complete the BSC process via the GasyNet system.

New items: All new items (original packaging, tags attached) are dutiable. The duty on new items is approximately 100% of declared value. Electrical items and appliances less than 6 months old require purchase receipts and incur tax and duty.

Appliance limits: Exemption is limited to 2 units per shipper of the following: bicycles, TVs, desktop computers, laptop computers, refrigerators, freezers, and cooking appliances (ovens, crock pots, etc.). Only 1 unit each is allowed of scanners, printers, copiers, or video projectors. Quantities exceeding these limits incur duty.

Household and garden tools are subject to import duty even if used.

Duties & Taxes

Duty-free conditions: Used household goods and personal effects (older than 6 months) may be imported duty-free provided the importation constitutes a genuine change of residence. The Certificate for Free Entry must be obtained from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Strict compliance with the documentation requirements is essential; non-compliance results in import duties of approximately 46% of cost and freight value.

VAT: Madagascar applies a 20% VAT on imports. All import shipments also incur a GASYNET tax of 0.3% of CIF value, plus 20% VAT on that 0.3%.

Prohibited & Restricted Items

Prohibited Items

- Narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances
- Firearms, ammunition, explosives, and military equipment [Permit Required]
- *Sport rifles require an agreement with the Defense Ministry*
- Weapons, knives, and deadly weapons
- Alcohol within household goods shipments (except Fond de Cave under 30 bottles)
- Pornographic and subversive materials
- Counterfeit goods and currency
- Stuffed (taxidermy) animals, birds, or fish
- Animal skins, furs, tusks, and horn [CITES]
- *Products derived from protected species require valid CITES permits*
- CB radios, walkie-talkies (including toy versions), GPS devices, and certain telecommunications equipment
- *Telephones and fax machines require an agreement with the Telecommunications and Post authority*
- Meat and meat products from outside Madagascar [Permit Required]
- *Require a health certificate and import authorization from the Regional Veterinary Service*
- Plants, plant products, and foodstuffs [Permit Required]
- *Require a phytosanitary certificate and import permit from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries*
- Vegetable matter of any kind
- Non-prescription drugs
- Electronic equipment (commercially prohibited; personal-use electronics within limits are permitted as restricted/dutiable)

Restricted / Dutiable Items

Duty-Free Traveller Allowances

The following items may be imported duty-free in the quantities indicated:

Tobacco: 20 packs of cigarettes (400 cigarettes total), or 25 cigars, or 500 g of loose tobacco. Quantities in excess incur duty.

Alcohol within household shipments: Alcohol is generally prohibited within household goods shipments. However, "Fond de Cave" (personal wine collection) is accepted in limited quantities (under 30 bottles). The following duty-free limits apply for alcohol within shipments: 2 litres of whisky, 2 litres of champagne, 4 litres of wine or sparkling wine, 4 litres of liqueur.

Perfume: All perfume is subject to duty regulations and cannot enter the country free of charge.

Dutiable Items

- Electrical items, appliances, and electronics less than 6 months old (require receipts)
- Home computers in excess of 2 units
- Household and garden tools (dutiable even if used)
- New items of any kind (approximately 100% duty)
- All items exceeding the per-shipper appliance limits (see Household Goods section)

Currency

Travellers may import up to MGA 400,000 in local currency. Foreign currency may be imported without limit but amounts exceeding EUR 7,500 (or equivalent) must be declared to customs.

Special Categories

Books, Tapes, and Discs

Books, audio tapes/CDs, and video tapes/DVDs require an agreement from the Interior Ministry. A detailed signed inventory list is required. These items will be censored and may be held for delivery to the residence by a customs agent or inspector.

Consignment Instructions

Recommended: Contact the destination agent to ensure all requirements have been met prior to import, especially for differences regarding air / sea shipments. The customs regulations in Madagascar are complex; always request the destination agent's approval before shipping.

Document submission: All required documents must be sent to the destination agent at least 15 days prior to the shipment's arrival. For diplomatic shipments, documents must be sent 30 days prior.

Clearance times: Customs clearance takes approximately 5 working days for ocean shipments and 2-3 days for air shipments. Customs offices are only open on weekdays. Shipments arriving Thursday or Friday will not be cleared over the weekend, incurring a 2-day delay. Free storage is limited to 3 days; charges apply thereafter.

Port of entry: The principal port for Madagascar is the Port of Toamasina (Tamatave). Air shipments arrive via Ivato International Airport in Antananarivo.

Visa timing: For foreign nationals, the green light for shipment can only be given once the client has arrived in Madagascar and the date of issue of their long-stay visa is confirmed. Air shipments should not be dispatched until the permanent visa is ready.

Export declaration: The origin agent must provide the destination agent with the final sea or air waybill and a valued household goods export customs declaration from the origin country customs authority as soon as the shipment has departed.

Power of attorney: A power of attorney giving authority for the destination agent to arrange customs clearance is required.

Owner presence: The owner must be present in Madagascar before the shipment arrives and during the clearance process.

Flammable materials surcharge: A 50% surcharge applies at the destination port if the bill of lading notes a presence of flammable or dangerous liquids (e.g. fuel remaining in a vehicle).

ISPM 15: Madagascar does not impose ISPM 15 requirements for wood packaging material.

Currency note: Madagascar is primarily a cash-driven economy. The local currency is the Malagasy Ariary (MGA). Credit cards are rarely accepted outside high-end establishments in Antananarivo. ATMs accepting Visa (generally not MasterCard) are available in large cities. US \$100 bills are frequently refused at banks and businesses.