

## **Guidance for International Travel of Companion Animals**

Please visit the USDA APHIS Pet Travel Website to obtain detailed information on traveling with your companion animal, including requirements for returning to the US: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pettravel>

If endorsement of your pet's health certificate by USDA APHIS Veterinary Services is required by the destination country, submit the health certificate to the office serving your state. Certificates should be mailed (overnight express courier is recommended) or, alternatively, presented in person by scheduling an appointment. ***Walk-ins are not accepted.*** However, a certificate can be dropped off for endorsement without an appointment.

*(See office locations on pages 2 and 3.)*

*Certificates are generally processed and returned the day they're received as long as there's no missing or incorrect information. See pages 4 – 6 of this document for help with avoiding common mistakes that cause a delay in endorsement.*

### **Essential documentation to include with your submission:**

- Export health certificate (original)
- Rabies vaccination certificate for all rabies vaccinations documented on the health certificate.
- Test results for laboratory tests, when required (e.g. rabies titer test).
- Import permit (if required).
- Payment (see Endorsement Fee section).
- **PRE-PAID** return label (see Instructions for submitting by FedEx, UPS, or USPS).
- Pet Export Checklist (see page 4 of this document).

### **Endorsement Fee:**

- If no laboratory test results are required to review: \$38.00 per certificate.
- If 1 - 2 required laboratory tests results to review: \$121.00 for the first animal and \$7.00 for each additional animal ***on the SAME certificate.***
- If 3 - 6 required laboratory tests results to review: \$150.00 for the first animal and \$12.00 for each additional animal ***on the SAME certificate.***

Acceptable payment methods: USDA APHIS User Fee Credit Account, check or money order made payable to the USDA, or credit card. *Checks must contain the payer's name and mailing address. **We do not accept cash.** We do not charge an endorsement fee for service animals **as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act**, or for active military working dogs.*



### Instructions for submitting by FedEx, UPS, or USPS:

- We recommend using overnight express service to minimize delays in submitting your health certificate for endorsement and for receiving it back after endorsement. In order for the health certificate to be returned by overnight delivery, **you must provide a PRE-PAID return label with your submission. The label must be purchased and paid for (meaning charges are incurred at purchase, not at time of pickup).** We do not accept shipping labels with credit cards on them; if you need to pay by credit card, you must have the service provider charge your card before generating the label.
- FedEx, UPS and USPS overnight express service packages are picked up from our offices every weekday evening.
  - We do not have ground service pick up at our offices.
- We recommend using a service provider that uses a tracking number to allow the package's progress to be tracked to and from the endorsing office, and to decrease the chance of the package being lost in transit. **It is your responsibility to keep a record of the tracking number.**
- **IF YOU USE FEDEX:** the USDA office's address should not appear anywhere on your return label. Your name and address should appear in both the sender and recipient's block of the return label.
- If a return label is not included, then we will return your package using USPS First Class Mail if we are unable to reach you to arrange for another method of return delivery.

### VS SERVICE CENTER, ALBANY OFFICE LOCATIONS

**Albany, NY Serving:** CT, DC (mail-in), DE (mail-in), ME, MA, MD (mail-in), NC, NH, NY, NJ (mail-in), RI, VA (mail-in), VT, WV

**USDA APHIS VS**

**Attention: Export**

500 New Karner Road, 2nd Floor

Albany, NY 12205

Telephone (518) 218-7540

Fax (518) 218-7545

Email [VSPSNY@usda.gov](mailto:VSPSNY@usda.gov)

**Robbinsville, NJ**

**Serving: NJ In-person Appointments (Mail-ins go to Albany, NY)**

**USDA APHIS VS**

**Attention: Export Department**

Mercer Corporate Park

320 Corporate Blvd.

Robbinsville, NJ 08691-1598

Phone (609) 259-5261

Fax (609) 208-2063

Email [VSPSNJ@usda.gov](mailto:VSPSNJ@usda.gov)



**Harrisburg, PA**      **Serving: PA**

**USDA APHIS VS**

**Attention: Export**

2300 Vartan Way Suite 250

Harrisburg, PA 17110

Telephone (717) 540-2770

Fax (717) 782-3809

Email [VSPSPA@usda.gov](mailto:VSPSPA@usda.gov)

**Richmond, VA**      **Serving: DC, DE, MD, VA In-person Appointments (Mail-ins go to Albany, NY)**

**USDA APHIS VS**

**Attention: Export**

Federal Building

400 N. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Ste. 726

Richmond, VA 23219

Telephone (804) 343-2567

Fax (804) 343-2599

Email [VSPSVA@usda.gov](mailto:VSPSVA@usda.gov)



# Pet Export Checklist

## USDA-APHIS-Veterinary Services, Service Center, Albany

*This checklist should be included with your other documents when you submit your health certificate(s) to us for endorsement.*

OWNER/EXPORTER'S INFORMATION	
Name:	
Telephone number(s):	
Email address:	
<b>Date of departure:</b>	
<b>Destination country:</b>	
USDA ACCREDITED VETERINARIAN'S INFORMATION	
Name:	
Clinic Name:	
Telephone number(s):	
Email address:	

### CHECKLIST

<input type="checkbox"/>	Export Health Certificate(s). <b><i>Make sure it is signed and dated by your veterinarian and includes the country of destination in the Consignee section.</i></b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rabies Vaccination Certificate. <b><i>If rabies vaccination information (e.g., date of vaccination, date of expiration of vaccination, rabies vaccine brand name and/or manufacturer, or serial number) is recorded on the export health certificate, make sure it matches the rabies vaccination certificate's</i></b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rabies Titer Laboratory Report <b><i>(if applicable)</i></b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Required Test Results <b><i>(if applicable)</i></b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Import permit <b><i>(if applicable)</i></b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Payment Enclosed <b><i>Either USDA APHIS User Fee Credit Account, check/money order payable to "USDA", or credit card information. Checks must contain the payer's name and mailing address.</i></b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prepaid Express Return Label <b><i>(FedEx, UPS, or USPS)* Make sure to keep a record of the return tracking number. USDA cannot provide this information on an individual basis.</i></b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Date of departure from the U.S. is provided above.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Email addresses of <b><i>both</i></b> the Owner/Exporter and Veterinarian are provided above. <b><i>By providing this information, you ensure we can immediately notify all involved parties if problems are found with the health certificate(s).</i></b>

**FAILURE TO PROVIDE ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION MAY RESULT IN A DELAY IN ENDORSEMENT**

*\*VERY IMPORTANT: YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS SHOULD APPEAR IN BOTH THE SENDER AND THE RECIPIENT'S BLOCK OF THE RETURN LABEL. The USDA address should not appear anywhere on your return label. The label must be purchased and paid for. We cannot accept a FedEx, UPS or USPS label with your credit card number listed as the payment method. If you want the return shipping charged to your credit card you will have to visit their store location or website and pre-enter the information and include the preprinted label with your materials when sent to us.*



Animal and Plant Health  
Inspection Service

Veterinary Services

Field Operations

Veterinary Export Trade  
Services

Service Center, Albany

500 New Karner Rd  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Albany, NY 12205

Voice (518) 218-7540  
Fax (518) 218-7545

VSPSNY@usda.gov

January 4, 2019

**Dear Accredited Veterinarian,**

The following is a generic checklist addressing problems we find with export health certificates issued by your peers of USDA accredited veterinarians (AVs). These problems result in delays or refusal to endorse a health certificate for your patient(s) because the health certificate is not compliant with the destination country's import regulations. Please read the following list and follow the explanatory advice to ensure you don't issue a noncompliant health certificate. **Please note this checklist is not all-inclusive, but addresses common errors made while completing these health certificates.**

In the end, it is ***your*** responsibility as an AV to issue a compliant health certificate. As per the Code of Federal Regulations' Standards for AVs, it is the responsibility of the AV to "not issue, or allow to be used, any certificate, form, record or report, until, and unless, it has been accurately and fully completed" and to "keep himself or herself currently informed on Federal and State regulations...governing the movement of animals". We understand some countries provide USDA APHIS with confusing import regulations and that not every patient fits the mold the destination country requires; in these cases, we encourage you to contact the USDA APHIS endorsing office serving your state.

If you have any questions, please contact your state's USDA Endorsement Office:

New England, NJ, NY, NC, WV [VSPSNY@usda.gov](mailto:VSPSNY@usda.gov) or (518) 218-7540  
MD, VA, DE, DC [VSPSVA@usda.gov](mailto:VSPSVA@usda.gov) or (804) 343 - 2567  
PA [VSPSPA@usda.gov](mailto:VSPSPA@usda.gov) or (717) 540 - 2770

Sincerely,

The Staff of Service Center, Albany

### **Helpful Links:**

USDA APHIS Pet Travel Website:

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pet-travel>

USDA APHIS International Regulations:

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal-health/exports-live-animals>

National Veterinary Accreditation Program:

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/nvap>

USDA Endorsing Offices:

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pet-travel/service-centers-endorsement-offices>

CHECKLIST OF COMMON MISTAKES WITH PET EXPORT HEALTH CERTIFICATES FOR THE USDA ACCREDITED VETERINARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Did you use the correct health certificate? Prior to issuance consult the following every time:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ USDA APHIS Pet Travel Website: <a href="https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pet-travel">https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pet-travel</a></li> <li>○ USDA APHIS International Regulations: <a href="http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal-health/exports-live-animals">http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal-health/exports-live-animals</a></li> <li>○ If country not listed, exporter should contact country of destination's port of entry or embassy.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Is the health certificate filled out TO COMPLETION?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No sections are left blank (e.g. vaccine name AND manufacturer AND lot #, etc.). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● If there are **** or lines through the box, no entry should be made.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ No information beyond what is requested by the destination country is provided.</li> <li>○ You have signed, printed your name, and <b>dated</b> the health certificate with the date of issuance.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Is the pet meeting ALL requirements of the destination country? If not, DO NOT issue the health certificate without consulting your USDA APHIS endorsing office.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ ALL required testing, treatments and vaccinations MUST be done.</li> <li>○ You MUST use the correct test, vaccination or treatment as specified by the destination country.</li> <li>○ <i><b>It is a violation of the Standards for Accredited Veterinarians to issue a certificate for a non-compliant animal.</b></i></li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Did you double check for erroneous information? If an error is made, draw a single lineout and initial or replace the page – WHITEOUT is NOT allowed on legal documents.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No typos in the pet's identification.</li> <li>○ The information recorded on the health certificate matches what's on the vaccination and test records (e.g. lot numbers, name/manufacturer of vaccine, blood draw dates, etc.).</li> <li>○ Correct test type used as required by destination country.</li> <li>○ Recorded the test sampling date, not the date the test was run or the result reported.</li> <li>○ Provided copies of all required vaccination certificates and test results to the exporter to include with submission for endorsement.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Is the health certificate accurately dated with the date of exam/issuance?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ It has NOT been pre- or post-dated.</li> <li>○ The date format requested on the health certificate has been followed (e.g. DD/MM/YY instead of MM/DD/YY).</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Is your USDA accreditation current, AND for the state in which you are practicing?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ AVs can check their accreditation status, states accredited in, and Category online at the <a href="#">National Veterinary Accreditation Program (NVAP) website</a>.</li> <li>○ AVs with additional questions about their accreditation may contact the NVAP Coordinator for their state (found at the same website).</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Pet travel to the EU:</b> The microchip "date of implantation/reading" MUST be a date that is on or prior to the date of rabies vaccination. If you/your clinic did not implant the chip, documentation of its presence in a previous medical records entry can be used. If this is your first time seeing the patient it is your responsibility to obtain such documentation from other sources (e.g. dated medical records, implant certificate, etc.).</p>

	<p><b>VEHCS (Veterinary Export Health Certification System):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Was the correct health certificate generated and submitted for the correct commodity, end use, and destination country?</li> <li>○ Has all of the required information been included?</li> <li>○ Were copies of the rabies vaccine certificate and laboratory reports (if applicable) uploaded and attached to the submission?</li> <li>○ Was a copy of the import permit (if required) uploaded and attached to the submission?</li> <li>○ Were either adequate funds uploaded into your VEHCS account, or was a USDA APHIS User Fee Credit Account number provided?</li> <li>○ Was a prepaid return label uploaded and attached to the submission (if applicable)? Not applicable for digitally endorsed health certificates (green, and some yellow and purple banner countries).</li> </ul>
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Animal and Plant  
Health Inspection  
Service

Veterinary Services

4700 River Rd

Unit 39

Riverdale, MD 20737

November 29, 2018

**Attention U.S. pet owners and others involved in the international movement of pets:**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) is the competent government authority responsible for international export of live animals, including pets such as dogs and cats, leaving the United States and traveling to a foreign country. It is APHIS VS' role to provide endorsement (review and countersignature) of international health certificates after issuance by a USDA Accredited Veterinarian when required by an importing foreign country.

Please be advised that some importing foreign countries will now accept digital (electronic) signatures for the issuance and/or endorsement of international health certificates for live animals, including pets. The APHIS Pet Travel Website ([www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pettravel](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pettravel)) should be consulted to determine the importing foreign country's requirements, including whether digital signatures are accepted, and to obtain the appropriate international health certificate.

For importing foreign countries that accept digital endorsement, the health certificate will have digital signatures instead of traditional pen-and-ink signatures, and the USDA seal will be printed on the certificate instead of a raised embossed seal. For importing foreign countries that do not accept digital endorsement, the health certificate will still have pen-and-ink signatures and an embossed USDA seal. At time of endorsement, APHIS VS is responsible for verifying if the importing foreign country accepts digital signatures. As a result, all APHIS VS-endorsed health certificates will be in the signature format accepted by the importing foreign country.

In addition to the international health certificate required by the importing foreign country, some airlines require pets to travel with an additional health certificate issued by a licensed veterinarian stating the pet is fit to travel. Since APHIS VS only reviews and endorses documentation required by the importing foreign country, APHIS VS will not endorse any health certificates required solely by an airline. This information was communicated to the airlines in June 2016.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your local APHIS VS Office. Contact information can be found on the APHIS Pet Travel Website. Thank you in advance for your attention to and assistance with this matter.

Respectfully,

**SHANNA  
SIEGEL**

Digitally signed by  
SHANNA SIEGEL  
Date: 2018.11.29  
08:39:39 -05'00'

Shanna Siegel, DVM, MPH  
Director of Live Animal Exports  
USDA APHIS Veterinary Services





United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

# International Pet Travel: Plan Ahead and Take the Right Steps

**Before making plans to travel internationally with your pet, visit our new Web site at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pettravel> for up-to-date information on what's required.**



The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has launched a new Web site devoted to international pet travel. Pets are often considered part of the family, but traveling with your pet isn't as simple as just booking a flight or driving across the border. There may be very specific steps you and your veterinarian need to follow, as well as pet vaccinations, treatments, and/or testing that your veterinarian must document.

We know this process can be stressful. That's why we designed a new Web site to help guide you and your veterinarian through each step. Some countries have pre-travel requirements that take advanced planning and time to complete, so it's important to start the process early.

On our pet travel Web site, you'll find detailed information about taking your pet from the United States to another country (export) and bringing your pet into the United States from another country (import). The site covers the export and import of certain types of pets, including:

- Dogs
- Cats
- Birds
- Ferrets
- Rabbits
- Rodents
- Hedgehogs and tenrecs
- Reptiles
- Amphibians

## Taking Your Pet to Another Country

Countries often have detailed animal health requirements that must be met before pets can cross their borders. These rules can vary greatly, so it's important to find out the exact requirements for the destination country and type of pet.

With the help of APHIS' pet travel Web site, you can get the most current information available for a particular country. There, you'll also find country-specific health certificates and instructions for completing them. This will help you and your veterinarian fill out the forms correctly so they are accepted by foreign officials. Please note that your veterinarian must be USDA-accredited to issue any international health certificates that require APHIS endorsement.

To help you and your veterinarian complete the process, the site also provides:

- Frequently asked questions and answers,
- A step-by-step checklist to better understand and prepare for international travel requirements,

- Detailed documents on sending pets to select countries, and
- A link to find APHIS' closest Veterinary Services office for assistance.

## Bringing Your Pet Into the United States

APHIS' mission is to protect the health and value of American agriculture and natural resources. To prevent the entry and spread of foreign animal diseases into our country, pets entering the United States from other countries may need to meet specific APHIS requirements. You can find information about these requirements on the new site. And for pet bird owners, the site provides a list of APHIS-approved ports of entry and contact information for our animal import centers.

Other Federal agencies also have rules for bringing pets into the United States. Our new Web site includes links to those agencies' sites to help meet all your pet travel needs.



**Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service**

Veterinary Services

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