



# *Importing Personal Property Into Qatar*

## **HOUSEHOLD GOODS AND PERSONAL EFFECTS**

### **CUSTOMS REGULATIONS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

#### **Customs Regulations:**

All shipments are subject to inspection. Client must be in Qatar at the time of clearance. Used household goods and personal effects are dutiable if the value is more than \$800.00USD. Duty incurred is 5% of the estimated value completed by the Custom Valuation Committee is incurred.

Qatar also has a legalization fee of \$175.00USD charged to the client.

A letter from the customer's employer attesting to the customer's length of stay and that they are not importing goods for commercial use must be presented to a Customs officer.

Any item with a lock must be unlocked for inspection purposes.

All required documents must be received by the Destination Agent at least 5 days prior to arrival of the shipment. Late or incorrect documents could lead to additional charges to the client

**NOTE: Items on the "Prohibited List" will be detained by Customs officials and may be destroyed without customer's consent.**

#### **Required Documents:**

- ✓ Passport – copy, including photo page, signature and entry stamp into Qatar
- ✓ Visa/Residence Permit - must be obtained prior to arrival of the shipment
- ✓ Bill of Lading/Air Waybill – copy, Express Release accepted
- ✓ Pack List – in English
- ✓ Comprehensive Inventory – 2 copies
- ✓ Letter of Emploment (NOC) from a local sponsor/employer
- ✓ Employer Attestation - stating goods are for personal use, and will not be lent of sold during contracted period of employment
- ✓ "No Objection Letter" – issued by former sponsor, for returning foreign residents

#### **Diplomat Status:**

Foreign diplomats, members of government or international organizations are granted inspection and duty-free entry of their personal effects and household items either new or used at the discretion of the Customs Director. A letter of protocol from the origin Embassy must processed with the Qatar Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Once the letter is received the shipment can be processed with the Diplomatic exceptions.

The Destination Agent must be notified in advance of the diplomatic shipment in order to coordinate the Letter of Protocol with Embassy administrators prior to arrival of the shipment.

**Diplomat's presence during clearance is not required but is recommended.**

#### **Required Documents:**

- ✓ Passport - copy
- ✓ Comprehensive Inventory
- ✓ Letter from Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- ✓ Letter of Protocol – obtained from the Embassy

## RESTRICTED/DUTIABLE ITEMS

- ✓ New furniture - requires original receipts, proforma invoice & certificate of origin, endorsed by a Qatar embassy at origin and received by the destination agent prior to arrival. Duty is currently 4% of CIF value
- ✓ Computer equipment requires a separate clearance procedure
- ✓ Cigarettes – 400 allowed duty free
- ✓ Firearms – permission required from Qatar Ministry of Defense
- ✓ **ALL PRINTED MATTER, BOOKS, PICTURES, CD'S, DVD'S, SLIDES, MOVIES, FILMS, TAPES, COMPUTUR SOFTWARE ETC ARE SUBJECT TO CENSORSHIP. THESE ITEMS MUST BE PACKED SEPERATLY FOR EASY ACCESS. ITEMS DEEMED INAPPROPRIATE WILL BE CONFISATED. CUSTOMER COULD FACE SEVERE PENALTIES AND POSSIBLE JAIL TIME FOR IMPORTING PROHIBITED AND/OR OFFENSIVE MATERIAL**

## PROHIBITED ITEMS

- ✓ Narcotics/illegal drugs of any kind
- ✓ Pornography in any form, any publications depicting semi-nudity including fashion magazines
- ✓ Politically sensitive materials, literature contrary to Muslim, and/or Arab beliefs and morality
- ✓ Religious idols – crosses, crucifixes, Buddha's, etc
- ✓ Explosives, ammunitions and weapons, swords and daggers even those of a decorative nature
- ✓ Wireless transmitters and communication equipment
- ✓ Pork and any items containing pork product
- ✓ Ivory and any items made of ivory
- ✓ Israeli currency

## IMPORTATION OF PETS

Pre-advise Destination Agent who must confirm to the relevant airline that they will be receiving delivery of a pet so that documents can be prepared and flight confirmation confirmed. Quarantine is not required at this time. Birds up to falcon size may be imported as well as other similar sized pets, cats and dogs as long as they are transported in locked, appropriate sized crates suitable for air travel.

\*Some breeds of dogs, especially large dogs and breeds considered aggressive are not admitted.

### Required Documents:

- ✓ Certificate of Vaccination – including rabies, dated less than 30 days prior to arrival
- ✓ Health Certificate - Issued by a government approved veterinary clinic at origin, dated no earlier than 14 days prior to arrival attesting to the health of the pet and accuracy of the vaccinations. The certificate must be faxed to the destination agent at least 3 days prior to arrival.
- ✓ Import Permit – obtained from the Ministry of Agriculture through the sponsoring employer, processed once health documents are received.

## IMPORTATION OF VEHICLES

Vehicles must be less than five years old. The owner of the vehicle must be resident in Qatar prior to registration of the vehicle in his/her name. Vehicle incurs duty of 5% based on invoice or depreciated value plus legislation fee based on the value. Vehicle must be left hand drive and meet Gulf Standard. One cannot drive on a U.S. driver license and must obtain a permanent Qatari license by passing an exam and road test.

## Required Documents:

- ✓ Certificate of Title and Registration - must be original
- ✓ Commercial/Purchase Invoice/proof of ownership – must be original
- ✓ Import Manifest – original
- ✓ Insurance policy

## NOTES:

**Entry & Exit Requirements:** Always carry a copy of your passport for proof of identity and U.S. citizenship should you be questioned by local officials. Employers routinely held employees' passports during their stay in Qatar. A law passed in 2009 formally forbids this practice, and all employers are prohibited from holding employees' passports, except for visa and immigration processing. Qatari law does not recognize dual nationality and requires that Qatari citizens hold only Qatari citizenship and enter and exit on a Qatari passport. Qatari authorities have confiscated the U.S. passports of U.S. citizens who acquired Qatari citizenship through marriage to a Qatari national or U.S. citizenship by virtue of birth in the United States. In several cases, Qatari authorities informed U.S. citizens that their U.S. citizenship had been revoked and was no longer valid. Foreign governments, however, have no authority to revoke the citizenship of a U.S. citizen. If such an incident occurs, please contact the U.S. Embassy in Doha immediately.

To facilitate entry with Qatari Immigration, former resident permit holders should carry a "no objection letter" issued by their former sponsor. Current residents who have a Family Residence Visa do not need an exit permit to leave Qatar. All other sponsored residents who have a Work Residence Permit must obtain an exit permit each time they leave Qatar. This must be arranged by the sponsor. Certain employers may offer multiple entry/exit permits.

Military personnel are subject to different entry/exit requirements and should contact the Department of Defense for specific information pertaining to their travel requirements.

Some HIV/AIDS entry restrictions exist for visitors to and foreign residents of Qatar.

**Safety & Security:** Incidents of violence are rare, although attacks against Western targets have occurred. U.S. citizens should also avoid visiting labor or work camps, where unrest can occur because of local working conditions or labor grievances.

US citizens are encouraged to enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program, to stay current with the latest safety and security announcements dispersed by the Embassy in your area. Your enrollment can also help the Department of State reach your family and friends in case of emergency.

**Crime:** The crime rate in Qatar is generally low. A large police presence is apparent to travelers throughout the country. Local and third-country-national young men have occasionally verbally and physically harassed unaccompanied expatriate women. Reports of petty theft are infrequent but have been growing, including ATM and credit card theft, purse snatching, and pickpocketing.

**Local Laws:** Some Qatari laws are based on Islam, thus vastly different from U.S. law. Be sensitive to Islamic beliefs and practices and do not wear sleeveless shirts and blouses, halter tops, or shorts. Western bathing attire can only be worn at hotel pools and beaches. Proselytizing is illegal. "Sharing one's faith" with someone of a different faith could be deemed violations of Qatari law, with deportation or even prison time as a consequence.

Qatari police have arrested U.S. citizens suspected of or witness to a crime. Once an arrest is made, only the Qatari Public Prosecution and Courts have authority to grant a release. Upon arrest, you should ask to speak to the U.S. Embassy immediately. If you are not allowed to do so, request that a friend or family member notify the U.S. Embassy. Incidents involving insults or obscene language or gestures often result in arrest and are considered a punishable offense. Drunk driving, public intoxication or other alcohol-related offenses are treated with severity and typically result in arrest, heavy fines, imprisonment, or expulsion from the country.

**Health:** While medical care is good, doctors and hospitals expect immediate cash payment for health services. Qatar does not allow individuals with HIV/AIDS to live in the country. Medical exams are required for all long-term visitors and residents. Individuals who have HIV/AIDS may be subject to deportation. Please verify this information with the Embassy of Qatar before you travel.

**Fumigation of Wood Packing Materials:** At this time Qatar does not require ISPM15 regulation for wood packaging material (WPM).

**Clearance:** Customs are not operational on Fridays except for the purposes of clearing live animals. Normal clearance takes 5-6 days for ocean shipments and 2-3 days for air shipments

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:**

Embassy of Qatar: <http://www.qatarembassy.net/>

Department of State: <http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/country/qatar.html>

Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>

Qatar government English language site: <http://portal.www.gov.qa/wps/portal>

E2E Global Lines Packers and Movers: Doha, Qatar

International Association of Movers

USDA: [www.aphis.usda.gov](http://www.aphis.usda.gov)

IATA Travel Centre

**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.**