INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MOVERS

IAM COUNTRY GUIDE



Greenland

CAPITAL	OFFICIAL LANGUAGE	CURRENCY
Nuuk	Greenlandic	Danish krone (DKK)

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> **Disclaimer**
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Overview

Duty-Free Eligibility

Customs duty on all imports: Unlike EU member states, Greenland charges customs duty on all imported goods, including household effects arriving from Denmark and the Faroe Islands. There is no blanket duty-free exemption for household goods in the way EU countries typically provide one.

Documents

Required Documents

- **Passport or valid national ID**
- **Detailed inventory/packing list with descriptions and values**
- **Proof of employment in Greenland or documentation of reason for relocation**
- **Bill of lading or air waybill**
- **Any weapons permits (if shipping firearms; see Section 5)**

Household Goods — Specific Information

Exemption for used personal effects: Personal belongings that are more than six months old are generally exempt from customs duties and taxes, provided the owner can demonstrate prior use. Documentation such as purchase receipts, photos, or similar evidence of ownership and use may be requested. However, port and airport handling fees still apply.

New goods: New and unused items within a household shipment may be subject to import duty. Items purchased new in Denmark shortly before moving may qualify for a Danish VAT refund (on purchases over DKK 300) since Greenland does not charge VAT, provided the items are unused, in original packaging, and the invoice shows a Greenlandic address or a tax-free form was issued.

Shipping logistics: All sea freight to Greenland must go through Royal Arctic Line (RAL), departing from the Port of Greenland in Aalborg, Denmark. RAL also assists with customs clearance. Air freight is handled by Air Greenland, though capacity is limited and costly.

Employer-assisted moves: In most cases, the employer in Greenland arranges and pays for relocation logistics. If your employer is managing the move, coordinate with them and the freight carrier on customs documentation requirements.

Alcohol, tobacco, and perishables in shipments: Household goods shipments may NOT contain wine, spirits, cigarettes, or easily perishable food items. These must be brought separately within personal duty-free allowances or purchased locally.

Dangerous goods: Shipments may not contain certain chemicals, solvents, paints, gas cartridges, or other dangerous goods without proper declaration and safety data sheets.

ISPM 15: Wood packaging materials must comply with ISPM 15 standards for international shipments entering Greenland.

Prohibited / Restricted Items

Prohibited Items

- Illegal drugs and narcotic substances (PROHIBITED)
- Weapons, explosives, and ammunition without prior permission from Greenlandic authorities (PERMIT REQUIRED)
- Knives and deadly weapons (PROHIBITED)
- Counterfeit currency (PROHIBITED)

- Pets and animals without proper import permits (RESTRICTED; see Section 3)
- Fighting dogs and muscle dog breeds (PROHIBITED)
- Dogs in sled dog districts (north of Kangaamiut and East Greenland) without exemption (PROHIBITED)
- Plants, seeds, fruit, and plant products (including cut flowers) from countries outside the EU, without phytosanitary certification (RESTRICTED)
- Endangered species and products derived from them without CITES permits (CITES)
- Easily perishable food items within household goods shipments (RESTRICTED)
- Certain chemicals, gas cartridges, and dangerous goods without proper declaration (RESTRICTED)

Hunting rifles: A permit from the carrying airline is required to bring a hunting rifle to Greenland, and hunting is only permitted on special trips organized by authorized tour operators approved by the Home Rule Government.

Restricted / Dutiable Items

Duty-Free Allowances on Personal Entry (persons aged 18+)

The following duty-free allowances apply to all travelers entering Greenland, including from Denmark and the Faroe Islands (per Executive Order No. 19, effective August 17, 2016):

Tobacco products (choose one category only):

- 200 cigarettes, OR
- 100 cigarillos (max. 3 g each), OR
- 50 cigars, OR
- 250 g smoking tobacco
- Plus: 200 cigarette rolling papers or tubes

Alcoholic beverages:

- 1 liter of spirits over 22%, OR
- 2 liters of fortified wine under 22%
- Plus: 2.25 liters of table wine (not exceeding 15%)
- Plus: 2 liters of beer
- Plus: 2 liters of carbonated soft drinks

Other goods:

- 50 ml perfume
- 250 ml eau de toilette
- Cosmetics and toiletries up to a value of DKK 1,000
- 4 kg of chocolates and sweets

Age restriction: Tobacco and alcohol allowances apply only to persons aged 18 or older.

Additional Dutiable Items

Alcohol, tobacco, food products, and vehicles are all subject to specific import duties beyond the duty-free allowances. Rates vary by product category. The Greenlandic tax authority (Skattestyrelsen) publishes detailed duty rate schedules.

Currency: No specific restrictions noted, but amounts should be declared if required by the origin country's export regulations.

Vehicles

Vehicle Documents

- **Vehicle registration/title documents**
- **Proof of ownership**
- **Import declaration to Greenlandic customs/tax authority (Skattestyrelsen)**
- **Insurance documentation**

Specific Information

Import duties on vehicles: There are import duties on motor vehicles imported into Greenland. The specific rates vary depending on the vehicle type and characteristics. Contact the Greenlandic tax authority (Skattestyrelsen/AKA) for current rates.

No general duty exemption for equipment: There are no general import duties on operating equipment in Greenland. However, if equipment is present for more than eight months, it must be declared to the Greenlandic tax authorities for statistical purposes. Motor vehicles are treated differently from operating equipment and are subject to excise duties.

Practical considerations: Greenland has very limited road infrastructure. Roads exist only within and between a few towns; there are no roads connecting major settlements. Most inter-settlement transport is by air, sea, dog sled, or snowmobile. The practical need for a conventional motor vehicle is limited to within-town driving in the larger settlements (Nuuk, Ilulissat, Sisimiut, etc.).

Shipping a vehicle to Greenland is expensive and may not be practical for many relocations.

Registration: Vehicles must be registered with local authorities. Contact the municipality to which you are relocating for current requirements.

Pets

Requirements

- **Import permit from the Greenland Representation in Copenhagen (Groenlands Repraesentation)**
- **Written permission from the municipality to which you are moving (required before applying for the import permit)**
- **Veterinary health certificates (from a licensed veterinarian in the country of origin)**
- **Proof of rabies vaccination**
- **ISO-compliant microchip**
- **Rabies antibody titer test (recommended)**
- **Internal parasite treatment certificate (dogs and cats must be treated for internal parasites before entry)**
- **For cats: exemption from the Executive Order of 14 December 1943 (applied for through the Danish Veterinary and Food Administration), plus municipal permission**

Specific Information

Import permit required for ALL animals: An import permit from the Greenland Representation in Copenhagen is required for every animal brought into Greenland. The application must be submitted well in advance of departure and must include all relevant certificates. The issued permit must accompany the animal during travel. Without proper documentation, the animal may be denied entry at departure.

Municipal approval required first: Before applying for an import permit, you must obtain written permission from the specific municipality you are moving to. Each municipality has its own regulations on dogs and cats. If you later move between municipalities within Greenland, you must obtain new permission from the destination municipality.

Dog sled district restrictions (critical): Dogs are NOT permitted north of the Arctic Circle (north of the village of Kangaamiut) or in East Greenland. This restriction exists to protect the purity of Greenlandic sled dog populations used commercially. Exemptions may be granted by the

Veterinary and Food Authority of the Government of Greenland for sled dogs, police dogs, or service dogs only. Dogs may only be imported to southern West Greenland (from Nanortalik up to and including Kangaamiut).

Permitted municipalities for dogs: Pet dogs are generally allowed in the following municipalities: Ivigtut, Maniitsoq, Nanortalik, Narsaq, Nuuk, Paamiut, and Qaqortoq. Confirm with the specific municipality before applying.

Sheep farm restrictions: At sheep farms, only Border Collie, Kelpie, or crosses of these breeds are permitted.

Fighting/muscle dogs prohibited: It is forbidden to import fighting dogs or muscle dogs to Greenland.

Cats: Cat owners must apply for an exemption to the historic Executive Order of 14 December 1943 through the Danish Veterinary and Food Administration, and separately for municipal permission. The municipality will decide on sterilization requirements during the application process.

EU Pet Passport: If your pet has an EU Pet Passport before moving to Greenland, retain it, as it simplifies bringing the pet back to Denmark or other EU countries (e.g., for holidays). Greenland is listed alongside EU/EEA countries for simplified pet passport re-entry to the EU.

No quarantine (if compliant): There is no quarantine imposed if all import regulations are met. Non-compliant animals may be quarantined (if facilities are available), returned to the country of origin, or in extreme cases euthanized, at the importer's expense.

Air transport: Contact Air Greenland well in advance to associate your pet with your booking. You must provide animal type, transport container dimensions, and total weight. The import permit must be presented at check-in. Cabin animals (dogs and cats only) must be in a soft bag under 8 kg combined weight. Cargo animals must be in IATA-approved containers not exceeding 102x69x76 cm.

Common mistakes that cause delays or denial:

- Failing to obtain municipal permission before applying for the import permit
- Attempting to bring a dog to an area within the dog sled district
- Missing or incomplete veterinary certificates
- Forgetting import permit documents at check-in (animal will be denied boarding)
- Not treating for internal parasites before departure

Important Context

Greenland is an autonomous territory within the Kingdom of Denmark. It is NOT part of the European Union (Greenland left the EEC in 1985) and maintains its own customs regime. Customs duty is payable on essentially all goods imported into Greenland, including from Denmark and the Faroe Islands. The sole sea freight carrier to Greenland is Royal Arctic Line (RAL), operating from the Port of Greenland in Aalborg, Denmark. Air freight goes through Air Greenland. Greenland has no VAT, but import duties and excise taxes apply. The population is approximately 56,000, and logistics are heavily constrained by geography, climate, and limited infrastructure.

Discrepancies and Clarifications

1. **Duty-free status of household goods:** Nordic Cooperation states that "customs duty is payable on everything" in Greenland, while a third-party relocation guide states personal belongings over six months old are "generally exempt." The most likely reconciliation is that used personal effects may receive preferential treatment or reduced duty rates, but this is not a blanket exemption. The destination agent or RAL should be consulted for current policy.

1. **VisaHQ vs. official sources on allowances:** VisaHQ lists significantly lower duty-free tobacco allowances (40 cigarettes, 50g tobacco) compared to the official Greenland airports and Greenland Travel sources (200 cigarettes, 250g tobacco). The VisaHQ figures appear to be outdated or incorrect. This guide follows the official Greenland sources (Executive Order No. 19, 2016).

1. **Alcohol allowances:** The detailed breakdown from Greenland airports (spirits 1L OR fortified wine 2L, plus table wine 2.25L, plus beer 2L) is more specific than the VisaHQ summary. This guide uses the official Greenland source.

1. **VAT:** Multiple sources confirm Greenland does not charge VAT. However, some freight sources reference a 20% import tax applied to CIF value. This likely refers to general customs duty, not VAT. The distinction should be verified with the Greenlandic tax authority.

1. **Pet import -- dog breed restrictions:** The prohibition on "fighting dogs and muscle dogs" is confirmed by multiple sources but the specific breed list is not enumerated in English-language sources. Confirm with the Greenland Representation before importing any large or potentially restricted breed.

Unverified Items

- Exact current customs duty rates for used household goods (the "generally exempt if over 6 months old" claim needs confirmation with Skattestyrelsen)
- Specific motor vehicle import duty rates and calculation method
- Whether the 20% import tax rate cited by FreightAmigo applies to household goods or only commercial shipments
- Complete list of dog breeds classified as "fighting dogs or muscle dogs" under Greenlandic law
- Current processing times for animal import permit applications through Greenland Representation

Consignment Instructions

Recommended: Contact the destination agent or Royal Arctic Line (RAL) to ensure all requirements have been met prior to import. Greenland's remote location and limited infrastructure mean that errors in documentation can cause severe delays and significant additional costs.

Sea freight: All sea freight must be handled by Royal Arctic Line (RAL) from their facility at the Port of Greenland in Aalborg, Denmark. RAL provides customs clearance assistance. Plan for long transit times, particularly to remote settlements.

Air freight: Air Greenland handles air cargo. Capacity is limited and costs are high. Contact Air Greenland well in advance, especially if transporting animals or oversized items.

Inventory requirements: A detailed declaration of contents (nature of goods, value, quantity) should be prepared in English or Danish. All items should be clearly described for customs assessment.

Timing and weather: Shipping schedules to Greenland are affected by Arctic weather, sea ice conditions, and seasonal accessibility of certain ports. Some settlements may only be accessible by sea during summer months. Plan shipments well in advance and build in buffer time.

Unpredictable expenses: Storage fees, demurrage, weather-related delays, and customs assessment charges can add significantly to costs. Greenland's remote logistics mean that any documentation error or delay compounds quickly.

Special considerations: Most employer-assisted relocations include logistical support for shipping. If relocating independently, engage a freight forwarder experienced with Greenland logistics and work closely with RAL.

Cultural & Other Information

- **OpenFactBook (replaces CIA World Factbook):** https://www.openfactbook.org/countries/greenland/ (verified 200)
- **Wikipedia -- Greenland:** https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greenland (verified 403 to bots; works in browser)
- **Government of Greenland (Naalakkersuisut):** https://naalakkersuisut.gl/ (verified 200)
- **Greenlandic Tax Authority (Skattestyrelsen/AKA):** https://aka.gl/en (verified 200)
- **Royal Arctic Line (sole sea freight carrier):** https://www.ral.gl/en (verified 200)
- **Greenland Representation in Copenhagen (import permits for animals):** https://grl-rep.dk/en/dyr/ (verified 200)
- **Greenland Airports (customs and pet travel info):** https://www.airports.gl/en/regler-for-told-og-afgifter-i-gronland/ (verified 200)
- **Greenland Travel (customs regulations):** https://www.greenland-travel.com/practical-article/greenland-customs-and-tax-regulations/ (verified 200)
- **Air Greenland (animal transport):** https://kundeservice.airgreenland.gl/hc/en-us/articles/4902849039644-Travel-with-animals (verified 403 to bots; works in browser)
- **Nordic Cooperation -- Moving to Greenland:** https://www.norden.org/en/info-norden/guide-moving-greenland-0 (verified 403 to bots; Cloudflare-protected, resolves and TLS-connects cleanly, browser-accessible)
- **Nordic Cooperation -- Customs in Greenland:** https://www.norden.org/en/info-norden/customs-regulations-greenland (verified 403 to bots; Cloudflare-protected, browser-accessible)
- **Nordic Cooperation -- Importing Pets to Greenland:** https://www.norden.org/en/info-norden/importing-pets-or-service-animals-greenland (verified 403 to bots; Cloudflare-protected, browser-accessible)
- **VisaHQ -- Greenland Customs:** https://www.visahq.com/greenland/customs/ (verified 200)
- **EU Pet Travel (Greenland listed for simplified re-entry):** https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/travel/carry/pets-and-other-animals/ (verified 200)

Quick Links & Resources

- Find Movers in Greenland
  https://iamovers.mobilityex.com/index.html#/search?loc=Greenland&lat=64.1750&lng=-51.7389&range=50&assocs=800&fvw=c&ctry=Greenland
- Foreign Embassies in Greenland
  https://www.embassypages.com/greenland
- Danish Embassies Abroad
  https://www.embassypages.com/denmark
- OpenFactBook (replaces CIA World Factbook)
  https://www.openfactbook.org/countries/greenland/
