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Importing Elephants, Rhinoceroses, Hippopotami, and Tapirs to the United States

Last Modified:



There are many processes involved with importing different species of regulated live animals into the United States. This page explains the requirements for importing elephants, rhinoceroses, hippopotami, and tapirs.

Requirements

[View the Protocol for Importing Elephants, Hippos, Rhinos and Tapirs](#)

Ports of Entry

An elephant, hippo, rhino, or tapir may only be imported into the United States at:

- Los Angeles, California
- Miami, Florida
- Newburgh, New York
- Or, on a case-by-case basis, and with prior written approval by APHIS, at another port of entry if:
 - The animals will be inspected and treated at a facility provided by the importer.
 - The Administrator has determined that the importer's facility is adequate for inspection, treatment, and incineration required under this section.
 - The Administrator has determined that an inspector is available to perform at the importer's facility the services that are required under this section.
 - The Administrator has determined that an inspector is available to perform at the port of entry the services that are required under this section if the animals will be inspected and treated at a facility provided by the importer.

*Please contact **APHIS Live Animal Imports** for additional information on approval of alternative ports of entry: LAIE@usda.gov*

Elephants, Hippos, Rhinos, and Tapirs Imported from Canada

Elephants, hippopotami, rhinoceroses and tapirs imported from Canada to the United States that meet specific criteria may be exempt from the full requirements outlined in the [Protocol for the Importation of Elephants, Hippopotami, Rhinoceroses](#)

[and Tapirs](#) (655.01 KB). See exempt criteria below.

Any movement from Canada to the U.S. not meeting the exempt criteria detailed below must meet all requirements outlined in the import protocol.

EXEMPT Shipments

CITES permit required whether animal movement is exempt or non-exempt.

1. Animal returning to United States from Canada

1. In Canada less than 60 days
 1. No permit required, original U.S. health certificate
 2. Travel by air or sea also requires contacting APHIS at least 2 weeks in advance

2. U.S.-origin animal

1. In Canada more than 60 days
 1. No permit required, Canadian health certificate
 2. Travel by air or sea also requires contacting APHIS at least 2 weeks in advance

3. Canadian-origin animal

1. Canadian residency for entire life
 1. Movement is exempt, must have required document from CFIA*
 2. Travel by air or sea also requires contacting APHIS at least 2 weeks in advance

4. Other country of origin

1. More than 1 year in Canada prior to export
 1. Movement is exempt, must have required document from CFIA*
 2. Travel by Air/Sea also requires contacting APHIS at least 2 weeks in advance.

5. Other country of origin

1. Less than 1 year in Canada prior to export
 1. **NOT EXEMPT** (follow general protocol)

**The animals are imported from Canada and are accompanied by a document signed by a veterinarian of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency stating: The animals were imported into Canada from a country other than the United States and have resided continuously for more than one year in Canada since that time, preceding their exportation to the United States; AND the animal(s) did not, during*

the year preceding their exportation into the United States, have physical contact with or share a pen or bedding materials with any non-US-origin elephant, hippo, rhino, or tapir imported into Canada during that year.

Contact Us

[Download contacts](#)

Live Animal Imports

For questions about import permits or permit applications:

Live Animal Import Permit Team

Email: laipermits@usda.gov

Phone: [301-851-3300](tel:301-851-3300)

For general questions related to the import of a live animal:

Live Animal Import and Export

Email: laie@usda.gov

Phone: [301-851-3300](tel:301-851-3300)

[All Contacts](#)

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