

Papua New Guinea Customs Information for Ports

Information for ships' masters (Non-military ships and persons on board)

First-port arrivals:

The master or owner of a ship arriving in Papua New Guinea (PNG) is required to provide Customs with a notice of the ship's impending arrival. The impending arrival report must include the estimated date of arrival of the ship at the first port in Papua New Guinea or any subsequent port that the ship intends to visit. The report is required 48 hours before the nominated date of arrival indicated by the impending arrival report. If the journey from the last port is likely to take less than 48 hours, the report is required 24 hours before the estimated date of arrival.

Ships carrying cargo must communicate with the impending arrival report a cargo report to Customs including all goods intended to be unloaded from the ship or remaining on board.

Shipping representatives or agents in PNG can also assist on how to meet reporting obligations determined by Customs legislation.

Ships will be required to produce the following reports on arrival:

- Ship's Report of Arrival
- Passenger and Crew Report
- Report of Ships Stores
- Crew Effects declaration

Penalties for non-compliance with Papua New Guinea's border legislation can be severe. So if you have any doubts whether goods in your possession require a permit or special conditions are to be met, you are advised to contact Customs for further information.

Temporary imports:

Commercial goods brought into Papua New Guinea with the intention of being sold are subject to the normal rates of duty and tax where applicable.

Goods, commercial or personal, that are brought into Papua New Guinea on a temporary basis may be admitted without the payment of duty or taxes, subject to certain conditions. You advised to contact Customs or speak with a customs broker for further information.

Transhipments:

Goods being transhipped through Papua New Guinea must be reported on a cargo report. Customs will allocate a transaction number for the transhipped goods. This number will be acquitted after the consignment is exported. The number will be used on the export manifest to reconcile the two movements.

Crew entitlements:

Information on Customs reporting requirements, Customs documents or advice on procedures can be obtained by contacting Customs at any Customs office.

Passengers:

Everyone on board a vessel who is not listed as crew is considered a passenger. Passengers who are not citizens of Papua New Guinea should hold a valid passport and a valid visa before they arrive in Papua New Guinea regardless of whether they are transiting or disembarking. The visa will generally appear as a label in the passenger's passport.

Passengers who travel to Papua New Guinea on board a vessel without a visa must apply for a Border Visa at the first port of arrival. A Border Visa allows one entry into Papua New Guinea with a maximum stay of 30 days only. Only officers of the Department of Immigration can grant these visas. As officers from the Department are not permanently present at the ports, these passengers may suffer considerable inconvenience and delay on arrival.

Each passenger is required to be cleared by a clearance officer. Passengers regardless of Nationality must present a valid passport and a completed Incoming Passenger Card to the clearance officer.

At the first port of arrival, the Master must provide two copies of a passenger list detailing:

- passengers disembarking at that port;
- passengers disembarking at subsequent ports (in port order) and
- Transit passengers (passengers departing Papua New Guinea on the same vessel during the course of the same voyage).

The list must include for each passenger:

- full name
- date of birth
- passport number and country of issue
- citizenship
- intended address in Papua New Guinea.

At each subsequent port, the Master is to provide Customs with a copy of the list of passengers disembarking at that port.

Stowaways:

A stowaway or a concealed person on board a vessel is a person who is neither a member of the crew or the spouse or dependent of a crewmember or a passenger appearing on a passenger list.

The master, owner, agent, charterer or operator of the vessel must notify the clearance officer at the first port of arrival of any stowaways aboard the vessel. Failure to comply with this requirement may incur a large penalty.

All costs associated with the detention and removal of a stowaway from Papua New Guinea are the responsibility of the carrier.

Crew change:

Customs officers must give approval before a crewmember is permitted to sign-off a vessel. Approval to sign-off is subject to a letter from the Master guaranteeing the crewmember's departure within a specific period and the crewmember holding an acceptable travel document.

Crew signing off their vessel and wishing to have a holiday in Papua New Guinea need a visitor visa. It is advisable that the visa be obtained before the crewmember travels to Papua New Guinea. They can also apply for the visa at an office of Immigration in Papua New Guinea before signing-off their vessel. Failure to do so will make them unlawful and subject to detention and removal from Papua New Guinea.

Crew joining a vessel in Papua New Guinea

Non-Papua New Guinea crew intending to join a vessel in Papua New Guinea must obtain a visa overseas or on arrival at the airport which will allow them to sign onto the vessel within 72 hours of their arrival in Papua New Guinea.

Reporting absent crew:

On departing a port in Papua New Guinea, the Master must report to Customs any crewmember that was on board the vessel on arrival at that port but is absent, with or without leave, when the vessel departs that port. This does not include crew who has signed off. Failure to report absent crew could result in a large fine.