



Importing Personal Property into

SOUTH AFRICA

IMPORTING HOUSEHOLD GOODS AND PERSONAL EFFECTS

DUTY-FREE ENTRY IS PERMITTED IF THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS ARE MET:

- The household goods/ effects are used.
- The shipper has had possession of the goods for at least one year.
- Items considered inheritance or antique must be accompanied by the proper documentation.
- Items must be of reasonable quantity, meaning a maximum of two each of certain electrical items including computers, television sets, hi-fi, etc.

Notes:

- **Returning residents** must have resided outside of South Africa for at least six consecutive months before they are entitled to duty-free importation of household goods purchased outside of South Africa. Customs requires proof that the shipper has resided outside of South Africa for at least 6 months and that he/she established a temporary residence (unfurnished or semi-furnished) abroad during this time.
- **Temporary residents** will only be allowed duty-free importation if they have a valid temporary work permit (valid for at least six months).
- **Foreign diplomats** must present a detailed inventory and a diplomatic clearance certificated – completed and signed by the relevant Embassy/ Consulate in South Africa and countersigned by the South African Department of Foreign Affairs.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

- ✓ Original Ocean Bill of Lading
- ✓ Letter from employer verifying customer is moving to South Africa on contract
- ✓ Customs Form P 1.160 - in triplicate
- ✓ Customs Form D.A.304 – in triplicate
- ✓ Detailed, comprehensive inventory is required for clearance
- ✓ Original Passport
- ✓ Valid Residence Permit or Work Permit (as applicable to the shipper's situation)
- ✓ Settler's Declaration Forms (in triplicate), completed upon arrival

Note: Customer must be in South Africa at least 10 days before the goods arrive to attend to customs formalities for clearance. All documentation must be given to the agent at least 7 working days before the arrival of the vessel so he/she can pass it through customs to prevent the consignment from being bonded.

PERSONAL EFFECTS SHIPMENT:

- This consignment must consist of clothing only. Shipment is always stopped for customs examination.
- Items marked as "PBO" (packed by owner) or "Misc." are not acceptable.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

- ✓ P 1.160 in triplicate
- ✓ List of Contents
- ✓ Original OBL

IMPORT PERMITS, ADVALOREM WHARFAGE, PROHIBITED / RESTRICTED ITEMS; IMPORTATING MOTOR VEHICLES

IMPORT PERMITS:

- Import permits should be obtained from the Director of Imports and Exports, Private Bag X192, Pretoria 0001 Transvall, South Africa at least two months in advance before emigration to South Africa.

ADVALOREM WHARFAGE:

- This is a harbor charge that is applicable to all imports. It is the value you declare to customs, calculated at 1.958%. If the shipper is not in South Africa at the time of a shipment's arrival, the consignment will be bonded. Bond charges are additional and can be very costly. Also, the shipment will not clear customs until the shipper is present in South Africa.

PROHIBITED ITEMS:

- Narcotics, drugs and paraphernalia
- Pornographic or "objectionable" items
- Uncooked meat/poultry, dairy products, butter, eggs, etc.
- Uncut diamonds
- Unwrought gold, South African bank notes in excess of R5000, gold coins, coin and stamp collections are subject to currency control.
- Honey, beeswax, bees and their larvae or eggs, used beehive appliances
- Ammunition
- Fully automatic, military and unnumbered weapons, explosives and fireworks
- Poison
- Toxic substances
- Counterfeit items
- Unlawful reproductions of items protected by copyright
- Goods made in a prison or penitentiary
- Cigarettes weighing over 2 kilograms per 1,000 cigarettes

DUTIABLE/ RESTRICTED ITEMS:

- Firearms and tobacco products
- New items, including new furniture
- Alcohol (must be easily accessible)
- Antiques
- Plants, seeds and/or bulbs require an Import Permit issued by the Department of Agriculture (see contact information below) and a Phytosanitary Certificate issued by the appropriate authorities in the country of origin.
Department of Agriculture
Division of Plant and Seed Control
Private Bag X179
Pretoria, 0001
- Medicines must be accompanied by prescriptions.
- Endangered species of plants or wildlife (alive or dead) or products made from such species require special permits.

IMPORTATION OF MOTOR VEHICLES:

Note: left-hand drive vehicles purchased or registered on or after January 1, 2000 are prohibited.

First Time Immigrants:

- Duty-free import is allowed if the following conditions are met:
 - One motor vehicle per family
 - Vehicle was owned and used by the shipper for at least one year prior to arrival.
 - Once imported, the vehicle must not be sold or otherwise disposed of for 2 years.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR IMPORTATING A MOTOR VEHICLE (CONTINUED) AND IMPORTING PETS/ ANIMALS

- **A Compliance Certificate/ Letter of Authority and an Import Permit must be obtained prior to export from origin.** For the Compliance Certificate/ Letter of Authority, contact the South African Bureau of Standards, Pretoria, Mr. P. Snyman or Mr. Allan Cohen, telephone: 2712 428 6276 or fax: 2712 428 6565. For the Import Permit contact the Department of Trade and Industry, Pretoria, Mrs. Van Vuuren, telephone: 2712 428 7793 or fax: 2712 428 7799.
- Along with the Compliance Certificate/ Letter of Authority and Import Permit, the following documents are required:
 - ✓ Attested form DA304a
 - ✓ Registration documents
 - ✓ Proof of value, such as a purchase invoice

Note: VAT of 14% is applicable.

Returning Residents:

- Full duty and taxes are applicable unless the shipper can provide sufficient proof to the South African Customs that he/she had no intention of ever returning to South Africa. Shippers who left on temporary work contracts, extended holidays, etc. are not permitted duty-free importation of a motor vehicle.

Temporary Residents:

- Payment covering full duties and taxes – approximately 105% must be provided to South African Customs and is refundable at time of departure.
- A Valid Temporary Residence Permit and a purchase invoice are required. A Compliance Certificate is not required.

Note: Cars must be steam-cleaned prior to arrival. Inspectors may order additional cleaning.

Foreign Diplomats:

- Diplomatic Certificate completed and signed by local Embassy/ Consulate and countersigned by the South African Department of Foreign Affairs and proof of value must be provided.
- No duties or taxes are applicable.
- A Letter of Authority must be obtained prior to the vehicle being exported from origin. See contact information on page 2 under *First Time Immigrants*.

IMPORTATION OF PETS AND ANIMALS:

- An **Import Permit** must be obtained prior to importing animals. A fee of R60.00 must accompany the application for the import permit. Contact information is:

The Director of Animal Health

Import/Export Control
Private Bag X138
Pretoria, 0001, South Africa
Telephone: 2712 319 7514
or: 2712 319 7414
or: 2712 319 7415
Fax: 2712 329 8292

Note: Import Permits are valid for a limited amount of time.

- A **Veterinarian Health Certificate** must be presented to the Customs Department at least four working days prior to the arrival of the animal in South Africa. If the certificate does not comply with regulations, the animal may be returned to origin or placed in quarantine for 60 days.
- Quarantine required for animals arriving from: South America, the Middle and Far East (except Israel), Russia, Turkey and all African countries except those bordering South Africa
- Cats and dogs must be booked as “manifested cargo” and not as “excess baggage.”

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS FOR IMPORTING PETS/ ANIMALS; IMPORTING FIREARMS, NEW FURNITURE AND INHERITANCE:

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS FOR THE IMPORTATION OF PETS AND ANIMALS:

- ✓ Original Veterinary Health Certificate in English and signed by a Government Veterinarian within ten days of your pet's departure.
- ✓ Veterinary Import Permit
- ✓ Valid rabies certificate obtained at least 30 days prior to your departure.

IMPORTATION OF FIREARMS:

- The following firearms are prohibited: automatic rifles and pistols, semi-automatic or pump action shotguns and hand carbines.
- Firearms are prohibited unless the shipper has received permission to import the firearm from the Department of Trade and Industry and the South African Police Firearm Registrar in Pretoria. The first step is to complete and submit form SAP311 to the South African Police Firearm Registrar, Pretoria, fax: 2712 353 6203, telephone: 2712 353 6181. If the Registrar provides the shipper with an Import Permit 312 form, then the shipper must submit this form to apply for an Import Permit to the Department of Trade and Industry, Pretoria, fax: 2712 428 7799, telephone: 2712 428 7000. The following information is needed to complete the application for the import permit: Identity number (for South African citizens only), Passport number (Foreigners and permanent resident holders), type of firearm, caliber of firearm, manufacturer's serial number, type of ammunition, quantity of ammunition and market value in Rand.
- The shipper must obtain both the Import Permit SAP312 from the South African Police Firearm Registrar and an Import Permit from the Department of Trade and Industry prior to export from origin. The owner must apply for the firearm license before the SAP312 (temporary permit) expires.

- Shipment will be stopped for a customs exam and should therefore be packed in an identifiable package and placed in an easily accessible area of the storage container.
- Duty and VAT will be applicable.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

- ✓ Original Bill of Lading
- ✓ D.A. 304 and P 1.160 in triplicate
- ✓ Import Permit
- ✓ Form SAP311
- ✓ Form SAP312
- ✓ Proof of ownership
- ✓ Certificate of Conduct or Police record from country of origin – to be presented to the South African Police Service when applying for a South African firearm license.

IMPORTATION OF NEW FURNITURE:

- Duties, surcharges, excise, VAT, etc., are payable. A shipment including new furniture will be stopped for a customs examination. The agent must have all of the required documentation before importation to properly proceed with the clearance.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

- ✓ Invoices – itemized and prices listed.
- ✓ Import permit

IMPORTATION OF INHERITANCE:

- Duty-free, if proper documentation is provided to customs.
- Motor vehicles are excluded

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR IMPORTING INHERITANCE, IMPORTING ANTIQUES AND ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS FOR IMPORTING INHERITANCE:

- ✓ Certified copy of the last will or testament with items being imported bequeathed in this document.
- ✓ Copy of Death Certificate
- ✓ Import Permit
- ✓ List of contents
- ✓ Form P 1.160 in triplicate
- ✓ Original Ocean Bill of Lading

IMPORTATION OF ANTIQUES:

- Duty-free if the agent has all of the necessary documentation prior to importation. Shipments including antiques will not always stopped for a customs examination.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

- ✓ Sales invoice
- ✓ Import Permit
- ✓ Original Ocean Bill of Lading
- ✓ Antique Dealers Certificate (British Antique Dealers Association, London & Provincial Dealers Association, or the South African Antique Dealers Association).

IMPORTATION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES:

- Alcohol will be assessed duty and VAT at rates between 35 – 45%.
- A detailed list including each bottle's type, volume, alcohol content and value will be required by Customs.
- This type of importation will always be stopped for customs examination.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

- Elliot International, Johannesburg, South Africa, 2003.
- South African Consulate General, New York, <http://www.southafrica-newyork.net/consulate/>, December 2003.
- Household Goods Forwarders Association of American, Inc., "Commercial Shipment Guide", 1998.

The information presented herein is based on customs data available at the time of printing and is frequently subject to change without notice. It is the responsibility of the owner or importer of the household goods to comply with the current customs restrictions, regulations, and duties of the country to which the goods are imported. We strongly advise customers to contact the consulate or embassy of the destination country for the most current information on customs regulations, restrictions and duties for importing household goods, personal effects and vehicles.