

Papua New Guinea

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

- Original passport
- Original Bill of Lading (OBL) or Air Waybill (AWB)
- Valid work permit or residence permit
- Immigration arrival card (completed on arrival)
- Duty-free certificate issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (diplomats and UN/NGO/AID employees)

Specific Information

Expatriates must be employed by a registered company and hold a valid work permit or residence permit at the time of clearance. One air shipment and one sea shipment may be imported duty-free; duty is levied on new items or on items deemed to be in excessive quantities for personal use. All shipments must arrive within 3 months of the date of issue of the work permit or residence permit.

The owner of the goods must be present in Papua New Guinea to sign a statutory declaration before a Commissioner of Oaths. Any new items must be declared separately and are dutiable. Household goods and personal effects must be shipped separately from commercial goods.

All shipments are subject to inspection by both Papua New Guinea Customs Service and the Quarantine Department. Clearance cannot be completed until both authorities have approved release. All shipments must be ISPM 15 compliant; non-compliant wood packaging is subject to additional quarantine charges, treatment, or rejection.

Clearances are processed through the Customs ASYCUDA World (AW) system via a licensed customs broker. The import entry (Customs Form 15) must include the name, address, and Tax File Number of the owner; errors or omissions may attract administrative penalties, and deliberate false declarations can result in goods seizure and prosecution.

Shipments may be offloaded into a bonded warehouse at the port. Sea shipments take up to 30 days to clear; air shipments take up to 10 days. High demurrage charges can apply during this period -- coordinate timing closely with the destination agent.

Diplomats require a duty-free certificate issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. UN, NGO, and AID employees must obtain the same certificate through their sponsoring government department.

Prohibited & Restricted Items

Prohibited Items

- Pornographic materials

- Firearms and ammunition (without prior authorization and firearms licence)
- Fireworks
- Narcotics and illegal drugs
- Gambling instruments
- Subversive or offensive literature
- Uncanned foodstuffs of animal origin from countries other than Australia and New Zealand
- Any pig meat from New Zealand, whether fresh or canned
- All animals (excluding approved pets) and plants from countries other than Australia and New Zealand
- Agricultural products (subject to quarantine restrictions)

Restricted / Dutiable Items

Alcohol: Up to 1 litre of alcoholic beverages for persons 18 years and older.

Tobacco: Up to 260 cigarettes, 250 grams of cigars, or 250 grams of tobacco for persons 18 years and older.

Perfume: Reasonable personal quantities.

Firearms: Import requires a firearms licence and prior authorization. Confirm requirements with the destination agent; firearms should generally not be included in household goods shipments.

Currency: There are no restrictions on the import or export of the Papua New Guinea Kina (PGK) or foreign currencies. Import of travellers' cheques is permitted. Currency or valuables over PGK 20,000 must be declared to a Customs Officer on arrival.

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.

PNG customs clearance is managed through the ASYCUDA World system; all importers must use a licensed customs broker registered with PNG Customs Service. Ensure the owner holds a valid work permit or residence permit before shipping, and that the permit issue date allows the shipment to arrive within the 3-month window.

All wood packaging and crating must be ISPM 15 treated and marked before departure. Untreated materials will trigger quarantine intervention, additional charges, and potential delays.

Dual inspection by Customs and the Quarantine Department is mandatory; allow for the full clearance timeline in your planning. Sea shipments can take up to 30 days and air up to 10 days; both are subject to port demurrage that accumulates from the time of vessel or aircraft arrival. Coordinate arrival timing and document submission carefully with the destination agent to minimise storage exposure.

Diplomatic and NGO/UN/AID shipments require a duty-free certificate from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the relevant sponsoring department; this should be arranged and confirmed before the shipment is loaded.

The owner must be in Papua New Guinea to sign the statutory declaration. Do not ship ahead of the owner's arrival.