

# Mauritius Relocation Guide



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

# ABELS™

THE ART OF MOVING

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FS 23942



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ISO 9001 - ISO 14001  
OHSAS 18001

<b>TELEPHONE:</b>	Country code (00230) + Area Code.
<b>STANDARD TIME:</b>	GMT +4.
<b>WEIGHTS &amp; MEASURES:</b>	Metric.
<b>ELECTRICITY:</b>	230v 50Hz.
<b>INOCULATIONS/VACCINATIONS:</b>	Recommended Typhoid and Hepatitis A.
<b>PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:</b>	1st January – New Years Day, 2nd January – Day 2nd New Year's Day holiday, 31st January – Thaipooosam Cavadee/ Hindu Festival, End January/Beginning February – Thaipooosam Cavadee Hindu, Festival first full moon in the Tamil month of Thai, 1st February – Abolition of Slavery, Mid February Maha Shivaratree – 13th night of the month of Phalguna, February – Chinese Spring Festival – 1st day of 1st Lunar month, 12th March National Day, March/April – Ougadi Beginning of the Hindu New Year, 1st May – Labour Day, Eid Ul Fitr End of Ramadan – based on Lunar calendar, 15th August – Assumption Day, August/September – Ganesh Chaturthi – 4th day of Hindu Lunar, Month of Bhadrapada, 2nd November – Celebrate the arrival of Indentured Labourers, October/November – Diwali Festival of Lights according to Lunar Year, 25th December Christmas Day.
<b>OFFICE HOURS:</b>	Normally 09.00 hours to 17.00 hours.
<b>BANK HOURS:</b>	Usually Monday to Thursday 09.15 hours to 15.15 hours. Friday 09.15 hours to 15.30 hours. Saturday 09.15 hours to 11.15 hours some banks only.
<b>EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS:</b>	Police 999. Medical Emergency 114. Fire Service 115.
<b>UK HIGH COMMISSION IN MAURITIUS:</b>	7th Floor, Cascades Building Edith Cavell Street PO Box 1063, Port Louis Tel: + 230 2029 408
<b>MAURITIUS HIGH COMMISSION:</b>	32/33 Elvaston Place London SW7 5NW Tel: 0207 581 0294

## **Part 1 – Background Information on Mauritius**

### **Background**

Although known to Arab and Malay sailors as early as the 10th century, Mauritius was first explored by the Portuguese in the 16th century and subsequently settled by the Dutch - who named it in honor of Prince Maurits van Nassau - in the 17th century. The French assumed control in 1715, developing the island into an important naval base overseeing Indian Ocean trade, and establishing a plantation economy of sugar cane. The British captured the island in 1810, during the Napoleonic Wars. Mauritius remained a strategically important British naval base, and later an air station, playing an important role during World War II for anti-submarine and convoy operations, as well as the collection of signals intelligence. Independence from the UK was attained in 1968. A stable democracy with regular free elections and a positive human rights record, the country has attracted considerable foreign investment and has one of Africa's highest per capita incomes. Once dependent on sugar exports, the island has built up a strong outsourcing and financial services sector, and an important tourism industry.

### **Geography and Climate**

Mauritius is a Southern African island in the Indian Ocean, about 800 km (500 mi) east of Madagascar and: includes Agalega Islands, Cargados Carajos Shoals (Saint Brandon), and Rodrigues. It is tropical, modified by southeast trade winds; warm, dry winter (May to November); hot, wet, humid summer (November to May) The terrain is coastal plain rising to discontinuous mountains encircling the central plateau, with the lowest point being the Indian Ocean 0 m, and the highest point Mont Piton 828 m.

The population density is one of the highest in the world; urban clusters are found throughout the main island, with a greater density in and around Port Louis; population on Rodrigues Island is spread across the island with a slightly denser cluster on the north coast. The Island is subject to cyclones (November to April), and is almost completely surrounded by reefs that may pose maritime hazards.

The main island, from which the country derives its name, is of volcanic origin and is almost entirely surrounded by coral reefs; former home of the dodo, a large flightless bird related to pigeons, driven to extinction by the end of the 17th century through a combination of hunting and the introduction of predatory species.

### **Population**

As at January 2019 the population was recorded at 1,269,911.

### **Currency**

The Rupee is the currency of Mauritius with the smaller denominations being cents, and the currency in circulations is:-

Coins:- 5, 20, 50 Cents and 1, 5, 10, and 20 Rupees.

Notes:- 25, 50, 100, 200, 500 and 1000 Rupees. There is a 2000 Rupee note which is rarely used.

### **Economy**

The economy currently depends on sugar, tourism, textiles and apparel, and financial services, but is expanding into fish processing, information and communications technology, education, and hospitality and property development.

Mauritius has attracted more than 32,000 offshore entities, many aimed at commerce in India, South Africa, and China. The Mauritius International Financial Center is under scrutiny by international bodies promoting fair tax competition and Mauritius has been cooperating with the European Union and the United States in the automatic exchange of account information. Mauritius is also a member of the OECD/G20's Inclusive Framework on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting and is under pressure to review its Double Taxation Avoidance Agreements. The offshore sector is vulnerable to changes in the tax framework and authorities have been working on a Financial Services Sector Blueprint to enable Mauritius to transition to a jurisdiction of higher value added. Mauritius' textile sector has taken advantage of the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act, a preferential trade program that allows duty free access to the US market, with Mauritian exports to the US growing by 35.6 % from 2000 to 2014.

Mauritius' sound economic policies and prudent banking practices helped mitigate negative effects of the global financial crisis in 2008-09. GDP grew in the 3-4% per year range in 2010-17, and the country continues to expand its trade and investment outreach around the globe. Growth in the US and Europe fostered goods and services exports, including tourism, while lower oil prices kept inflation low. Mauritius continues to rank as one of the most business-friendly environments on the continent and passed a Business Facilitation Act to improve competitiveness and long-term growth prospects. A new National Economic Development Board was set up in 2017-2018 to spearhead efforts to promote exports and attract inward investment.

### **Religion**

Mauritius is a religiously diverse nation with Hinduism being the largest religion. The people of Indian descent (Indo-Mauritian) follow mostly Hinduism and Islam. The Franco-Mauritians, Creoles and Sino-Mauritians follow Christianity.

### **Language**

English is the official language. However, French is extensively used and Creole is widely spoken.

### **Healthcare**

There is a public healthcare system where Mauritians and permanent residents benefit from free medical services. Foreign visitors, would be required to pay for their health needs. Expats are strongly advised to secure health coverage before travelling to the country.

Community clinics are found in towns and cities, but the larger facilities are located in the capital city of Port Louis.

State-run clinics and hospitals provide free medical services, including maternity care and financial assistance to eligible individuals.

### **Education**

In Mauritius, education is mandatory for students up to the age of 16, and is free from primary to secondary level and is compulsory for all students up to the age of 16. Public schools (referred to as Government schools in Mauritius) follow the British system of education, while private primary and secondary schools tend to follow the International Baccalaureate programme or the French Education System.

English is the official language of Mauritius, and therefore most courses are in English as from the primary level, meaning that most Mauritian students are at the very least bilingual by secondary school.

International schools are privately operated, and entry is subject to registration and tuition fees.

## **Part 2 – Mauritius Import Customs Regulations**

**To the best of our knowledge, the following documentation is required to import household goods and personal effects into Mauritius.**

### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

- You must have arrived in Mauritius at least two weeks prior to your household and personal effects
- All shipments for Mauritius have to be approved prior to shipping, therefore effects will be brought into our warehouse, after which copy documentation, including the valued packing list, will be emailed to our partner company who will present to the customs authorities for approval
- Effects must arrive within six months of your first arrival
- If you have a 2nd consignment to be shipped this must be notified to customs at the time of clearance of the 1st consignment

- The effects must not be for resale. For a period of 2 years after importation of effects you are required to submit to the Director General, not later than one month immediately following a period of 12 months, evidence that you are still residing in Mauritius, by way of documents such as utility bills etc., or be liable to pay the full amount of customs duty and tax plus a penalty. Effects cannot be pledged, sold or disposed of within 4 years of date of importation

### **Mauritian returning citizen**

#### **Documents Required:**

- Original Passport (for the duration of customs clearance) this must show the last arrival date in Mauritius. Plus original Mauritian passport of any family members, again showing the last arrival date in Mauritius, if their effects are also being shipped. If you are married to a non citizen of Mauritius, their residence permit will also be required, as well as their original passport. Copies of passports are required by us
- Packing list prepared by us
- Valued inventory list showing quantities of each item
- Customs declaration form (E9) and Exemption form (E8) which our partner company will provide. These have to be signed in the presence of a customs officer
- Passport Memo. You have to apply for this personally at the Passport and Immigration Office, Sterling
- House, Port Louis on your arrival in Mauritius. The Passport Memo takes about 7 days

In order to qualify for Exemption of duties and taxes, you must have been outside Mauritius for at least one full year, and not taken exemption before. Total stay in Mauritius on short visits during the preceding years should not exceed 6 months.

### **Expatriate/Non Resident of Mauritius**

#### **Documents required:**

- Original Passport (for the duration of customs clearance) this must show the last arrival date in Mauritius. Plus original passport of any family members, if their effects are also being shipped
- Original Occupation permit (original A4 page + card) and or Original Residence permit (original A4 + small card). Also required for any family member if their effects are also being shipped
- Customs declaration form (E9) and Exemption form (E8) which our partner company will provide. These have to be signed in the presence of a customs officer
- Packing list prepared by us
- Valued inventory list showing quantities of each item

For importers possessing Occupation permit, work permit or residence permit (retired non citizen) issued by the Passport and Immigration office, your effects must arrive within 6 months of the date of issue.

For importers possessing Residence permit under Real Estate Scheme, your effects must arrive within 3 years of the date of issue.

**Note** If permits are not available, a bank guarantee has to be applied for in Mauritius (will take at least 2 weeks) or a cash deposit made available, in order to clear your effects through customs. The amount is refunded when original permits are produced to customs. VAT is not refunded for cash deposit.

#### **Diplomatic Removal**

Duty free importation is allowed upon submission of the detailed inventory and a diplomatic clearance certificate completed and signed by relevant Embassy/Consulate Mauritius.

#### **Documents required:**

- Copy of Passport showing last arrival date in Mauritius, plus Diplomatic ID
- Packing list prepared by us

- Valued inventory list showing quantities of each item
- 2 sets of exemption letter issued by the Ministry of foreign affairs that need to be obtained from the Local embassy in order to proceed with customs clearance

### **Motor Vehicles – Cars and Motorbikes**

The motor vehicle should be right hand drive (left hand drive is prohibited)

The motor vehicle should have its original chassis.

An Import Permit is required for second hand vehicles, and only motorcycles less than one year old can be imported.

Only Returning Mauritian Passport holders (and Diplomats) are eligible for tax and duty concessions, and must have been working and residing outside Mauritius for a period of at least 5 years immediately preceding the date of return. Also during the 10 years preceding the date of return to Mauritius has worked in Mauritius for not more than 3 years on aggregate, and has ceased working having reached retirement age.

Concessions may be given where a returning citizen has been temporarily residing and working in Mauritius and then decides to remain (in which case application has to be made to the Director General).

The motor vehicle must be purchased prior to the date of return and shipped to arrive within 180 days of return.

Generally second hand car parts and accessories are prohibited.

### **Documents Required for Returning Mauritian Passport holders**

- Valid Mauritian passport and birth certificate as applicable
- Evidence of employment abroad, such as a) Certificate issued by Employer. b) Salary receipts, pay slips etc for a period of at least five years. c) Income Tax Returns and P60. d) Bank Statements
- Registration Certificate for the Car
- Deregistration Certificate
- Purchase Invoice
- Deed of Sale
- PSI Certificate

When benefit concession is given and the car has been imported, you are required to submit to the Director General for a period of 4 years, not later than one month immediately following a period of 12 months from the date of importation, prove that you are still residing in Mauritius.

### **Documents Required for Diplomat**

- 2 sets of exemption letter from the Ministry of Foreign affairs obtained from the local embassy
- A copy of passport with arrival stamps

### **Expatriate/Non Resident of Mauritius**

Please contact us if you wish to import a car, and we will assist you with what documentation is required, but please note tax and duty concessions are not available for Expatriates.

### **Restricted Items**

Please note you are only allowed one of the following items duty and tax free:-

Sewing Machine. Radio, Musical Instrument. Refrigerator. Cooking stove. Heater. Perambulator, Bicycle, Ladder, Printer, DVD Player, Washing Machine, Dish Washer, Fan, Microwave Oven, Exerciser/Keep Fit apparatus.

2 Televisions.



### **Dutiable Items**

Tiles/Ceramics, Blinds/Window Treatment, Satellite Dishes, Car Seats/baby car seats, Laminated Flooring, Candles, Sinks/Wash Basins, Boat Engines, Cosmetics, Perfumes, Bathroom Items (shower gel etc). Empty gas cylinders (diving or cooking), Air compressor.

### **Prohibited Items**

Underwater Fishing Guns, Tear Gas, Water Scooters, Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, Toy Guns, Laser Penlights, Publications, films or video of obscene character are prohibited, Firearms, guns, weapons, ammunitions and explosives, Counterfeit or fake goods, Plants, Stuffed animals, Ball valve bottles, Kerosene stoves of any description, Yoyo water balls.

### **Please do not include**

Alcohol, Any food stuffs or liquids, Medicines, Cigarettes, Cigars.

### **Pets (dogs, cats, etc.)**

We work with a number of Pet Relocation Companies who can help you import your pet to Mauritius.

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.*