



Importing Personal Property Into Rwanda

HOUSEHOLD GOODS AND PERSONAL EFFECTS

CUSTOMS REGULATIONS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Customs Regulations:

Client is not required to be present during Customs clearance process. Used household goods and personal effects are duty free provided goods have been owned and used by the customer for a minimum of twelve months and customer has lived abroad for at least one year. All new items will be levied a tax. The goods must be imported within six months of arrival. Items can not be sold, lent or otherwise disposed of during stay. All documents must be to the Destination Agent at least 3 weeks prior to arrival of the shipment to apply and be granted duty free clearance of the goods. As Rwanda has several Visa categories for both diplomats and foreign residents it is advised to consult with the Rwandan Embassy and the employer or mission to be certain one is applying for the appropriate Visa, Work and Resident Permits.

It is advised to have the OBL notated as a "Through OBL" with Port of discharge as Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania: Place of Delivery as Kigali, Rwanda.

Required Documents:

- ✓ Passport - copy
- ✓ Residence Visa – obtained from Directorate of Immigration; good for 2 years & either a Work Permit or Work Visa
- ✓ Work Visa - obtained from Directorate of Immigration renewed annually
- ✓ Work Permit – obtained from Directorate of Immigration, renewed every 2 years
- ✓ Residence Card - Upon receipt of residence visa, residents must obtain an alien registration card at Kigali City Council; this can be carried as identification in lieu of the passport
- ✓ Certificate of Good Conduct- obtained from police at origin
- ✓ Bill of Lading/Air Waybill – rated, original, Express Release not allowed
- ✓ Comprehensive Valued Inventory – original, in French or English, dated and signed by owner
- ✓ Pack list
- ✓ NGO Registration Certificate - For non-government clients
- ✓ Power of Attorney – giving authority for Destination Agent to arrange customs clearance
- ✓ Letter from Employer –attesting to client’s employment contract & client’s resume
- ✓ Declaration of Customer – attesting to length of stay

Diplomat Status:

Foreign diplomats, members of government or international organizations are granted tax and duty free entry of their personal effects and household goods. All documents must arrive to the Destination Agent 15 days prior to arrival to obtain free entry from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Note: Diplomatic visa holders desiring to work on the local economy must use their regular passports to apply for work permits and waive diplomatic immunity.

Required Documents:

- ✓ Diplomatic Card or “carte d’assistance technique”
- ✓ “Note Verbale” – obtained from Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- ✓ Letter of Recommendation - from Embassy or Mission
- ✓ Passport – diplomatic

- ✓ Comprehensive Inventory – in French or English, dated & signed by diplomat
- ✓ Power of Attorney – giving authority for Destination Agent to arrange customs clearance

RESTRICTED/DUTIABLE ITEMS

- ✓ Appliances/Electronics – must have invoices/receipts
- ✓ Prescription medications – require a health certificate
- ✓ Firearms & ammunition- requires a permit from local police in Rwanda prior to importation
- ✓ New items – (less than 6 months) must have invoices/receipts; incur taxes & duties;
- ✓ Tobacco – 2 cartons of cigarettes; in excess of these amounts incurs duty

PROHIBITED ITEMS

- ✓ Narcotics/illegal drugs of any kind
- ✓ Pornography and subversive material
- ✓ Explosives, ammunitions, swords, knives and any other weapons
- ✓ Telecommunications equipment & radioactive substances
- ✓ Alcohol – should be sent separately: Free-Entry must be obtained from the Line Ministry of Alcohol; only those marked “fond de cave are allowed, less than 15 bottles allowed; if valued over 5000.00USD must have an import license and pre-shipment inspection at origin

IMPORTATION OF PETS

Required Documents:

- ✓ Certificate of Vaccination – including rabies, less than 6 months prior to arrival
- ✓ Health Certificate - by a Veterinarian at origin

IMPORTATION OF VEHICLES

Vehicles are subject to high import taxes and duties. Amount to be paid depends on value, model, year, cubic centimeters and accessories. Tax range varies depending on these factors of 5% - 110%. The OBL must show Chassis Number, Engine number, Cubic Capacity, year of manufacture, brand and model. Right hand drive vehicles are prohibited.

Required Documents:

- ✓ Certificate of Title and Registration - must be original
- ✓ Commercial/Purchase Invoice – must be original
- ✓ Passport copy, Drivers License & International Insurance Policy (green card)
- ✓ OBL – rated

NOTES:

Entry & Exit Requirements: Proof of Yellow fever inoculation is a requirement of entry. U.S. citizens planning on working in Rwanda should review the information concerning Rwandan visas before departing the United States, and should apply for a work permit at the Directorate of Immigration as soon as possible after arrival in Rwanda. Detailed entry information may be obtained from [Rwanda's Directorate of Immigration](#) site. Also, visit the Embassy of the Republic of Rwanda for the most current visa information.

Safety & Security: use caution crossing the border into Burundi and eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), continues to operate in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. FDLR forces are known to operate in eastern DRC, Burundi, Tanzania, and Uganda (including near the popular tourist area of Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park). US citizens are advised to exercise caution in these areas. On occasion, travel by U.S. Embassy personnel may be restricted based on changing security conditions. U.S. Embassy personnel are prohibited from driving outside Kigali city limits after dark (6:00pm), and are not permitted to use motorcycle-taxis or mini-bus taxis. For the latest security information, U.S. citizens should enroll in the STEP program to receive the latest security information.

Crime: Although violent crimes such as carjacking, robbery, rape and home invasion occur in Rwanda, they are rarely committed against foreigners. The Embassy has noted an increase in residential burglary attempts throughout Kigali. U.S. citizens are advised to remain alert, exercise caution, and follow appropriate personal security measures while residing in Rwanda.

Currency: The Rwandan franc is freely exchangeable for hard currencies in banks and the Bureaux de Change. Using U.S. currency printed before the year 2004 is problematic due to the high rate of counterfeit currency. The Embassy recommends traveling with newer U.S. currency notes.

Health: Yellow fever vaccination is required. Cholera is a serious risk and pre-cautions are essential. Tuberculosis is an increasingly serious health concern in Rwanda. Immunization against polio and typhoid is recommended. Malaria exists year round throughout the region. Hepatitis A, B and E are widespread. Meningococcal meningitis occurs. There is a high level of HIV/AIDs reported; thus one should take all necessary precautions. Rabies is present throughout the country and pre-exposure rabies immunization is recommended for long-term residents, and those who will be more than 24 hours away from reliable post-exposure treatment.

Fumigation of Wood Packing Materials: As of this posting Rwanda does not impose ISPM15 regulations for wood packaging material (WPM).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

AGS Frasers: Kigali. Rwanda

Embassy of Rwanda: <http://www.rwandaembassy.org/>

Department of State: http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1007.html

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

USDA: www.aphis.usda.gov

IATA Travel Centre

Visa HQ.com

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.