

Somalia

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

Required Documents

Specific Information

Somalia uses the Harmonized System (HS) for tariff classification. Import duty is assessed on the CIF (cost, insurance, freight) value of goods. All imports must be declared to customs via the SOMCAS electronic system using the SOMSAD form. The Federal Government of Somalia has enacted updated Customs Regulations (2024) and a Customs Tariff Law based on the 2022 HS schedule.

Somalia currently has some of the lowest import tax rates in the region. The standard import duty structure is ad valorem (percentage of CIF value), with rates varying by HS classification. VAT and sales taxes may apply to specific categories on top of import duty, assessed on CIF plus duty.

No specific duty-free transfer-of-residence framework has been publicly documented for Somalia equivalent to EU or other regional regimes. Members should confirm with the destination agent whether any personal effects exemption applies for relocating staff.

For shipments to Somaliland or Puntland, separate customs administrations apply. Confirm with the destination agent which administrative region will handle clearance.

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

Recommended: Contact the destination agent to ensure all requirements have been met prior to import, especially for differences regarding air and sea shipments.

Somalia presents significant operational challenges for international movers. Members should be aware of the following:

Security: Somalia remains a high-security-risk environment. The U.S., UK, and other governments maintain active travel advisories against travel to most parts of Somalia. Operational risks must be assessed carefully before accepting shipments.

Port infrastructure: The main commercial port is the Port of Mogadishu. Port capacity and efficiency are improving under Federal Government reforms, but delays, demurrage, and logistical complications remain common. Other entry points include ports at Berbera (Somaliland), Bosaso (Puntland), and Kismayo.

Administrative fragmentation: Somaliland (in the northwest) and Puntland (in the northeast) operate with significant autonomy and have their own customs administrations. A shipment destined for Hargeisa (Somaliland) or Bosaso (Puntland) will go through a different customs authority than one destined for Mogadishu. Confirm the applicable customs regime with the destination agent.

Customs modernization: The Federal Government has been modernizing customs administration through the SOMCAS electronic system, the 2022 Customs Tariff, and the General Customs Regulations 2024. The system is functional in Mogadishu but implementation

across all ports may be uneven.

Prohibited items: The prohibition on alcohol is strictly enforced. Members must advise clients clearly that no alcoholic beverages, pork products, or other prohibited items may be included in shipments under any circumstances.

NGO and diplomatic shipments: Most international household goods moves to Somalia involve NGO workers, UN staff, diplomatic personnel, or private security/development contractors. These categories may have specific customs exemptions -- confirm with the destination agent and the relevant organizational procurement or logistics function.