

Bahamas Relocation Guide



By Appointment To
Her Majesty The Queen
Removals and Storage Contractor Abels

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ISO 9001 + ISO 14001
OHSAS 18001



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TELEPHONE:	Country Code (001) + Area code.
STANDARD TIME:	GMT – 5 hours.
WEIGHTS & MEASURES:	Metric.
ELECTRICITY:	The standard voltage is 120V with frequency of 60Hz.
INOCULATIONS/VACCINATIONS:	Hepatitis A and Typhoid are recommended.
PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:	1st January – New Year's Day, 10th January – Majority Rule Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Whit Monday – 7th Monday after Easter, First Friday in June – Labour Day, 10th July – Independence Day, First Monday in August – Emancipation Day, Second Monday in October – National Heroes Day, 25th December – Christmas Day, 26th December – Boxing Day.
OFFICE HOURS:	Normally a 40 hours week. 09.00 hours to 17.00 hours and Saturdays.
BANK HOURS:	Generally 09.00 hours to 15.00 hours.
EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS:	Police, Fire and Ambulance 919 or 911.
BRITISH HONORARY CONSULATE:	P.O. Box N-918 Nassau Bahamas Tel: +1 242 422 1939 The High Commission in Kingston, Jamaica is responsible for coverage of The Bahamas.
HIGH COMMISSION OF THE BAHAMAS:	10 Chesterfield Street Mayfair London W1J 5JL Tel: 0207 408 4488

Part 1 – Background information on the Bahamas

Background

Lucayan Indians inhabited the islands when Christopher Columbus first set foot in the New World on San Salvador in 1492. British settlement of the islands began in 1647; the islands became a colony in 1783. Piracy thrived in the 17th and 18th centuries because of The Bahamas close proximity to shipping lanes. Since attaining independence from the UK in 1973, The Bahamas has prospered through tourism, international banking, and investment management. Prime Minister Hubert Minnis (2017-) is only the fourth Prime Minister in Bahamian history following its independence from the UK; he is also the first Prime Minister in 25 years besides Perry Christie and Hubert Ingraham, who repeatedly traded the premiership from 1992 to 2017.

Geography and Climate

1864, the Governor of the Bahamas reported that there were 29 islands, 661 cays, and 2,387 rocks in the colony.

The closest island to the United States is Bimini, which is also known as the gateway to the Bahamas. Nassa, capital city of the Bahamas, lies on the island of New Providence.

All the islands are low and flat, with ridges that usually rise no more than 15 to 20 m (49 to 66 ft). The highest point in the country is Mount Alvernia (formerly Como Hill) on Cat Island. It has an elevation of 63 metres (207 ft).

The climate of the Bahamas is tropical savannah climate. The low latitude, warm tropical Gulf Stream, and low elevation give the Bahamas a warm and winterless climate. There is only an 8 °C difference between the warmest month and coolest month in most of the Bahama Islands. Like most tropical climates, seasonal rainfall follows the sun, and summer is the wettest season. The Bahamas are often sunny and dry for long periods of time, and average more than 3,000 hours of sunlight annually.

Tropical storms and hurricanes affect the Bahamas.

Population

As at April 2018 the population was 398,453.

Currency

The Bahamian Dollar B\$

Banknotes: ½, 1, 3, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100 Dollars.

Coins: 1, 5, 10, 15, 25 and 50 cents 1, 2, and 5 Dollars.

Economy

The Bahamas has the second highest per capital GDP in the English-speaking Caribbean with an economy heavily dependent on tourism and international banking. Tourism accounts for approximately 75-80% of GDP and directly or indirectly employs half of the archipelago's labor force. Financial services constitute the second-most important sector of the Bahamian economy, accounting for about 15% of GDP. Manufacturing and agriculture combined contribute less than 7% of GDP and show little growth, despite government incentives aimed at those sectors. The new government led by Prime Minister Hubert Minnis has prioritized addressing fiscal imbalances and rising debt, which stood at 75% in 2016. Large capital projects like the Baha Mar Casino and Hotel are driving growth. Public debt increased in 2017 in large part due to hurricane reconstruction and relief financing. The primary fiscal balance was a deficit of 0.4% in 2016. The Bahamas is the only country in the Western Hemisphere that is not a member of the World Trade Organization.

Education

Education in the Bahamas is compulsory between ages 5 and 16 and still based on the British system in many ways. School attendance rates are high and ¾ of primary and secondary schools are state-owned.

Public education is free to all people who wish to enroll.

There are many private schools in the Bahamas, including three international schools which offer the International Baccalaureate program.

Religion

Christianity is the dominant religion in the Bahamas.

Healthcare

While legal residents of the Bahamas can take advantage of NHI government funded care, foreigners must pay for all costs. The public system is managed by the Public Hospitals Authority in the Bahamas, which is recognized as one of the best healthcare systems in the Caribbean.

The standard of healthcare in the Bahamas has always been considered to be high

Medical staff in the Bahamas all will speak English.

The National Health Insurance Authority oversees the government funded NHI Bahamas. Foreign residents and travellers will have to consider purchasing their own insurance to meet the costs of the Bahamian health system.

Part 2 – Bahamas Import Customs Regulations

To the best of our knowledge, the following is required to import household and personal effects into the Bahamas.

General Information

- It is recommended that you are present for the customs examination
- All foreigners and returning residents have to pay customs duty on the majority of items being imported
- VAT also added to the duty charge
- Diplomatic imports do not attract duty

Documentation Required

- Origin passport with entry visa
- Packing List
- Valued Inventory
- Letter authorising our partner company to clear your shipment upon arrival

Motor Vehicles

- All motor vehicles are subject to high duties and taxes, the duty and tax percentage is based on the value of the vehicle

Prohibited Items

- Weapons and ammunition
- Drugs
- Fireworks and firecrackers
- Counterfeit currency
- Pornography
- Articles contrary to Bahamian religious beliefs or morality will not be allowed into the Country

Pets (dogs, cats, etc.)

We work with a number of Pet Relocation Companies who can help you Import your pet to the Bahamas

Please contact us if you wish to be put in contact with our partners.

Endangered Species

A CITES certificate is normally required. There is a worldwide ban on the movement of Ivory without a CITES Certificate. **Please note old pianos usually have ivory keys and a CITES certification will be required.**

For information on obtaining a CITES certificate please visit:-

<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/endangered-species-application-for-import-and-export-permit>

Although every care is taken to ensure that all information in the Abels Relocation Guide is accurate and up to date Abels cannot accept liability for any inaccuracy.