

Shipping a Car from Puerto Rico

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== Notes ==

Requirements may change. Always confirm the requirements at the local VPC page <https://pcsmypov.com/Locations/Puerto%20Rico%20VPC> or the specific shipper you are using. Current requirements have shippers coordinate with three separate government entities: ACAA (govt auto insurance office), CESCO (Puerto Rico's DMV), and PR police (stolen vehicle branch).

Be polite and professional. For the steps involving visits to an office, it can help to be in uniform. Always be polite as the actions you are taking are not common and many employees may not be familiar with vehicle export processes.

Have a plan. Trying to accomplish all of this at the last minute will increase stress, can have added costs, and can potentially risk not having your car shipped before PCS.

== 6 Months Out ==

Vehicle Recall: Check <https://vinrcl.safercar.gov/vin/> for any pending recalls and get them resolved. Ensure you have a copy of the receipt showing completion as some entries may take time to catch up in the system. If the dealer is unable to make the repairs, get documentation that they cannot and try another dealer. If problems persist, contact the shipper to determine if it will be a problem. Note that some manufacturers require the car to be in their Puerto Rico system vs the CONUS system before they can do warranty work or repair recalls. Nissan and Hyundai and two examples. This can take time.

Cracked Glass: Some shippers will not ship with any windshield or glass damage and some will ship if the damage is not in the sightline of the driver. Plavica is an excellent repair chain with numerous locations and good inventory: <https://plavica.com>.

Leaking Fluids: Any petroleum product dripping on the ground will be a show stopper for most shipping companies.

Not Running: If the car won't start and can't drive itself, it won't be accepted.

Parking Brake: The parking brake needs to be in good working order.

Loan on the Vehicle: If you have a loan on your vehicle or are renting it, you must have a Lien Holder letter authorizing the export of your POV from Puerto Rico. Engage the lien holder (bank) and shipper early to determine their process and if they have any specific requirements. Check with the shipper to determine if this needs to be a notarized document (get a notarized document if in doubt).

Major repairs or body work: If you were previously in an accident or had significant modification done to the vehicle, locate receipts that describe the work and parts replaced / installed. The police inspection prior to shipping the vehicle is checking to ensure it is not loaded with stolen parts. If in doubt, you can take the car to the police for a pre-inspection. You will need to get an affidavit explaining the circumstances surrounding the

replacement of the original parts which can be obtained from the Sector San Juan attorney, Mr. Jose Suarez. If he is not available, Fort Buchanan legal assistance can also provide one.

Shipping to another Overseas location: Review any special requirements if shipping the vehicle to another overseas territory or country. You may have additional requirements or restrictions.

Vehicle Title: Some states like Florida hold the title electronically and do not normally issue a paper title. You will have to look through their process of obtaining a paper title.

== 4 Months Out ==

Schedule POV Turn In: This can be done anytime provided you have the information they require on the web page and can schedule a firm drop off date. For the VPC, this can be done online at: <https://www.pcsmypov.com/>. Other shipping companies have similar online booking. Check the web page to see what information you need so you can book as early as possible. Since the police and CESCO paperwork is only good for three days, consider booking later in the week.

Power(s) of Attorney (POA): Everyone needs a power of attorney authorizing the shipper to ship the vehicle (Rodi Cargo International Group for the VPC). This must be an original and can be obtained from the Sector San Juan attorney, Mr. Jose Suarez or Fort Buchanan legal assistance if he is unavailable. If a spouse or other individual will (or may) be dropping off the vehicle, they will need another power of attorney to act on your behalf. You will need to provide the servicing legal office with the year, make, model and VIN of the vehicle, and if designating another individual, their full name as it appears on a government ID. You will need a separate power of attorney for vehicle pickup if someone other than the service member is picking it up.

Tax Stamps and Vouchers: You will need to obtain tax stamps and vouchers for some of the documents you submit to the VPC or shipping company. If the vehicle is registered out of state, you are required to obtain (x1) \$11.00 Tax Stamp, (x2) \$2.00 voucher # 842, and (x1) \$10.00 voucher #5122. If registered in Puerto Rico, you are required to obtain (x2) \$11.00 Tax Stamp, \$2.00 voucher # 842, and (x1) \$10.00 voucher #5122. This can change from year to year. You can purchase them at any Colecturia (Tax Office) or Banco Popular. You may be able to use credit cards or exact change in cash for the purchase. The service member does not need to be present to purchase them, but the individual purchasing does need the full name of whom it is for as they print them at the time of purchase with the member's name. The stamps and vouchers are stickers and you cannot use digital images or photocopies.

AutoExpresso: You will need to close your AutoExpresso account if you have one. There is a form you can download and mail. They will not refund any existing balance on account closure, so plan ahead to shut off automatic recharging and use the remaining balance.

== No Less Than 30 Days from Drop Off ==

Negative ACAA Certificate: You need to obtain a negative ACAA certification specifically for the export of a vehicle ("Certificación Negativa de Gravámenes para la exportación de vehículos"). This is to confirm you have no unresolved claims or debts owed to ACAA. The ACAA web page may have the functionality to do this online at <http://www.acaa.gobierno.pr/servicios>. If you cannot do it online, you will need to visit an ACAA regional office (Oficinas Regionales – do not go to the ACAA Central Office). Beforehand, make copies of your title, registration, and driver's license (front and back) as this will speed your processing time. The cost is

\$3.00 cash in exact change. It is recommended to visit in the morning (AM) as anyone over 60 has head of the line privileges. The closest location is in Hato Rey (Google Maps: CWGP+5HR).

Underbody Cleaning: To export a car off the island, it must have a wash that meets USDA standards. This includes an undercarriage, wheel well, and engine bay cleaning. The VPC will do this the day of the turn in, so it is a step you can skip if shipping through the VPC and willing to pay the \$70 charge. If you obtain this commercially at a car wash, you have to ensure it is for export, meets USDA standards, and states on the receipt the engine, exterior, chassis and wheel well area have been cleaned. There is no specific timeframe for completing this, but if there is mud or plant products clinging the car, they could deny accepting it. The USDA can fine you and the shipper for violations, so shippers are usually stringent on this. For those shipping through the VPC, paying the day you drop off is the most stress-free solution.

Vehicle Contents: Pay attention to the requirements of what can be shipped in the vehicle and what cannot. Some items may have to be placed in household goods, sold, or disposed of. What can go in the vehicle is governed by the shipping company's policy, federal law, and in the case of the VPC, the government contract.

== No Less than 3 Days from Drop Off ==

CESCO (Department of Motor Vehicles): You are required to obtain a "No Traffic Violation Certificate" if your car is registered in Puerto Rico or a "Certificate of the Vehicle Not Registered in Puerto Rico" if it is not. This is done at a CESCO servicing center. You need to book an appointment online at <https://cesco.turnospr.com/>. Select "MULTAS" button, select "Certificacion...", select "COORDINAR UNA CITA," from here you will enter your information and continue to select the desired location. CESCO Carolina seems to have the best track record of successfully completing. You will enter your preferred dates/times and a calendar will populate allowing you to choose your appointment. Schedule your appointment early and arrive one hour before your appointment to get in line. (Google Maps: 93G6+HJM)

- Make copies of your title, registration, and driver's license (front and back); this will speed your appointment time. You should also make copies of the form you receive from CESCO.
- Print a copy of the email or text confirmation as you may need to show this when you arrive at the CESCO.
- Once at the door, a CESCO employee will screen your confirmation number and provide you a separate number for a booth inside (very similar to CONUS DMV wait time once inside). If the booth employee isn't sure how to help you, ask for a supervisor.

Police Pre-Inspection: This is an inspection to ensure the vehicle is not stolen or composed of stolen parts. It can be done at any police station with a "Division de Vehiculos Hurtados". This will be the last step before turn in and requires negative ACAA and CESCO to be complete. The hours are generally 0800-1300. Make copies of your title, registration, driver's license (front and back), negative ACAA, and CESCO certificates; this will speed your appointment time. PRPD will issue you a certificate of inspection. (Google Maps: CV94+726, Expreso Río Hondo, Bayamón)

Car Wash: This is a basic car wash that can be done at a commercial car wash or at home to facilitate inspecting the car and complying with USDA regulations in the interior. The shipper will expect it to be white glove clean to facilitate inspecting the exterior. You must also vacuum and clean your vehicle's interior; it must be free of any dirt, soil, leaves, pollen, sand, pebbles, stones, mud, plant life, food particles, pet dander, and hair. This does not replace the USDA underbody cleaning.

Gas Tank Level: All shippers require that your gas tank be no more than ¼ tank or less at the time of turn in.

== POV Turn In ==

The main event: You will need your driver's license, title, registration, negative ACAA, CESCO certificates, police inspection, POA(s), lien holder authorizations, recall repair documentation, and remaining tax stamp / voucher stickers. Other than the title and registration, do not bring copies as they want all the originals and will make any copies they need. If shipping through the VPC, you will need \$70 cash and your PCS orders with all amendments.

Wheel Locks: If your wheels have wheel locks, they must be in the glove compartment.

Dropping off for someone: If you are completing tasks on behalf of the service member and/or title holder, you need a separate POA designating and photocopies of their driver's license.

Bag: Bring a bag to carry the inevitable small items they will find during inspection you forgot about that can't be shipped with the vehicle.

VPC Location: The VPC is located at Victoria Industrial Park in Carolina. It will have signs for "Rodi Cargo Int'l Group" and VPC contractor IAL. (Google Maps: 92HM+MM)

AutoExpresso: Remove the AutoExpresso transponder sticker and wrap in foil to prevent accidental charging later. Mail the letter to close the account.

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