



REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, INTERNATIONAL TRADE
AND REGIONAL CO-OPERATION

My ref: 18570/32

22 December 2004

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to circular (Decision 80/54) ref E/INCB/PSY/C.L.23/2004 dated 29 September 2004 requesting the Government of the Republic of Mauritius to provide information on all relevant specific legal or administrative measures adopted to allow travellers to carry medical preparations containing controlled substances for personal use.

I am pleased to enclosed the required information on the legal measures which are in force in Mauritius with regard to the transport of controlled drugs by inbound and outbound passengers.

Please accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

INC B
PSYCHOTROPICS UNIT

Action: File: DEC. 80-54 (MAR)

22 DEC 2004

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Legal Measures adopted for inbound travellers carrying narcotics

A Preliminary procedures

1. Prior notification of carrying drugs through embassies, tour operators or directly encouraged.
2. Documents needed
 - a. Photocopy of passport/national identity card
 - b. Residential address in country of origin
 - c. Therapeutic justification from doctor on letterhead
 - d. Copy of prescription if available else description and exact quantities of controlled medicines to be carried to be given
 - e. Proposed address in Mauritius
 - f. Date of arrival and flight number and period of stay
 - g. Certificate from drug rehabilitation centre if necessary
 - h. Notification of National Authority for narcotics control may be necessary in some cases
3. The application is examined and outcome determined in 48 hours if all essential information is available
4. Notification of acceptance to applicant directly and through embassy and /or tour operator with a set of conditions.
5. Notification of acceptance to custom and police authorities at airport
6. Passenger notifies acceptance of conditions

B Arrival in Mauritius

1. Upon arrival in Mauritius the passenger is required to declare the drugs to the customs. We advise passengers to carry a copy of their prescription and to keep drugs in their original containers which normally carry their names and instructions for use.
2. The passenger may be met at the airport by pharmacy inspectors if we deem that the total quantity of drugs is too much. In such cases part of the drugs are surrendered to the inspector in the presence of the customs officers and against a due receipt. We undertake to deliver the drugs to the passenger at his hotels at regular intervals. The procedure is well rehearsed and has been conducted to the satisfaction of one and all.
3. In all cases no drugs must be left in Mauritius and any changes of address must be notified to the Permanent secretary Ministry of Health.
4. The Ministry reserves the right to refuse the import of narcotics if it deems that the passenger does not offer sufficient guarantees. E.g. unknown address, import of large quantities of narcotics by addicts for rehabilitation purposes, sharing of narcotics, etc



5. Passengers are informed upon their arrival that misuse of narcotics carry severe penalties.

The above procedures apply especially to Narcotics such as morphine, methadone, or pethidine. Lighter procedures are applied for Psychotropic drugs such as benzodiazepines.

C Case of absence of prior notification by passenger

Drugs are released exceptionally if the passenger can justify possession and obtention by legal means. Passenger also needs to present evidence of a booked address during his stay. The procedures described under B 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 may apply.

Passengers who are not duly authorized to carry controlled drugs and who do not declare those items to the customs may be prosecuted.

Passengers who are not duly authorized may be delayed at the customs pending investigation by the customs. In some cases passengers may have to return to the airport to collect their drugs after vetting of the consignment by pharmacy inspectors.

D Import of Controlled drugs by foreigners staying temporarily in Mauritius.

This may be allowed under exceptional conditions and if adequate substitutes do not exist in Mauritius. Medical justification must be produced. Morphine tablets (plain) and sustained release, pethidine injection, Morphine injection, Fentanyl patches are available in Mauritius under brand names. All benzodiazepines are available in Mauritius. Methadone and buprenorphine (Subutex) are not available.



Legal Measures adopted for outbound travellers carrying narcotics



A. Information required for passengers carrying psychotropics

1. Basic documents

- Name and address
 - Passengers are required to justify the need for drugs by way of a prescription and a medical certificate
 - Quantities and exact quantities must be stated
 - Date of departure and flight number are required as well as country of destination and transit points
 - Quantities must be commensurate with length of stay. The law allows for a maximum duration of 30 days for psychotropic preparations.
2. A letter is issued to the passenger authoring him to carry the drugs. Passenger is also given a letter for the customs authorities at destination. He is advised to declare the drugs at the customs at his arrival at destination and to keep a copy of his prescription. Passenger is informed about legal provisions governing possession of such drugs.
3. Customs are informed.

B Passengers carrying Narcotics out of Mauritius

The same procedures as above apply. Passenger is also issued with a formal export certificate and the Narcotic Authorities of the country of destination are informed.

Decision to allow transport depends on the nature and amount of the drugs to be carried as well as standing of the applicant with the justice of the republic. Most applications concern patients going for surgical operation abroad.

The resolutions of the Commission have been smoothly implemented. In fact we had a similar policy well before the matter was brought to the attention of the Commission. The system is well tested and has stood many challenges from tourists and tour operators.