



# Animal Care Tech Note

## Live Dog Import Permit Requirements Under the Animal Welfare Act

The Animal Care program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) administers Animal Welfare Act (AWA) regulations (Title 9, Sections 2.150-2.153 of the *Code of Federal Regulations*) that set requirements for permits to legally import dogs into the United States for the purpose of resale. Animal Care works with its partners at U.S. ports of entry—the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)—to ensure that these imported live dogs meet the AWA's health, age, and vaccination requirements.



### Questions and Answers

#### What live dog imports are covered by the AWA?

The AWA and its regulations apply only to live dogs imported into the United States for the purpose of *resale* (described below).

#### What does the term “resale” mean in terms of the import permit requirements?

Resale includes any transfer of ownership of a dog, for compensation, after it is imported. Examples include:

- Sales through retail or wholesale channels
- Adoption for a fee or donation

#### What live dog imports are not covered by the AWA?

The AWA and its regulations do not apply when there is no resale of a dog after it is imported. Examples include:

- Pet, service, or working dogs traveling with or being delivered to their owners;
- Dogs participating in shows or events;
- Dogs that will be used as breeding stock but will not be resold;
- Dogs that will be used or trained as working dogs but will not be resold;
- Dogs transiting the United States to be resold in another country; and,
- Dogs purchased or adopted from a foreign source and delivered to the new owners who will not resell the dogs.

#### What is required to import dogs into the United States for the purpose of resale?

All of the following are required. Dogs must be:

- at least 6 months of age;
- in good health and vaccinated for rabies, distemper, hepatitis, leptospirosis, parvovirus, and parainfluenza virus;
- accompanied by health and rabies vaccination certificates that certify the age, health, and vaccination requirements and are issued in English by a veterinarian with a valid license to practice veterinary medicine in the country of export; and
- accompanied by an import permit issued by Animal Care.

#### Are there exceptions to the age and vaccination requirements for dogs imported for the purpose of resale?

Exceptions to the age and/or vaccination requirements may be granted for the following:

- Dogs imported into Hawaii from the British Isles, Australia, Guam, or New Zealand;
- Dogs imported for resale for research purposes; and,
- Dogs imported for veterinary treatment and subsequent resale.

In such cases, contact Animal Care's Live Dog Import Team for guidance. See contact information on next page.

## How do I obtain an import permit?

You can apply for a live dog import permit online at [efile.aphis.usda.gov](https://efile.aphis.usda.gov). We require applications to be submitted a minimum of 5 business days prior to importation to allow enough time for processing. For detailed, step-by-step guidance on how to apply for permits, contact Animal Care's Live Dog Import Permit Team. See contact information at right.

You will need to obtain a USDA eAuthentication ID and password to gain access to the system. You may learn more about obtaining an eAuthentication ID online at [www.eauth.usda.gov/home](https://www.eauth.usda.gov/home). There is no fee to obtain a permit.

## Are there other requirements for importing dogs?

Multiple agencies have requirements for importing live dogs. As an importer, you are responsible for complying with all Federal, State, and local regulations and requirements. We have links on our website to other agencies to assist you with understanding all requirements.

- For APHIS Veterinary Services requirements, visit [www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pet-travel](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pet-travel).
- For CDC requirements, visit [www.cdc.gov/importation/bringing-an-animal-into-the-united-states/dogs.html](https://www.cdc.gov/importation/bringing-an-animal-into-the-united-states/dogs.html)
- To find contact information for the State of destination, visit [www.usaha.org/saho](https://www.usaha.org/saho).
- For U.S. Department of Homeland Security's customs requirements, contact the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) office at your port of entry. You can find contact information online at [www.cbp.gov/contact/ports](https://www.cbp.gov/contact/ports).

## For More Information

Contact Animal Care's Live Dog Import Permit Team:

USDA Animal Care  
Live Dog Import Permit Team  
2150 Centre Avenue, Building B  
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Fort Collins, CO 80526-8117

Phone: (816) 737-4223

Email: [ac.dogimport.mailbox@usda.gov](mailto:ac.dogimport.mailbox@usda.gov)

Website: [www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalwelfare/ct\\_awa\\_import\\_live\\_dogs\\_regulation](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalwelfare/ct_awa_import_live_dogs_regulation)