Dawgen GLOBAL

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CARIBBEAN SERVICE DESK · GREATER ANTILLES

Doing Business in Haiti

A practical guide to establishing, operating and growing a business in Haiti

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FOREWORD

Haiti shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic and has the largest population in CARICOM. It has a long tradition of enterprise, a young workforce and preferential access to the United States market for apparel.

Investors consider Haiti for its labour force, its location close to North America and its trade preferences, particularly in apparel assembly, agriculture and services. Opportunity sits alongside real challenges. Security, governance, registration, tax and employment matters all need careful handling and realistic planning from the first day.

This guide sets out what you need to know in plain language: how to choose a structure, how the set-up process works, what taxes apply, how to employ people, and which incentives may be available. It is written for investors, entrepreneurs and regional and international groups considering Haiti.

We serve clients in Haiti through Dawgen Global's Caribbean Service Desk, managed from our headquarters in Kingston, and we are ready to help you turn a plan into a well-run, compliant business.

Dr. Dawkins Brown, Ph.D., MCMI, ACFE

Executive Chairman, Dawgen Global

How to use this guide

This guide gives a practical overview of establishing and running a business in Haiti. It is general information, current to October 2026, and is not a substitute for advice on your circumstances. Rates and rules change; speak to us before you act.

OVERVIEW

01 Haiti at a glance

The western third of Hispaniola, with an economy built on services, remittances, apparel assembly, agriculture and trade.

CAPITAL
Port-au-Prince
Cap-Haïtien is the main city of the north

POPULATION
About 12 million
Large diaspora in the US, Canada and France

LANGUAGES
French and Creole
Both official; laws and contracts are in French

CURRENCY
Haitian gourde (HTG)
Floating rate; US dollar widely used

LEGAL SYSTEM
Civil law
Codes based on the French model

TIME ZONE
UTC−5
Daylight saving (UTC−4) from March to November

CORPORATE INCOME TAX
30%
Tax year runs 1 October to 30 September

TURNOVER TAX (TCA)
10%
Franchise below HTG 10 million turnover from 1 October 2026

TRADE ACCESS
US, CARICOM
HOPE/HELP apparel preferences

Leading sectors

Apparel and textile assembly · Agriculture and agro-processing · Trade and distribution · Telecommunications · Financial services · Construction · Energy · Remittance services · Tourism (north coast)

Gateways

Toussaint Louverture International (Port-au-Prince) and Cap-Haïtien International are the main airports. US commercial flights to the Port-au-Prince area are restricted until at least 2 March 2027, so many travellers use Cap-Haïtien or the Dominican Republic. Check current status before travel.

Public holidays

National holidays include Independence Day (1 January), Ancestors' Day (2 January), Carnival, Flag and University Day (18 May) and the anniversary of the Battle of Vertières (18 November).

INVESTMENT CLIMATE

02 Why Haiti

A large, young workforce, proximity to North America and preferential US market access support investment, alongside significant security and governance risks that must be planned for.

Location

Haiti lies about two hours' flight from Miami and shares a land border with the Dominican Republic. Northern free zones such as Caracol and CODEVI serve the US market and cross-border supply chains.

Workforce

A young labour force, competitive wage levels and decades of experience in apparel assembly underpin export manufacturing. The diaspora supports trade, remittances and investment.

Market access

Duty-free US access for qualifying apparel under HOPE/HELP, to an expiry set by the US Congress, is the main draw for export manufacturers.

Security and governance

Haiti has had no elected national officials since 2023. The Transitional Presidential Council's mandate ended in February 2026, and the government of Prime Minister Alix Didier Fils-Aimé now leads the transition, largely by decree. General elections planned for 13 December 2026 were postponed in October 2026 with no new date set.

Armed groups control much of the Port-au-Prince area and some key roads, and the UN reports more than 1.5 million people displaced. A UN-authorised Gang Suppression Force, renewed to 31 March 2027, is deploying in support of national authorities. Conditions vary sharply by area and change quickly.

Our recommendation

Before committing funds, carry out thorough due diligence on partners, land title and permits, and prepare a security plan covering staff movement, premises, cash handling, insurance and business continuity, using professional security advice. The Centre de Facilitation des Investissements (CFI) is the national investment promotion and facilitation agency.

LEGAL VEHICLES

03 Choosing a business structure

Most investors use a société anonyme (SA). Overseas companies may instead register a branch. The right choice depends on liability, tax, financing, land needs and exit plans.

Vehicle	Key features	Typical use	Main obligations
Société anonyme (SA)	Separate legal entity with share capital; shareholders' liability limited to their shares; formed by notarial deed; several shareholders and a board are required	Most operating businesses and subsidiaries of foreign groups	Authorisation by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry; publication in Le Moniteur; tax returns; shareholder register
Branch of a foreign company	Registered with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry; not a separate legal entity	Projects, contracts and market entry by foreign companies	Registration and publication; tax on Haitian profits; local accounts
Société en nom collectif (SNC)	General partnership; partners personally and jointly liable	Family and professional businesses	Registration; partners taxed on their share of profits
Société en commandite	Limited partnership with managing and silent partners, simple or with shares	Family and investor arrangements	Registration; tax filings
Sole proprietorship	Individual trading in their own name; unlimited liability	Small owner-managed businesses	Registration; tax ID and patente; personal income tax
Cooperative or foundation	Member-owned or non-profit entities under special laws	Agriculture, savings and charitable work	Registration with the relevant ministry or council

Foreign ownership

The Investment Code gives foreign and Haitian investors the same rights. Confirm with counsel the minimum number of SA shareholders and whether a Haitian shareholder is needed. Banking, insurance, telecoms and mining need licences first, and land rules (page 9) depend on the share held by Haitians.

Beneficial ownership

There is no public beneficial ownership register. Banks, notaries and other reporting entities must identify beneficial owners under the anti-money laundering law, and Haiti remains on the FATF list of jurisdictions under increased monitoring.

GETTING STARTED

04 Setting up: step by step

Incorporation involves a notary, ministerial authorisation and publication in the official gazette. Allow several weeks to a few months; bank accounts and licences can take longer.

1 **Plan the structure and name** — WEEK 1–2

Choose the vehicle, shareholders and directors, check name availability with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MCI), and use the CFI's facilitation services.

2 **Execute the notarial deed** — WEEK 2–4

A Haitian notary prepares and executes the articles (statuts) in French. Subscribed capital is deposited with a Haitian bank as the articles require.

3 **Obtain MCI authorisation and publish** — WEEK 3–10

File with the MCI for authorisation and registration. The articles and authorisation are published in Le Moniteur, the official gazette, before the SA operates fully.

4 **Register for taxes** — WEEK 6–12

Obtain a tax identification number (NIF) and the annual patente from the Direction Générale des Impôts (DGI), and register for TCA where turnover reaches the HTG 10 million franchise.

5 **Register as an employer** — BEFORE HIRING

Register with ONA (pensions) and OFATMA (work injury, sickness and maternity), and set up payroll withholding with the DGI.

6 **Open bank accounts** — VARIES

Banks apply full know-your-customer checks on the company, directors and beneficial owners. Expect enhanced checks given Haiti's FATF status.

7 **Licences, permits and security** — BEFORE TRADING

Obtain sector licences, municipal and building approvals, free zone approval where relevant, and work and residence permits for foreign staff. Put the security plan in place.

Documents you will usually need

Certified passport and proof of address for each director, shareholder and beneficial owner; a NIF for Haitian participants; registered office details; and, for a foreign company, certified and translated constitutional documents, a board resolution and a certificate of good standing from its home registry.

TAXATION

05 Tax at a glance

Taxes are administered by the DGI. A new tax code (Code fiscal) took effect on 1 October 2026, replacing the 2022 code. Headline rates are below; confirm detailed rules against the new code.

Business taxes	
Corporate income tax	30% of taxable profit; tax year 1 October to 30 September
Small businesses	A simplified regime applies below set turnover limits
TCA	10% turnover tax (similar to VAT); franchise below HTG 10 million turnover; monthly returns by the 15th
Patente	Annual business licence tax payable to the DGI
Property	Annual tax on built property (CFPB) for the communes; registration duties on transfers
Customs	Duties under Haiti's tariff, plus import levies and fees

Individuals (from 1 October 2026)	
Tax-free band	First HTG 360,000 a year
Rates	12% to HTG 540,000; 18% to HTG 1.08 million; 25% to HTG 2.16 million; 30% above

Withholding tax	Rate*
Dividends	15%
Interest	15%
Bonuses and overtime	15%

*Payments to non-resident service providers and certain contracts are also subject to withholding. Haiti has very few tax treaties, so domestic rates usually apply; confirm each rate under the new code.

Recent changes

The decree on the new Code fiscal was published in Le Moniteur on 30 September 2026 and applies from 1 October 2026. It widened the personal income tax bands, set the TCA franchise at HTG 10 million and raised withholding on bonuses and overtime from 10% to 15%. The Minister of Economy and Finance will issue implementing decisions. The 2025–26 budget was HTG 345.5 billion.

PEOPLE

06 Employing people

The Labour Code sets minimum standards on wages, hours, leave and termination. Employers must register with ONA and OFATMA and pay deductions monthly.

Minimum standards

- **Minimum wage:** set daily by sector from May 2026, from HTG 500 (domestic work) to HTG 1,000 (banks, telecoms and export assembly)
- **Hours:** 8-hour day and 48-hour week; overtime at a premium
- **Vacation:** at least 15 days' paid leave after a year's service
- **Sick leave:** up to 15 days a year with a medical certificate
- **Maternity:** 12 weeks' leave
- **Notice:** from 15 days (under 1 year) to 4 months (over 10 years), or pay in lieu
- **Boni:** a 13th-month payment of one-twelfth of annual pay, due between 24 and 31 December

Statutory payroll contributions

Contribution	Employee	Employer
Income tax	0–30%	—
ONA (pensions)	6%	6%
OFATMA sickness and maternity	3%	3%
OFATMA work injury	—	2–6%

Work injury rates depend on the sector. Withheld tax is paid to the DGI by the 15th of the following month. Daily minimum wages from May 2026 (HTG): 1,000 banks, telecoms and export assembly; 925 security and fuel distribution; 900 construction, wholesale and IT; 760 retail, restaurants and agriculture; 500 domestic work.

Bringing in foreign staff

Work permits

Foreign employees need a work permit from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (MAST), applied for with the employer's support.

Residence

Longer stays need a residence permit from the Immigration and Emigration Directorate. Plan lead times, as offices may be affected by security conditions.

Duty of care

Brief expatriate and local staff on security procedures, travel, communications and evacuation arrangements.

HR essentials from day one

Give every employee written terms in French, keep accurate time, pay and leave records, register each employee with ONA and OFATMA, budget for the boni, and adopt a staff handbook covering conduct, grievances and health and safety.

MONEY AND ASSETS

07 Banking, currency and property

Banking and finance

Haiti has a small banking system of commercial banks, savings institutions and cooperatives, regulated by the Banque de la République d'Haïti (BRH).

- **Floating currency:** the gourde floats; the BRH publishes a daily reference rate and intervenes in the market
- **US dollar accounts** are widely available, and the dollar is used in many transactions
- **BRH rules:** policy favours the gourde for domestic transactions; check current BRH circulars on pricing and foreign currency settlement
- **Transfers:** the Investment Code allows profits and capital to be transferred abroad once taxes are paid
- **Compliance:** expect enhanced anti-money laundering checks

Financial reporting

Keep accounts that support the DGI return; audited statements are needed for larger taxpayers, lenders and regulated entities.

Land and property

Under the law of 16 June 1975, foreigners resident in Haiti and foreign companies may own property for housing or business, with prior authorisation from the Minister of Justice. An SA with its head office in Haiti is treated as Haitian; other companies are treated as foreign unless at least half their capital is Haitian-held.

Key rules and costs	
Area limits	About 1.29 ha urban and 5 carreaux rural; one dwelling per commune
Use	Property must be put to its declared use within two years
Transfer costs	Registration duties, notary and surveyor fees
Property tax	Annual CFPB on built property

Before you buy or build

Title records can be incomplete or contested. Commission a full title search and survey, and obtain municipal building and environmental approvals.

GROWTH LEVERS

08 Incentives, trade and customs

Haiti offers tax and customs relief under its Investment Code and free zone law, and its apparel exports benefit from US trade preferences.

Key incentive regimes

Regime	What it offers
Investment Code (2002)	Time-limited income tax and customs relief for approved investments in priority sectors, applied for through the CFI
Free zones	Income tax holidays and duty-free imports of inputs and equipment for approved developers and operators
Caracol Industrial Park	Public industrial park in the north serving export manufacturers
CODEVI	Private free zone at Ouanaminthe on the Dominican border, focused on apparel
SONAPI parks	Public industrial parks managed by the national parks company

Eligibility, durations and conditions apply to each regime. We can assess which incentives fit your project and prepare the applications.

Market access

- **HOPE/HELP:** duty-free US access for qualifying apparel; lapsed on 30 September 2025 and was restored retroactively in early 2026; expiry set by the US Congress
- **Caribbean Basin Initiative:** duty-free US access for many other products
- **CARICOM:** Haiti is a full member, with limited participation in the single market
- **CARIFORUM–EU Economic Partnership Agreement:** signed by Haiti; check its current application

Customs

The Administration Générale des Douanes handles imports and exports. Importers need a NIF. Duty is charged on the customs value at tariff rates, plus levies and fees. Allow for disruption at Port-au-Prince and on main roads.

COMPLIANCE

09 Regulators and compliance calendar

Who regulates what

Body	Role
Ministry of Commerce and Industry	Company authorisation and registration
CFI	Investment facilitation and incentives
DGI	Income tax, TCA, patente, withholding
Administration Générale des Douanes	Imports, exports and duties
BRH	Banks, foreign exchange and payments
UCREF	Financial intelligence and anti-money laundering reporting
MAST	Labour standards and work permits
ONA and OFATMA	Pensions and social insurance
Free Zones Directorate	Free zone approvals
CONATEL	Telecommunications

Key filing dates

When	What
15th of each month	Payroll withholding, other withholding and TCA return and payment for the previous month
Monthly	ONA and OFATMA contributions
During the tax year	Income tax instalments (acomptes) on set dates
After 30 September	Annual income tax return and financial statements, generally within about three months
24–31 December	Boni payment to employees
Each year	Patente renewal

Dates under the new code should be confirmed as implementing decisions are issued. Late filing and payment attract penalties.

Anti-money laundering and data

Banks and designated businesses must report to UCREF. Haiti remains under FATF increased monitoring, so expect enhanced checks by foreign counterparties. Haiti has no comprehensive data protection law; follow good practice and parent-group rules.

ACTION PLAN

10 Your first 90 days: checklist

Use this checklist to track the essential steps from decision to first trading day.

Days 1–30: establish

- [ ] Agree business plan, structure and ownership
- [ ] Complete partner, title and security due diligence
- [ ] Check the company name with the MCI
- [ ] Gather KYC documents for directors and owners
- [ ] Execute the notarial deed of incorporation
- [ ] Deposit subscribed capital
- [ ] Apply for MCI authorisation and registration
- [ ] Apply to open business bank accounts

Days 31–60: register and license

- [ ] Publish the articles in Le Moniteur
- [ ] Obtain NIF and patente from the DGI
- [ ] Register for TCA where required
- [ ] Register with ONA and OFATMA
- [ ] Apply for work and residence permits
- [ ] Apply for Investment Code or free zone benefits
- [ ] Arrange insurance and a security plan

Days 61–90: operate

- [ ] Set up the accounting system and chart of accounts
- [ ] Set up payroll and statutory deductions
- [ ] Issue written employment contracts
- [ ] Build the tax and filing calendar
- [ ] Put AML and business continuity policies in place
- [ ] Agree year-end and audit arrangements

Ongoing

- [ ] Monthly withholding, TCA and social filings
- [ ] Income tax instalments
- [ ] Annual tax return and financial statements
- [ ] Boni and patente each year
- [ ] Review security plan regularly

YOUR PARTNER

11 How Dawgen Global helps

One Dawgen Global team supports you through our Caribbean Service Desk, managed from our headquarters in Kingston.

Market entry and structuring

Choice of vehicle, group and tax structuring, feasibility studies and business plans.

Incorporation and corporate secretarial

Company formation support, statutory registers and annual filings.

Tax advisory and compliance

Registrations, planning, TCA, withholding, returns, transfer pricing and tax audits, through our Caribbean Tax Service Desk.

Accounting and payroll outsourcing

Bookkeeping, management accounts, payroll and a Virtual CFO.

Audit and assurance

Statutory audits, reviews and special-purpose reporting for lenders and parent companies.

HR, immigration and legal support

Employment contracts, HR policies, work permits and legal process support, with our panel of attorneys.

Risk and compliance

Due diligence, AML programmes, business continuity, internal audit and governance.

Technology and cyber

Systems selection, digital transformation, cybersecurity and AI governance.

Incentive applications

Investment Code and free zone assessments and applications.

Start with a conversation

Tell us your plans for Haiti, and we will set out the steps, timeline and costs. Some regulated services are performed by affiliated firms; we will advise you of the arrangements when you make a request. Fees are tailored to each client's circumstances and set out in an engagement letter. Email **haiti@dawgen.com** or **info@dawgen.global**, or call (876) 926-5210.

Talk to the Haiti Caribbean Service Desk

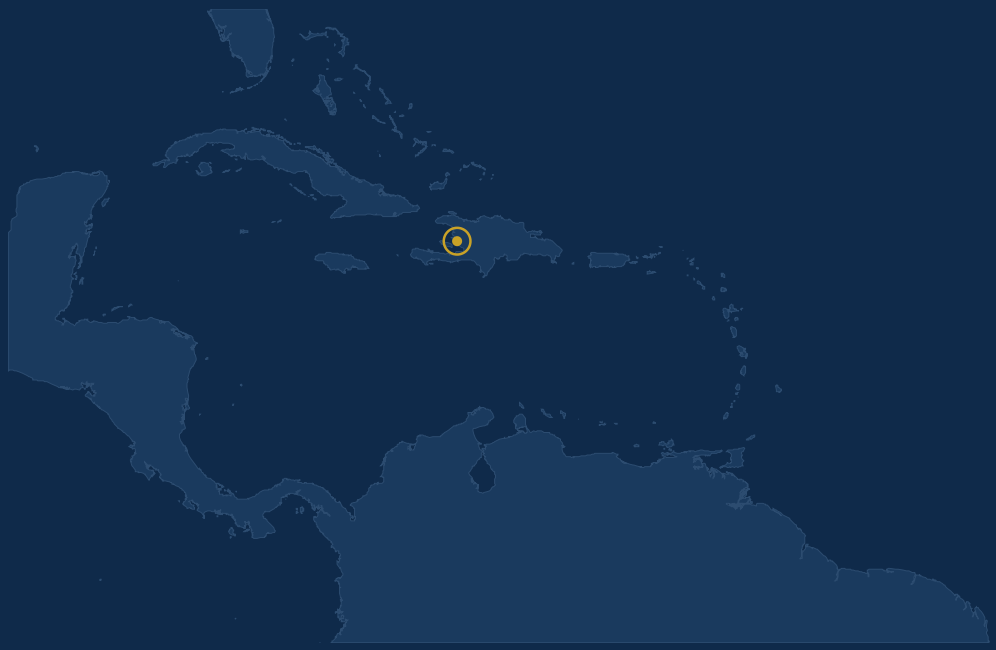
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Key official sources

- Direction Générale des Impôts (dgi.gouv.ht)
- Ministère du Commerce et de l'Industrie (mci.gouv.ht)
- Centre de Facilitation des Investissements (cfihaiti.com)
- Ministère de l'Économie et des Finances (mef.gouv.ht)
- Banque de la République d'Haïti (brh.ht)
- Ministère des Affaires Sociales et du Travail (mast.gouv.ht)
- Administration Générale des Douanes (douane.gouv.ht)
- International Trade Administration, US (trade.gov)



This publication contains general information only, current to October 2026, and is not professional advice. Haiti's new tax code took effect on 1 October 2026, and tax rates, thresholds, procedures and security conditions change frequently; confirm the current position with Dawgen Global or the relevant authority before acting. Some regulated services are performed by affiliated firms; we will advise you of the arrangements when you make a request.
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