Animal Care
Tech Note
USDA APHIS
United States Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare/

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Submission of Itineraries (§2.126(c))
Questions and Answers

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) administers the Animal Welfare Act (AWA). This law provides for the humane care and treatment of animals bred for commercial sale, transported in commerce, used in biomedical research, and exhibited to the public.

APHIS' Animal Care (AC) program enforces the AWA primarily through inspections of regulated facilities. To ensure that compliance with the AWA is continually maintained, all facilities that keep animals regulated under the Act must be licensed or registered with APHIS. AC personnel conduct unannounced inspections of licensed or registered facilities to assess compliance.

In order to perform unannounced inspections, AC must know the location(s) of regulated animals. Animals that are traveling for exhibition purposes are not usually found at the licensee's home site. Submission of itineraries for traveling animals is necessary to provide the opportunity for unannounced inspections to determine compliance with the AWA.

The following questions (Q) and answers (A) will clarify information about this new regulation:

Q. What does this rule do?
A. As part of its work under the Animal Welfare Act, APHIS published a final rule to provide more specific requirements for the submission of itineraries by traveling exhibitors. Traveling exhibitors are those exhibitors who intend to exhibit an animal at any location other than their main facility. Under the final rule, when these animals travel away from their approved site overnight or longer, the exhibitor must provide APHIS with an itinerary no fewer than two days in advance of the trip's start.

Q. Why is this rule necessary?
A. As part of AWA regulations, exhibitors must provide APHIS Animal Care inspectors with readily available access to premises and animals. In order to do so, APHIS must be aware of the animals' location. The itinerary information required by this rule will allow APHIS Animal Care inspectors to conduct unannounced inspections wherever those animals are being exhibited in order to ensure compliance with regulations and standards for animal welfare. APHIS will be able to better focus its time and resources on inspecting AWA-regulated animals rather than trying to locate those animals.

Q. What should the itinerary I submit include?
A. The itinerary will include:

- The name and license or registration number under the Act of the person who will exhibit the animals, and if any animals are leased, borrowed, loaned, or under some similar arrangement, the name of the person who owns the animals;
- The name, identification number or identifying characteristics, species (common or scientific name), sex and age of each animal; and
- The names, dates, and locations where the animals will travel, be housed, and be exhibited, including all anticipated dates and locations for any stops and layovers.

Q. Where and how do I submit my itinerary?
A. Submit your itinerary to APHIS by fax, USPS mail, or by e-mail. Use the state you are licensed in to determine your local Regional office, and send your itinerary in care of the Regional Director.

Eastern Regional Office
USDA, APHIS, Animal Care
920 Main Campus Drive, Suite 200
Raleigh, NC 27606
FAX: 919-855-7123 or 919-855-7124
aceast@aphis.usda.gov

Western Regional Office
USDA, APHIS, Animal Care
2150 Centre Ave.
Bldg. B, Mail Stop #3W11
Fort Collins, CO 80526-8117
Fax: 970-494-7461
acwest@aphis.usda.gov

If submitting the information by e-mail, please place your certificate number, customer number, or business name (not all three, just one), and the word “itinerary” in the subject line of the e-mail.

Q. Who in Animal Care should be notified of any revision of itinerary?
A. If the itinerary changes, the exhibitor must notify APHIS of any revisions by fax, mail or e-mail, following the same guidance you did to submit the original itinerary.

Q. Why should itineraries be submitted no fewer than 2 days before the start of travel?
A. Animal Care requires advance notification in order to ensure that Animal Care inspectors can make unannounced inspections at any location where the animals are exhibited. These inspections help ensure compliance with regulations and standards for animal welfare.

Q. How many comments were received from all parties during the comment period?
A. We received 790 comments during the 60-day comment period.

Q. Who commented on the proposed rule?
A. We received comments from animal welfare organizations, exhibitor and trade associations, exhibitors and private citizens.

Q. Can you summarize whether the comments were for, or against this rule?
A. A large number of commenters supported the proposed rule as written. Among the reasons provided for their support, commenters stated that the proposed provisions would make it easier for APHIS to monitor adherence to the regulations and that the rule would have little impact on the majority of exhibitors who already submit itineraries in a timely manner.

Q. What concerns were raised during the comment period? How did APHIS respond?
A. This rule was modified from the earlier proposed version to address concerns, including:

- The zoo industry was concerned about increased burden if all travel away from the zoo had to be reported. APHIS clarified that this requirement only applied to travel that was overnight or longer.
- The traveling exhibition industry was concerned with the level of detail being requested and how to submit the information. APHIS clarified exactly what information was needed and how to submit it.

Q. Do penalties change under this new rule?
A. No. This rule has no impact on penalties.

Q. Couldn't the release of such detailed information about exhibitor stops compromise the safety of animals and their caretakers?
A. APHIS is aware of concern about the potential release of itinerary information under the Freedom of Information Act. However, similar information is already required to be reported to Animal Care and there have been no issues. A person seeking information submitted to APHIS would need to request such information under the Freedom of Information Act, which exempts from release commercial or financial information that is privileged or confidential.

Q. Isn't 2 days advance notice impractical? Wouldn't it prohibit some exhibitors from accepting certain engagements?
A. Moving animals offsite for exhibition for longer than a day requires special preparations for housing, security, food, water, employees, public barriers and perimeter fences. Such arrangements are typically made well in advance of travel. Preparing and submitting an itinerary at the same time is not impractical.

However, APHIS recognizes the need for some flexibility regarding this requirement. If an exhibitor does accept an engagement for which travel will begin with less than 48 hours' notice, the exhibitor must contact the APHIS Animal Care regional director immediately in writing with the itinerary information. Facsimiles or e-mails are acceptable. We expect such notifications on shortened notice to be infrequent.

Additional Information
For more information contact:
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