



## *Importing Personal Property Into Syria*

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

#### **Customs Regulations:**

The client must be in Syria at the time of Customs clearance. It is not necessary to attend the clearance process if an authorized agent is present. Customs Authority reserves the right to ask for the client to attend. All shipments are physically inspected. Items must arrive within 4 months of the client with the exception of diplomats. Items can not be moved to a bonded warehouse for storage until clearance has taken place. Used household goods and personal effects are duty-free provided items are for personal use, are not sold and are re-exported from Syria at the expiration of the Work Permit or Active Service.

**Note:** The Temporary Import License must be based on length of work contract. The Permit must be secured prior to arrival of the shipment. Foreigners must obtain confirmation from their employer that the Import Permit will be ready prior to the arrival of the household goods

**Syrian Nationals:** Allowed one shipment during the first four (4) months of arrival.

Used household goods and personal effects are duty-free provided the owner is transferring his household to Syria to take up permanent residence. Household goods must be at least two (2) years old and retained for personal by the owner for a period of three (3) years.

The U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control currently administers sanctions involving a number of countries that may affect the transportation of household goods and personal effects. Please contact us if you have a question regarding these sanctions, or for further information on the OFAC's sanctions, you may visit: <http://www.ustreas.gov/ofac>

#### **Required Documents:**

- ✓ Passport – copy, including biographical page
- ✓ Bill of Lading/Air Waybill (express B/L is NOT acceptable)
- ✓ Comprehensive Inventory List - in English or French ✓ Work Permit
- ✓ Residence Card
- ✓ Letter of Guaranty from Employer
- ✓ Temporary Import License – obtained from General Directorate of Customs Authority
- ✓ Full contact information, delivery instructions & Insurance Certificate

#### **Diplomat Status:**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs must approve diplomat status. Foreign diplomats are granted duty free entry on all items. Diplomats may import new furniture and household goods duty-free as well. They may also import alcohol, tobacco and plants. Diplomats must re-export their household goods when their period of service is over.

**Required Documents:**

- ✓Diplomatic Exemption – obtained from Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- ✓Passport copy
- ✓Comprehensive inventory list in English or French
- ✓Bill of Lading/Air Waybill (express B/L is NOT acceptable)

**Returning Nationals:**

For returning Syrians the duty on electronics and vehicles could be up to 200%

**Required Documents:**

- ✓Passport and Syrian Identity Card
- ✓Certificate of Change of Residency from the Syrian Embassy/Consulate of origin
- ✓Letter of Employment - include start and end date of work contract
- ✓List of household goods in Arabic, certified by the Syrian Embassy/Consulate in country of origin
- ✓Emigrant Book - from the Syrian Embassy
- ✓Copies of lease/rental agreement abroad and invoices of electrical, phone and or water bills

- ✓Presents and souvenirs, works of art and antiques
- ✓Inheritance and wedding trousseaus
- ✓Electrical items & electronics state make, model and serial number on the Inventory List. These items are subject to censorship
- ✓Computers, TV's, radios – include manuals, list serial numbers on Inventory List
- ✓All printed materials, books, pictures, discs, records, films, tapes, software, etc are subject to inspection, censorship and confiscation. These items must be packed separately and stowed for easy access to the Customs Agents

- ✓Narcotics
- ✓Alcohol, wine, tobacco - unless one has Diplomat status
- ✓Pornography, Political or Military literature
- ✓Items offensive to Islam
- ✓Weapons, swords, Firearms - including air guns, and ammunitions ✓New furniture & household goods – unless one has Diplomat status ✓Radio transmitters, walkie-talkies, radio controlled cars, boats and planes ✓Plants - unless one has Diplomat status
- ✓Motorcycles
- ✓Works of Art & Antiques

Mandatory quarantine is not applicable however, the government reserves the right to quarantine pets upon arrival should they have a reasonable doubt as to the animal's health.

**Birds:** only falcons are permitted with the proper permission from Syrian authorities. All other birds are prohibited.

**Required Documents:**

- ✓Certificate of Vaccination – issued at least six months from arrival date
- ✓Health Certificate – Government issued: at least six months from arrival date

**Only diplomats and foreigners on a business contract may import vehicles.** Client must be present for Customs clearance. Vehicles are duty-free under temporary import admission. Subject to pay road taxes and the vehicle must be retained for personal use. Vehicles must clear Customs within four months of the owner's arrival. Vehicles may not be more than 2 years of date of manufacture.

The vehicle must be re-exported at the end of the employment contract or active service.

**Note:** Motorcycles of any kind are not allowed. Diesel engines are prohibited.

Diplomats are exempt from paying the road tax. It is strongly recommended to secure the import license/franchise before forwarding the vehicle. It is the responsibility of the shipper or the employer to ensure documentation is correct and available prior to dispatch and/or vehicle arrival into Syria.

**Required Documents: (Diplomats and Foreigners on a work contract)**

- ✓Copy of Certificate of Title and Registration
- ✓Import Permit
- ✓Proof of ownership of at least 1 year before importation – Such as original purchase invoice, insurance certificate, etc.
- ✓Permit from the Syrian General Directorate of Customs for clearance under temporary status
- ✓Letter of Guarantee from employer in Syria
- ✓Work Permit, Residence Permit
- ✓Green Card
- ✓Diplomatic exemption from the Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Returning Nationals:**

Vehicle must be unused i.e. “0” miles/Km's. Vehicle must be within 3 years of manufacture date. Vehicle is subject to Import Duty NO EXEMPTIONS.

**Required Documents: Returning Syrian Nationals**

- ✓BL/CRM to be consigned to the same name in which the import license is issued
- ✓Commercial Invoice – Showing purchase value/Chassis number, engine number, make & model
- ✓Attestation by Syrian Embassy at origin

## NOTES:

**Entry & Exit Requirements:** The Embassy of the Syria in Washington, DC, has not provided consular services since March 18, 2014. Those seeking visa information may visit the website of the Syrian Embassy for the most current information. As the U.S. Embassy in Damascus has suspended operations, U.S. citizens are reminded that the Czech Government, through the Czech Embassy in Damascus, currently serves as the Protecting Power for U.S. interests in Syria.

Syrian-American men or American men of Syrian origin, even those born in the United States, may be subject to military service unless they receive a temporary or permanent exemption from a Syrian diplomatic mission abroad prior to their entry into Syria.

The Syrian government enforces restrictions on prior travel to Israel, and does not allow persons with passports bearing Israeli visas or entry/exit stamps to enter the country. Likewise, the absence of entry stamps from a country adjacent to Israel, which the traveler has just visited, will cause Syrian immigration officials to refuse admittance. Overland entry into Syria directly from Israel is not possible. U.S. citizens suspected of having traveled to Israel have been detained for questioning. Syrian security officials are also sensitive about travel to Iraq. All U.S. citizens should always ensure that passports and important personal papers are in order in the event it becomes necessary to leave the country quickly.

**Safety & Security:** The Department of State continues to warn U.S. citizens against travel to Syria and strongly recommends that U.S. citizens remaining in Syria depart immediately. There is an ongoing and increased risk of kidnapping of U.S. citizens and Westerners in general throughout the country. U.S. citizens remain a specific target. Security personnel frequently place foreign visitors under surveillance. 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 current unrest and significant deterioration of the Syrian economy have led to a perceived increase in criminal activity. Since the closure of the Embassy in Damascus in 2012, accurate information about crime to U.S. citizens visiting or living in Syria is difficult to measure.

**Health:** HIV/AIDS entry restrictions exist for visitors or foreign residents of Syria. AIDS tests are mandatory for foreigners from ages 15 to 60. The AIDS test must be conducted in Syria at a facility approved by the Syrian Ministry of Health. A residence permit will not be issued until the absence of the HIV virus has been determined. There are reports of recent Polio and Measles outbreaks.

**Currency:** Foreign currencies can be exchanged for Syrian pounds by licensed money changers, the Commercial Bank of Syria (CBS), the Real Estate Bank, and at private banks, some of which maintain offices inside four and five star hotels. These hotels and high-end stores generally accept credit cards. Most restaurants and shops operate in cash. Foreigners visiting Syria are required to pay hotel bills in U.S. dollars, Euros or other non-Syrian hard currency. Private banks with ATMs in most major cities usually honor major debit/credit systems.

**Fumigation of Wood Packing Materials:** Importation of shipments containing wood packing materials must be in accordance with ISPM 15 requirements and are required to have the wood fumigation mark ISPM 15 and IPPC logo. Shipment MUST have a valid Fumigation Certificate covering any wood packing materials.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:



BPL COMPANY LTD

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

Embassy of Syria: <http://www.syrianembassy.us/>

Nazha and Darwish Ltd

Visa HQ

International Association of Movers

**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.**