The Veterinary Export Health Certification System (VEHCS)

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO USING VEHCS
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About VEHCS
What is VEHCS?

VEHCS is USDA APHIS’s online, secure electronic system for the creation, issuance (complete, sign, date), submission and endorsement of hardcopy health certificates for international export of live animals and germplasm from the United States to foreign countries.

VEHCS allows USDA Accredited Veterinarians (AVs) to issue and electronically sign health certificates through the secure server after logging in with their eAuthentication account. VEHCS also allows an AV’s Support Staff and Exporters to prepare health certificates for the AV to issue and electronically sign.

- eAuthentication is a User ID and password to identify yourself and access certain USDA systems.
- eAuthentication accounts cannot be shared between individuals. USDA Accredited Veterinarians who share their eAuthentication account with others may be subject to accreditation violations.
- For more information, click here.

Once signed, the health certificate and supporting documentation for the submission are submitted electronically by the AV via VEHCS to USDA APHIS for review and endorsement; thereby eliminating the time and shipping expense required to send the hard copy to your USDA Endorsement Office.

- NOTE: a printed hardcopy of the endorsed health certificate must still accompany all animals when they travel.
Why use VEHCS?

By using VEHCS, you can save time and money by instantaneously submitting your international export health certificate to your USDA Endorsement Office instead of express shipping or driving a health certificate to the office.

- For countries accepting USDA APHIS’s digital endorsement, additional time and money are saved by allowing the AV to print the endorsed health certificate from VEHCS.
- Keep in mind, your USDA Endorsement Office still needs to review the health certificate after it is submitted, so the time from receipt to endorsement is the same as for paper health certificates.

VEHCS can also help minimize errors by walking the AV through the issuance process.

- If the AV makes a mistake, he/she can quickly correct the health certificate and return it to the USDA Endorsement Office.
When can VEHCS be used?

USDA APHIS accepts health certificates electronically signed by AVs when issued and submitted through VEHCS for animals eligible to travel to another country for all destination countries.

This means VEHCS can be used instead of submitting a hardcopy health certificate for endorsement.

With a few exceptions, it is **not** mandatory to use VEHCS.

- The [USDA APHIS International Regulations (IRegs) web page](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/international/regs) and the [USDA APHIS Pet Travel Website (PTW)](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal-welfare/pet-travel) will state if VEHCS must be used.
- It remains acceptable to continue to issue paper health certificates.
- But do **not** issue both a paper and VEHCS health certificate. Only one option may be used.
  - It is against the policy of USDA APHIS and the World Organisation for Animal Health to have more than one endorsed health certificate in existence at the same time for an animal’s movement to another country.
- Always remember, regardless of how the health certificate is issued, a printed, paper hardcopy of the endorsed health certificate must accompany all animals when they travel.
When can VEHCS be used?

While VEHCS can be used to issue and submit any health certificate requiring USDA APHIS endorsement, not every destination country will allow USDA APHIS to *digitally endorse* the health certificate in VEHCS.

If a destination country accepts USDA APHIS’s digital endorsement, your USDA Endorsement Office will digitally endorse the health certificate in VEHCS.

- The AV, or anyone else who can access the VEHCS health certificate, must print the endorsed health certificate from VEHCS and provide it to the animal’s owner/broker so it can accompany the animal when shipped.

If a destination country does not accept USDA APHIS’s digital endorsement, your USDA Endorsement Office will print the health certificate from VEHCS and wet-ink sign it.

- Because the paper hardcopy of the endorsed health certificate must accompany the animal when shipped, a pre-paid return shipping label must be uploaded as an attachment when the AV submits the health certificate in VEHCS. Your USDA Endorsement Office will send the hardcopy endorsed health certificate back with that shipping label so it can accompany the animal when shipped.
Determining use of VEHCS by country

Each country page on the USDA APHIS International Regulations for Live Animal Exports (IRegs) and USDA APHIS Pet Travel Website (PTW) contain color-coded banners to indicate a destination country’s acceptance of VEHCS.

The color-coded banners USDA created for VEHCS are summarized as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accredited Veterinarian Signature</th>
<th>RED</th>
<th>ORANGE</th>
<th>GREEN</th>
<th>YELLOW</th>
<th>PURPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Original signature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Electronic signature for SOME commodities only (Please refer to IRegs or PTW)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APHIS VMO Signature</td>
<td>Original signature and physically embossed with raised seal</td>
<td>Original signature and physically embossed with raised seal</td>
<td>Digital signature and digital seal (not embossed) for SOME commodities only (Please refer to IRegs or PTW)</td>
<td>Digital signature and digital seal (not embossed) for SOME commodities only (Please refer to IRegs or PTW)</td>
<td></td>
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Deciphering the VEHCS banner colors

-- IMPORTANT NOTICE --

This country requires original ink signatures from the issuing USDA Accredited Veterinarian and the endorsing USDA APHIS Veterinary Medical Officer with the application of the USDA embossed seal.

Red banners mean VEHCS use is not allowed. You must issue a traditional paper health certificate (wet ink signature and date of signing) and overnight ship or hand deliver to the USDA Endorsement Office for review and endorsement.

At this time, there are not any countries with this VEHCS banner status.
Deciphering the VEHCS banner colors

This country allows USDA Accredited Veterinarians to use USDA’s online Veterinary Export Health Certification System (VEHCS) to complete health certificates.

Save Time and Money!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USDA Accredited Veterinarian Signature</th>
<th>Electronic Signature Accepted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USDA APHIS Veterinary Medical Officer Signature</td>
<td>Digital Endorsement NOT Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The health certificate bears the original ink signature and embossed seal</td>
</tr>
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Orange banners mean VEHCS may be used to issue the health certificate, but your USDA Endorsement Office must print the health certificate from VEHCS to physically endorse it. The endorsed health certificate **cannot** be printed from VEHCS to accompany the animal; the endorsed paper health certificate is shipped back with the return label the AV uploaded into VEHCS with the certificate submission. The endorsed hardcopy health certificate must travel with the animal.
Deciphering the VEHCS banner colors

Green banners mean VEHCS may be used to electronically issue and digitally endorse the health certificate for all commodities. This means the AV will print the endorsed health certificate from VEHCS and provide it to the owner/broker to accompany the animal when shipped.
Deciphering the VEHCS banner colors

Yellow banners mean the use of VEHCS to issue the health certificate, and your USDA Endorsement Office’s digital endorsement, are commodity-specific. If use of VEHCS is allowed:

- If your USDA Endorsement Office can digitally endorse, the AV will print the endorsed health certificate from VEHCS and provide it to the owner/broker to accompany the animal when shipped.
- If your USDA Endorsement Office must physically endorse, it cannot be printed from VEHCS to accompany the animal when shipped. The endorsed paper health certificate is mailed back with the completed shipping label the AV uploaded into VEHCS with the certificate submission. The paper endorsed health certificate must travel with the animal.
Deciphering the VEHCS banner colors

Purple banners mean VEHCS may be used to issue the health certificate, but your USDA Endorsement Office’s digital endorsement is commodity-specific.

- If your USDA Endorsement Office can digitally endorse, the AV will print the endorsed health certificate from VEHCS and provide it to the owner/broker to accompany the animal when shipped.

- If your USDA Endorsement Office must physically endorse, the health certificate cannot be printed from VEHCS to accompany the animal when shipped. The endorsed hardcopy health certificate is returned using the shipping label the AV uploaded into VEHCS with the certificate submission. The endorsed hardcopy health certificate must accompany the animal.
VEHCS banners: helpful information

In addition to stating whether or not VEHCS may be used to issue and digitally endorse a health certificate, **orange, green, yellow, and purple VEHCS banners also contain helpful reminders and links to accessing VEHCS and the VEHCS Help Page, including this step-by-step guide:**

STOP

To process some health certificates, VEHCS may need the USDA Accredited Veterinarian to upload the completed fillable PDF version found below. Either save a copy of the PDF below, or return to this page for the health certificate, if prompted by VEHCS.

USDA Accredited Veterinarians, log in here if you wish to use VEHCS.

USDA Accredited Veterinarians, help with using VEHCS is available on the VEHCS Help Page. To walk yourself through issuing a health certificate in VEHCS, click here.

NOTE: The printed paper endorsed health certificate must accompany each shipment. USDA Accredited Veterinarians can print the health certificate from VEHCS once it is endorsed.
VEHCS banners: when they don’t apply

Not every country requires USDA APHIS endorsement of a health certificate for every species or commodity.

If USDA APHIS endorsement of the health certificate is not required, the health certificate should not be submitted to your USDA Endorsement Office.

The VEHCS banners are just to communicate the level of VEHCS use, if endorsement of the health certificate is required.
The types of VEHCS health certificates
What VEHCS health certificates look like

There are three ways in which a health certificate can be issued in VEHCS. These three types of health certificates are:

1. VEHCS Defined
2. VEHCS Universal
3. AV PDF Upload

When you initiate the health certificate’s creation in VEHCS, the system will indicate which health certificate format is used.

Of the three types of certificates, the Defined and AV PDF Upload are the most common.
The types of health certificates

**Defined** certificates walk you through issuance of the health certificate step-by-step, with buttons and check boxes to select the applicable option for the animal(s), so that you only need to input the shipment-specific data. This type of health certificate also gives the option to save some of the health certificate information for future travel if saved as a template.
The types of health certificates

When a Defined version of the health certificate is unavailable in VEHCS, you will likely use the **AV PDF Upload**, which uses the traditional health certificate from the IRegs and PTW but is uploaded within VEHCS as a PDF file.

- We prefer that you complete the health certificate by saving a copy from the IRegs or PTW, reopening the file in Adobe, completing within Adobe, saving the completed health certificate, and then uploading the file. This avoids any issues in formatting and saves you time by not printing the health certificate to complete by hand and scan back into your computer.
The types of health certificates

The AV has four options for signing an AV PDF Upload health certificate. The AV may sign by:

1. Electronically signing the signature field of the health certificate with Adobe’s electronic signature function
2. Typing “Electronically signed” in the signature field of the health certificate
3. Typing his/her name in a cursive-type font in the signature field of the health certificate
4. Printing the completed health certificate to wet-ink sign the signature field and then scanning the health certificate back into a PDF. (Least preferred option.)
The types of health certificates

The third type of VEHCS health certificate, **Universal**, is similar to the Defined in that it is created within VEHCS, but this type of certificate requires you to enter all required information from the import regulations, including any country-specific required certification statements.

This type of VEHCS health certificate is rarely used.
Paying the endorsement fee for a VEHCS health certificate
Payment is required

USDA APHIS must charge for its services, including endorsement of international export health certificates. The fee for endorsement varies based on the complexity of the health certificate, and thus review required by your USDA Endorsement Office.

- The endorsement fees for pet health certificates can be found here:  
- Please contact your VS Endorsement Office for the cost of endorsement of non-pet health certificates.

Payment of the fee must be provided within VEHCS before your USDA Endorsement Office can endorse the health certificate.

- The only exceptions to these fees for endorsement are for service animals (primarily dogs) belonging to individuals with disabilities, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (or “ADA”), and military working dogs.
- The AV is responsible for ensuring funds are available in their VEHCS account at the time of submission. However, this can be their own funding source or that of their client/exporter (see below).

There are two options for providing payment in VEHCS:

1. Deposit money into your VEHCS account, with either a credit or debit card, or checking or savings account, under “Financial Management” from the menu bar.
2. A USDA APHIS User Fee Credit Account. Enter your credit account number in the “Comments: (Will NOT be printed on the certificate)” field of an individual health certificate submission.

- These credit accounts are for individuals or organizations who regularly use services from USDA APHIS. If you are interested in opening a USDA APHIS User Fee Credit Account, please contact your VS Endorsement Office.
Payment: how to deposit money

From the VEHCS Welcome screen, click on “Financial Management.”
Payment: how to deposit money

Enter amount of money to deposit in “Deposit Amount.” Then, select “Add to Balance.”
Payment: how to deposit money

You may pay with either a Bank Account or Credit/Debit Card. Select your method of payment. Then, select “Continue” and follow the prompts on the screen.
Payment: how to deposit money

If you need additional help, instructions for your selected method of payment are available in the Quick Reference Guide “Adding Funds to an Organization’s Account in VEHCS.”


Regardless of the method of payment used, when your transaction is successfully processed, we strongly recommend you print a copy of the page for your records. This is your only record of the deposit; you will not receive email confirmation.

- If you ever need to request a refund of your payment, you will need this information to initiate the refund.
How to receive the endorsed health certificate

DIGITALLY AND NON-DIGITALLY ENDORSED HEALTH CERTIFICATES
Receiving the endorsed health certificate

For destination countries that accept USDA APHIS’s digital signature and endorsement (green and some commodities under yellow and purple banner countries), the endorsed health certificate must be printed directly from VEHCS. Unless the AV’s Support Staff or Exporter has a VEHCS account, the AV must print the endorsed health certificate to accompany the animal during export.

For destination countries that do not accept USDA APHIS’s digital signature and endorsement, and are instead wet ink signed and physically embossed (orange and some commodities for purple and yellow banner countries), a pre-paid return shipping label (e.g., FedEx or UPS) must be uploaded as an attachment when the AV submits the health certificate to receive the endorsed health certificate back from your USDA Endorsement Office.
If a return shipping label is required

The return shipping label must be pre-paid, and it cannot contain your USDA Endorsement Office in the sender/sent from field of the label.

- We recommending using the name and address of the recipient (person the health certificate is being returned to after endorsement) in both the “sent from” and “sent to” fields of the label.
- Need help with shipping labels? Contact your courier (e.g., FedEx or UPS) for more information.

You will upload the pre-paid return shipping label as an attachment when you create the health certificate:
Getting started in VEHCS
Logging into VEHCS for the first time

New users must [create an eAuthentication account](#) before [logging into VEHCS](#). We’ll show you how to start the process in the next slides.

Remember! Each person who uses eAuthentication must use his/her own account, and AVs who share their eAuthentication account with others may be subject to accreditation violations.
Logging into VEHCS for the first time

From the VEHCS website, select “Log In.”
Logging into VEHCS for the first time

Select “Create Account.”
Logging into VEHCS for the first time

From here, follow the self-service walkthrough for creating your eAuthentication account.

If you need help:
• eAuthentication FAQs are available under the Quick Links at the bottom of the eAuthentication website.
• Or, you may contact the eAuthentication Help Desk at: 1-866-794-2827 or aehd@usda.gov.
Logging into VEHCS for the first time

Once you have created your eAuthentication account, return to VEHCS and select “Log In.”
Logging into VEHCS for the first time

Enter your newly created eAuthentication user ID and password. Select “Log In with Password.”
Logging into VEHCS for the first time

Select “Continue to VEHCS.”
Logging into VEHCS for the first time

Confirm your selection by selecting “Yes.”
Logging into VEHCS for the first time

If you are not joining a pre-existing VEHCS Organization, select “Create Business Organization” under “Option 1” to create a new VEHCS Organization.
Logging into VEHCS for the first time

In the next screen, enter your user information. Then, select “Next.”

If you are an AV, it is your responsibility to maintain current License and Accreditation information in VEHCS by entering in renewal information.

• **VEHCS will not permit you to issue a health certificate if either your License or Accreditation expire.**

All users, remember to keep your contact information up to date since this is how your USDA Endorsement Office will contact you.
Logging into VEHCS for the first time

In the next screen, enter your organization’s information and select “Submit” to complete the registration.

Remember to keep your organization’s contact information up to date since this is how your USDA Endorsement Office will contact you.
Logging into VEHCS for the first time

If you are joining a pre-existing VEHCS Organization, enter the unique PIN the organization created for you in VEHCS and select “Join.”
Logging into VEHCS for the first time

In the next screen, enter your user information. Then, select “Next.”

If you are an AV, it is your responsibility to maintain current License and Accreditation information in VEHCS by entering in renewal information.

- VEHCS will not permit you to issue a health certificate if either your License or Accreditation expire.

All users, remember to keep your contact information up to date since this is how your USDA Endorsement Office will contact you.
Logging into VEHCS for the first time

You are now logged into VEHCS and will be taken to the “Welcome” screen.

From the “Welcome” screen, you can:

• Read important information from USDA APHIS in “Messages”
• Read new alerts and notifications from USDA APHIS, including updates to VEHCS and scheduled system maintenance in “What’s New”
• Download Excel spreadsheets for uploading animal information into VEHCS for certain animals to certain countries from “Spreadsheets”
Logging into VEHCS for the first time

From the “Welcome” screen, you can also:

• Start a new health certificate from scratch in “New Certificate” or with previously saved information in “From Saved Template”

• Create or manage template data in “Manage/Create Template Data”

• Deposit funds into VEHCS or check your account balance in “Financial Management”

• Review past financial transactions in “View Reports”

• Review previously issued health certificates, including endorsed health certificates in “View Certificates”
VEHCS Organizations

CONNECTING WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES IN VEHCS
Connecting to others in VEHCS

Similar to how an AV’s support staff or an exporter may help the AV initiate the completion of a paper health certificate, these groups may also begin the completion of a VEHCS health certificate.

If an AV’s support staff or exporter prepares the VEHCS health certificate, AVs must remember: *as the USDA Accredited Veterinarian, you remain solely responsible for ensuring the VEHCS health certificate is accurately and fully completed!*

Only USDA Accredited Veterinarians may submit VEHCS health certificates.

- Only USDA Accredited Veterinarians may initiate, and submit, reissued health certificates.
Connecting to others in VEHCS

The three roles available in VEHCS are an AV, an AV Support Staff, and Exporter.

- AVs within the same veterinary organization can join the same VEHCS Organization.
- AV Support Staff should join the same VEHCS Organization as their AV(s).
- Exporters create their own VEHCS Organization, which an AV can join. However, Exporters cannot join an AV’s VEHCS Organization.

Whether or not an AV Support Staff or Exporter are in the same VEHCS Organization as the AV matters because VEHCS currently does not allow AV Support Staff and Exporters to provide AV PDF Upload certificates to AVs outside of their organization, which VEHCS refers to as “External Accredited Veterinarian.”

- USDA APHIS is working to make this an option. When this becomes possible in VEHCS, this note will be removed.
Connecting to others in VEHCS

To add a new member to your VEHCS Organization, the Organization member with Admin Privileges must first add the new member to the VEHCS Organization.

This user has Admin Privileges and can add new members to the VEHCS Organization.

Then, each joining member must create his/her own eAuthentication account.
Connecting to others in VEHCS

The VEHCS Organization member with Administrative Privileges selects “Manage Account” in the top right corner of the “Welcome” screen.
Connecting to others in VEHCS

Select “Organization Account Information For:” your organization in the “Manage Account” screen
Click “Next.”
Connecting to others in VEHCS

Select “Add Member to Organization” at the bottom of the “Manage Organization Profile” screen.
Connecting to others in VEHCS

Complete all required fields in the “Member Details” screen and select “Save.”

- Don’t forget to make a note of the unique PIN!
Connecting to others in VEHCS

Provide the Unique PIN to the member joining your VEHCS organization.

When the new member logs into VEHCS for the first time, he/she must enter the PIN under Option 2 to join the existing VEHCS Organization.
Connecting to others in VEHCS

When AV Support Staff and Exporters prepare a Defined certificate for an AV within their VEHCS Organization, they select “Internal Accredited Veterinarian” and the issuing AV’s name from the dropdown menu that opens. They are able to prepare everything except for selecting the applicable certification statements.

When the health certificate is ready for the AV, the AV Support Staff or Exporter saves the health certificate as a work in progress.

Warning: Only the selected Accredited Veterinarian can submit a certificate with his/her name attached to it. You can save this certificate as a work in progress for the AV to retrieve.
Connecting to others in VEHCS

When AV Support Staff and Exporters prepare an AV PDF Upload certificate for an AV within their VEHCS Organization, they can do everything to prepare the certificate for submission by the AV, including uploading the AV’s signed PDF of the health certificate.

When the health certificate is ready for the AV, the AV Support Staff or Exporter saves the health certificate as a work in progress for the AV to finish completing the submission.

Warning: Only the selected Accredited Veterinarian can submit a certificate with his/her name attached to it. You can save this certificate as a work in progress for the AV to retrieve.
Connecting to others in VEHCS

Any funds deposited in VEHCS through Financial Management by one member of the organization will be visible by all members of the VEHCS organization.

For health certificates submitted to an “External Accredited Veterinarian,” the AV has the option to select the external AV Support Staff or Exporter as the responsible payer and access their money deposited in VEHCS.
Connecting to others in VEHCS

AVs can view the status of a certificate as it progresses through endorsement.

AV Support Staff and Exporters can see the status of certificates within their VEHCS Organization. They can also see the status of certificates submitted to an “External Accredited Veterinarian.”

The following are the statuses of certificates in VEHCS:

- **Work In Progress**: The certificate has been saved but not submitted to the USDA Endorsement Office.
- **Submitted to AV**: The certificate created by an AV Support Staff or Exporter was submitted to an “External Accredited Veterinarian” for completion.
- **Returned to Exporter**: The certificate that was created by an Exporter and submitted to an “External Accredited Veterinarian” for completion was subsequently returned to the Exporter. The exporter may make changes and resubmit the certificate to the “External Accredited Veterinarian.” The Exporter may also delete the certificate.
- **Submitted**: The certificate has been submitted to the USDA Endorsement Office by the AV.
- **Review in Progress**: The certificate is in the process of being reviewed at the USDA Endorsement Office.
- **Reviewed**: The certificate has been reviewed by the USDA Endorsement Office.
- **Endorsement in Progress**: The certificate is being endorsed by the USDA Endorsement Office. VEHCS has generated the certificate number, applied the endorsing VMO’s name and endorsement date. However, the endorsed health certificate is not yet available.
- **Completed**: The certificate is fully endorsed and available for viewing and printing.
- **Returned**: The certificate was submitted to the USDA Endorsement Office but then returned to the AV. The AV or AV Support Staff may make changes and the AV may resubmit the certificate. The AV or AV Support Staff may also delete the certificate. Exporters cannot make changes.
- **Void**: The endorsed certificate was voided by either the AV reissuing the health certificate or the USDA Endorsement Office.
Defined Certificates

HOW TO ISSUE AND SUBMIT A DEFINED CERTIFICATE FOR ENDORSEMENT, AND HOW TO EITHER PRINT OR PROVIDE A PRE-PAID EXPRESS SHIPPING LABEL TO OBTAIN THE ENDORSED CERTIFICATE
Defined certificates

In the next slides, we will walk you through how a Defined certificate is issued and submitted for endorsement, including where to upload a pre-paid return shipping label if USDA APHIS’s digital endorsement is not accepted or how to print the endorsed health certificate if USDA APHIS’s digital endorsement is accepted.

The walk-through is via the USDA Accredited Veterinarian role.

While the example is for a cat traveling to India, the premise is the same for other types of animals traveling to other countries and can still be used as a guide.

If you require assistance with issuing a Defined certificate beyond what is provided here, please see the VEHCS Quick Reference Guide on creating a Defined certificate: https://pcitraining.aphis.usda.gov/VEHCSHelp/VEHCS_Create_Certificate.pdf
A cat traveling to India

While reviewing your appointment calendar for the next day, you see your first appointment is for a cat traveling to India.

How should you prepare for this appointment?
First, check the PTW for pet cats to India

1. **Visit the USDA APHIS PTW.**

2. Select India from the Export dropdown menu.

3. Note the green banner indicating health certificates submitted by the AV through VEHCS will be digitally endorsed by USDA APHIS.

4. Follow the import regulations in the dropdown bar for “Pet Dogs and Cats.”
5. Once the cat is compliant with India’s import regulations and it’s time to issue the health certificate, access the VEHCS website and login to your account. The link to the VEHCS website is available within the PTW’s VEHCS banner.

6. If you are not paying by a USDA APHIS User Fee Credit Account, select “Financial Management” to first deposit money in VEHCS to pay the endorsement fee.

7. Select “New Certificate” under “Create Certificate.”
Creating the certificate

8. In the “Certificate Content” screen, select “India” from the “Destination Country” dropdown menu.

9. The “Commodity Type” and “Type of Admission” dropdown menus will then appear. Select the applicable options for this cat from each dropdown menu.

10. Select “Next.”
Creating the certificate

Before we proceed on, notice that items marked with a red asterisk (*) are required fields.

If a required field is not completed, you will not be allowed to advance to the next step.

You do not have to complete a field if it is not mark required and if that information isn’t required by the destination country.
11. Complete the required fields about where the cat is originating from (i.e., currently resides).

12. Complete the Consignor (name and physical address of the cat’s owner in the U.S.) information.

13. Complete the Consignee (name and physical address of the cat’s owner in India) information.

14. Click “Next.”

All fields marked with a red * are required to be completed.
General information: consignor

All fields marked with a red * are required to be completed.
General information: consignee

All fields marked with a red * are required to be completed.
Export & Shipping

15. Select the name of the AV issuing the health certificate.
   • If the name of the AV does not appear here, the AV must check that his/her license and accreditation information is current in his/her profile from the VEHCS “Welcome” screen’s “Manage Account.”
   • Since this certificate is being issued by an AV, there is not an option to select an “Internal Accredited Veterinarian” or “External Accredited Veterinarian,” but if this is certificate was being issued by an AV Support Staff or Exporter, this is where those options would appear.

16. Select the “Port of Embarkation/Border Crossing.”

17. Select the “Estimated Date of Shipment.”

18. Select the “Means of Transport.”

19. Click “Next.”

All fields marked with a red * are required to be completed.
20. Complete the “Number of Rows,” which is the total number of animals included in the health certificate. Since this is just one cat traveling to India, “1” is entered and “Generate Rows” selected.

21. You can either enter in the remaining required commodity information in the “Default” fields or you can enter it in the rows that are generated.
   • By entering information that applies to all animals included in a health certificate, time can be saved by using the “Default” fields.

22. Once the required microchip number, breed, date of birth, sex, color, and coat type and distinctive markings is entered, record the number of animals in the health certificate in “Total Quantity.”

23. Click “Next.”
Statements

24. Select the certification statement check boxes. All certification statements need to be selected or the system will not allow you to proceed with submission.
   • Reminder: this page can only be completed by an AV. AV Support Staff and Exporters are not allowed to complete this page.

25. If a certification statement requires information to be entered, type the information into the space provided or use the calendar that appears for fields requiring a date. For statements that require the applicable statement to be selected, select the radio button that applies to the true statement.

26. Select “Next.”
Certification Tables

27. For certificates that require additional information in the certification statements, like vaccination information, that information is entered through this page.

28. Click “Edit” to open the page for entry of the required information. The page that opens will be similar to the “Commodities” page in that you will again need to generate the number of rows for the table and you can enter “Default” information for saving time in entry of repeated information for multiple animals.

29. Once you have entered the required information on the next page, you’ll select “Save” to return to this page and then select “Next.”
Certification Tables: entering information
Attachments

30. Select “Add Attachment” to upload the rabies vaccine certificate that supports the rabies vaccination entered in “Certification Tables.”

*While not applicable to this example, for orange, and some yellow and purple, banner countries, your prepaid return label would be uploaded here as well.
31. Select “Browse” to find the rabies vaccine certificate from your computer files. The file must be in .gif, .jpg, or .pdf.

32. Select “Rabies Certificate” from the dropdown menu to describe the file as the rabies vaccine certificate.
   • For uploading other types of required documentation, like laboratory reports, import permits, or shipping labels, you’ll select the applicable description from the dropdown menu. If there is not a pre-populated description, you’ll select “Other” and then enter the description in “If Other, More Details.”

33. Select “Upload.”
Attachments

In this example, because India does not require laboratory testing or an import permit, and because the certificate will be digitally endorsed by USDA APHIS, no other documents are uploaded. But if a laboratory test report, import permit, or shipping label were required to be uploaded, this is where they would be attached.

Also, some countries require incorporation of additional information beyond what is programmed into the Defined certificate. This is known as an addendum, and it will appear as an additional page in the final endorsed health certificate. Examples of addendums are silhouette diagrams of a horse, a list of animal identification, and laboratory reports that must be endorsed by USDA APHIS. In these situations, the additional page is uploaded in the Attachments section as the Defined health certificate is created. If an addendum is required, a “Note” appears in the Attachments’ instructions to state additional pages must be uploaded for incorporation into the endorsed health certificate. Your USDA Endorsement Office will incorporate the additional pages into the health certificate during endorsement.
34. Once all required documents are attached to the submission by uploading, select “Next.”
35. The information entered in the previous pages is summarized here. You must review the information to ensure it is accurate and complete. If you need to correct any information, select “Edit” on the right side of the section. An alternative way to view the health certificate is by clicking “View Certificate Draft.”
36. If you are paying by USDA APHIS User Fee Credit Account or need to leave a message for your USDA Endorsement Office, enter it in “Comments: (Will NOT be printed on the certificate).”

37. Before the AV can submit the certificate to the USDA Endorsement Office, the two statements must be read and selected to certify that the information is accurate, that laboratory test reports were uploaded as attachments (when applicable), that you acknowledge fees will be charged upon endorsement of the certificate, and that by submitting the certificate, you are legally signing the certificate.

• AV Support Staff and Exporters are not able to select these statements.

38. Select “Submit Certificate.”

• AV Support Staff and Exporters cannot submit a certificate for endorsement. Instead, they are given the option to “Save as Work in Progress” for an “Internal Accredited Veterinarian” or “Submit to Accredited Veterinarian” for an “External Accredited Veterinarian” to complete the certificate and submit it for endorsement.
Successful submission

If VEHCS identifies that required information was not provided, you will receive an error message to correct the missing information. The certificate cannot be submitted until all required information is provided.

If all required information was provided, the certificate is submitted to your USDA Endorsement Office.

Make a note of the tracking number VEHCS assigned to the certificate. You will need to provide this information (and the state you are located in) to your USDA Endorsement Office if you need to communicate with them about your certificate. When the certificate is endorsed, the tracking number will be replaced by the certificate number.

If you want to save the Consignor, Consignee, and Commodity Table (when applicable) information for future exports, select “Save as Template.”

Otherwise, periodically check VEHCS each business day to monitor the status of your submission. VEHCS does not externally notify you when the certificate is returned for correction or endorsed, so it is your responsibility to monitor the status.
Your USDA Endorsement Office

Your USDA Endorsement Office will review your certificate and supporting documentation.

If everything is in order, the certificate will be endorsed.

Once the certificate is endorsed, as noted by a VEHCS status of “Completed,” it will either be:

- Mailed with the pre-paid shipping label provided in VEHCS if the destination country does not accept USDA APHIS’s digital endorsement.
  - This is when USDA APHIS must wet ink sign and physically emboss the printed paper health certificate (for orange, and some commodities for yellow and purple banner countries).
- Ready for you to view and print if the destination country accepts USDA APHIS’s digital endorsement. This applies to green, and some commodities for yellow and purple, banner countries.
  - Ensure the printed hardcopy does not contain a “COPY” watermark.

Regardless of whether or not the certificate is digitally or physically endorsed, a printed, paper hardcopy of the endorsed health certificate must accompany the animal(s) during travel!
Steps for printing digitally endorsed certificates

To print the digitally endorsed health certificate, click “View Certificates.”
Steps for printing digitally endorsed certificates

The certificate should appear in the table below, but if you want to narrow your search results, you can search for the certificate by the “Status,” “Date Range” for either its creation, submission, or endorsement date, tracking number, or certificate number.
Steps for printing digitally endorsed certificates

When you find the certificate you need to print, click "Manage."
Steps for printing digitally endorsed certificates

In the “Process” dropdown menu, select “View Certificate” and click “Select.”

Do not select “Generate Copy” since that will yield a certificate that is not an original endorsed certificate and will bear a “COPY” watermark that may result in rejection by the destination country.
Steps for printing digitally endorsed certificates

Select **Generate Certificate** to open a PDF of the certificate for you to print.

Again, **a printed, paper hardcopy of the endorsed health certificate must accompany the animal(s) during travel!**
AV PDF Upload Certificates

HOW TO DETERMINE WHEN AN AV PDF UPLOAD CERTIFICATE IS REQUIRED, HOW TO ISSUE AND SUBMIT FOR ENDORSEMENT, AND HOW TO EITHER PRINT OR PROVIDE A PRE-PAID EXPRESS SHIPPING LABEL TO OBTAIN THE ENDORSED CERTIFICATE
AV PDF Upload certificates

In the next slides, we will walk you through how an AV PDF Upload certificate is issued and submitted for endorsement, including where to upload a pre-paid return shipping label if USDA APHIS’s digital endorsement is not accepted or how to print the endorsed health certificate if USDA APHIS’s digital endorsement is accepted.

The walk-through is via the USDA Accredited Veterinarian role.

While the example is for a dog traveling to Chile, the premise is the same for other types of animals traveling to other countries and can still be used as a guide.

If you require assistance with issuing an AV PDF Upload certificate beyond what is provided here, please see the VEHCS Quick Reference Guide on the AV PDF Upload certificate: https://pcit-training.aphis.usda.gov/VEHCSHelp/AV_Health_Certificate.Upload.pdf
A dog traveling to Chile

One of your clients called to set up an appointment for an international export health certificate. She will be travelling with her dog to Chile.

What should you do first?
First, check the PTW for pet dogs to Chile

1. Visit the USDA APHIS PTW.

2. Select Chile from the Export dropdown menu.

3. Note the green banner indicating health certificates submitted by the AV through VEHCS will be digitally endorsed by USDA APHIS.

4. Follow the import regulations in the dropdown bar for “Pet Dogs and Cats.”
Once you’re ready to start the certificate

5. Once the dog is compliant with Chile’s import regulations and it’s time to issue the health certificate, access the VEHCS website and login to your account. The link to the VEHCS website is available within the PTW’s VEHCS banner.

6. If you are not paying by a USDA APHIS User Fee Credit Account, select “Financial Management” to first deposit money in VEHCS to pay the endorsement fee.

7. Select “New Certificate” under “Create Certificate.”
Creating the certificate

8. In the “Certificate Content” screen, select “Chile” from the “Destination Country” dropdown menu.

9. The “Commodity Type” and “Type of Admission” dropdown menus will then appear. There is not an option for dogs in the “Commodity Type” so select “Commodity not Listed” from the dropdown.

   - The same is true for the “Destination Country” and “Type of Admission” dropdown menus. If the applicable country, commodity, and admission do not appear, select the “not listed” option.

10. By selecting “Commodity not Listed,” the page updates with the message “Click on the Upload button to upload a Filled PDF” to indicate the health certificate will be issued and submitted by the AV PDF Upload certificate type.
11. In a separate tab or browser window, return to the PTW page for Chile to download the PDF of the health certificate.
Creating the certificate

11. After saving the PDF to your computer and opening the saved file in Adobe, complete the health certificate just as you would when issuing a hardcopy health certificate.

• Remember, it is USDA APHIS’s preference that the health certificate is typed using Adobe so it is legible.
Creating the certificate

12. Once the health certificate is fully and accurately completed, finish issuing the PDF health certificate by signing your name with one of the four acceptable options for electronically signing an AV PDF Upload certificate.
   - As a reminder, you may either:
     - Electronically sign the signature field of the health certificate with Adobe’s electronic signature
     - Type “Electronically signed” in the signature field of the health certificate
     - Type your name in a cursive type font
     - Print the completed health certificate to wet-ink sign the signature field and then scan the health certificate back into a PDF.

13. Save the completed and signed certificate.
14. Return to your open VEHCS page and click “Upload” to begin uploading the completed and signed PDF health certificate.
Creating the certificate

15. Enter the required information for the certificate content.
   • All fields marked with a red * are required to be completed.
   • If the name of the AV does not appear here, the AV must check that his/her license and accreditation information is current in his/her profile from the VEHCS “Welcome” screen’s “Manage Account.”

16. Select “Next.”
Uploading the PDF health certificate

17. In the next page, select “Add/Replace Certificate.”

18. Then, select “Browse” to select the PDF of the completed health certificate from your files. Once the file is selected, click “Upload.”
19. If the PDF file successfully uploads, you will return to this page and see the file name now appears here.

20. Click “Next.”
Upload attachments

21. Select “Add Attachment” to upload the rabies vaccine certificate that supports the rabies vaccination entered in the PDF health certificate.

22. Select “Rabies Certificate” from the dropdown menu to describe the file as the rabies vaccine certificate.
   - For uploading other types of required documentation, such as laboratory reports, import permits, or shipping labels, you’ll select the applicable description from the dropdown menu. If there is not a pre-populated description, you’ll select “Other” and then enter the description in “If Other, More Details.”

23. Select “Upload.”

24. In this example, because Chile does not require laboratory testing or an import permit, and because the certificate will be digitally endorsed by USDA APHIS, no other documents are uploaded. But if a laboratory test report, import permit, or shipping label were required to be uploaded, this is where they would be attached.

25. Once all required documents are attached to the submission by uploading, select “Next.”
Submitting for endorsement

26. The information entered in the previous pages is summarized here. You must review the information to ensure it is accurate and complete. If you need to correct any information, select “Edit” on the right side of the section.

27. If you are paying by USDA APHIS User Fee Credit Account or need to leave a message for your USDA Endorsement Office, enter it in “Comments: (Will NOT be printed on the certificate).”

28. Before the AV can submit the certificate to the USDA Endorsement Office, the two statements must be read and selected to certify that the information is accurate, that laboratory test reports were uploaded as attachments (when applicable), that you acknowledge fees will be charged upon endorsement of the certificate, and that by submitting the certificate, you are legally signing the certificate.
   • AV Support Staff and Exporters are not able to select these statements.

29. Select “Submit Certificate.”
   • AV Support Staff and Exporters cannot submit a certificate for endorsement. Instead, they are given the option to “Save as Work in Progress” for an “Internal Accredited Veterinarian.”
Successful submission

If VEHCS identifies that required information was not provided, you will receive an error message to correct the missing information. The certificate cannot be submitted until all required information is provided.

If all required information was provided, the certificate is submitted to your USDA Endorsement Office.

Make a note of the tracking number VEHCS assigned to the certificate. You will need to provide this information (and the state you are located in) to your USDA Endorsement Office if you need to communicate with them about your certificate. When the certificate is endorsed, the tracking number will be replaced by the certificate number.

Otherwise, periodically check VEHCS each business day to monitor the status of your submission. VEHCS does not externally notify you when the certificate is returned for correction or endorsed, so it is your responsibility to monitor the status.
Your USDA Endorsement Office

Your USDA Endorsement Office will review your certificate and supporting documentation.

If everything is in order, the certificate will be endorsed.

Once the certificate is endorsed, as noted by a VEHCS status of “Completed,” it will either be:

- Mailed with the pre-paid shipping label provided in VEHCS if the destination country does not accept USDA APHIS’s digital endorsement.
  - This is when USDA APHIS must wet ink sign and physically emboss the printed paper health certificate (for orange, and some commodities for yellow and purple banner countries).
- Ready for you to view and print if the destination country accepts USDA APHIS’s digital endorsement. This applies to green, and some commodities for yellow and purple, banner countries.
  - Ensure the printed hardcopy does not contain a “COPY” watermark.

Regardless of if the certificate is digitally or physically endorsed, a printed, paper hardcopy of the endorsed health certificate must accompany the animal(s) during travel!
Steps for printing digitally endorsed certificates

To print the digitally endorsed health certificate, click “View Certificates.”
Steps for printing digitally endorsed certificates

The certificate should appear in the table below, but if you want to narrow your search results, you can search for the certificate by the “Status,” “Date Range” for either its creation, submission, or endorsement date, tracking number, or certificate number.
Steps for printing digitally endorsed certificates

When you find the certificate you need to print, click “Manage.”
Steps for printing digitally endorsed certificates

In the “Process” dropdown menu, select “View Certificate” and click “Select.”
Steps for printing digitally endorsed certificates

Select “View Certificate” to open a PDF of the certificate for you to print.

Again, a printed, paper hardcopy of the endorsed health certificate must accompany the animal(s) during travel!
Transiting another country

When an animal travels through another country before arriving in the destination country
Transits: issuing multiple certificates

If an animal stops in one country (e.g., for a layover) before immediately traveling on to the destination country, and the country the animal stops in requires the animal meet their import regulations, more than one health certificate may need to be issued and endorsed in VEHCS.

For animals who require a separate health certificate for the country they transit, the transit health certificate must be submitted separately in VEHCS from the health certificate for the destination country.

• The Consignee field for the transit certificate should list the address in the destination country and end in “via [insert name of the country transited].”

To link the two health certificates together in VEHCS to ensure your USDA Endorsement Office processes them in tandem, you must include a note in the “Comments: (Will NOT be printed on the certificate)” of each submission to explain the relationship between the submissions.

Once endorsed, the health certificate for the country transited and the final destination country will have different certificate numbers.
If Your USDA Endorsement Office Returns a Submission for Correction
Returned certificates

If you realize there’s an error after you submit your health certificate, contact your USDA Endorsement Office immediately, noting the state you are located in and the tracking number. If possible, your USDA Endorsement Office will return your submission to you for correction before they begin reviewing the submission for endorsement.

If your USDA Endorsement Office finds an error with your submission, they will notify you that a correction needs to be made, and the certificate will be returned to you in VEHCS.

- USDA APHIS is unable to make changes to electronically submitted documents.
- Remember to keep your contact information up to date in VEHCS since this is how your USDA Endorsement Office will contact you.
Returned certificates

- When returning the certificate to you in VEHCS, your USDA Endorsement Office may include comments on the reason for return. If so, the remarks will be available in “Comments.”
- You will access the certificate in “View/Edit” to make the necessary corrections based on the feedback from your USDA Endorsement Office and resubmit the certificate.
- DO NOT start a new submission as a means of submitting a corrected health certificate. By doing so, the re-submission will appear to your USDA Endorsement Office as a brand new submission, which may result in a further delay in endorsement and duplicate charges.
Reissuing endorsed health certificates
Reissuing endorsed health certificates

If information within the health certificate needs to be changed after endorsement, the health certificate may be reissued in VEHCS. Endorsement fees may apply.

• You **cannot** make corrections to an endorsed health certificate. To do so could be considered a criminal offense.

Before you reissue the health certificate in VEHCS, contact your USDA Endorsement Office to discuss the reason for reissuing the health certificate, especially if an animal is held in another country.
Reissuing endorsed health certificates

Only the AV may reissue an endorsed health certificate. AV Support Staff and Exporters cannot initiate a request to reissue an endorsed health certificate.

Saving as a work in progress is not available for reissue requests. The AV must complete the reissue during the current session or it will be cancelled and the AV will have to begin again.

Once your USDA Endorsement Office endorses the reissued health certificate:

◦ The original health certificate is voided in VEHCS (i.e., no longer available).
◦ The reissued health certificate will have a new certificate number, but it will reference the original health certificate by declaring “This certificate replaces certificate # (original certificate #).”
Reissuing endorsed health certificates

To initiate the reissue, select “Manage” in the “View Certificates” screen for the health certificate you need reissued.
Reissuing endorsed health certificates

Then, select “Request Re-issue Certificate” in the “Process” dropdown menu, and enter the reason for the reissue in the “Reissue Reason” field, including what information you will change in the health certificate.
Reissuing endorsed Defined certificates

For Defined certificates, correct the information you need to change.
- Before submitting the reissued certificate, you will also need to select yourself as the AV in the “Export and Shipping” screen and reselect the certification statements in the “Certification Statements” screen.
- The reason for the reissue, and the original VEHCS certificate number, are displayed at the bottom of the “Summary/Submit” screen.
  - If you need to correct the “Reissue Reason” field, you may do so here.

Then, submit the certificate as you normally would.
- Note: you must review each page and select “Next” before VEHCS will let you submit.
Reissuing endorsed health certificates
Reissuing endorsed AV PDF Upload

For AV PDF Upload certificates, once you’ve initiated the reissue, the “Certificate Content” screen will appear.

◦ If any of this information needs to be changed, do so here.
◦ Otherwise, select yourself as the AV and select “Next.”
Reissuing endorsed AV PDF Upload

In the “Upload Filled PDF Health Certificate” screen, upload the reissued health certificate as you normally would for an AV PDF Upload certificate.
Reissuing endorsed AV PDF Upload

In the “Summary/Submit” screen, the reason for the reissue and the original certificate number, appear at the bottom of the screen. 

- If you need to correct the “Reissue Reason” field, you may do so here. 
- Otherwise, submit the reissued certificate as you normally would.
Reusing Consignor and Consignee information

ALIAS NAMES
Reusing Consignor and Consignee info

If you’ve previously issued a health certificate for your client under the exact same Consignor name you will use to create a new health certificate, you may see an error message that the Consignor Alias Name already exists in the “Consignor Details” screen:
Reusing Consignor and Consignee info

To workaround this error message, return to the previous “General” screen and select your client’s Consignor name from the dropdown menu.
Reusing Consignor and Consignee info

When the same thing happens for clients that are returning to a previous destination, you would select their previous entry in the Consignee dropdown menu in the “General” screen.
Reusing Consignor and Consignee info

If your client’s home address has changed since the last time you issued a VEHCS health certificate (i.e., the previous Consignee information is out of date), you may either:

1. Make a new Consignor Name by recording a “Consignor Alias Name” in the “Consignor Details” screen

   -or-

2. Edit your client’s information under “Manage Consignors” under “Manage/Create Template Data”
Reusing Consignor and Consignee info

1. Make a new Consignor Name by recording a “Consignor Alias Name” in the “Consignor Details” screen
Reusing Consignor and Consignee info

2. Edit your client’s information under “Manage Consignors” under “Manage/Create Template Data”
If your client is traveling to either a different address in a previously visited country or a new country, you will update their information in “Manage Consignees” under “Manage/Create Template Data”:

![Image of the USDA website showing how to manage consignees]
Additional VEHCS resources

WHERE TO FIND MORE HELP WITH USING VEHCS
If you need additional help with VEHCS

If you need help with VEHCS at any point, there are several VEHCS resources available to you:

◦ **VEHCS Help Page**
◦ **VEHCS Quick Reference Guides** (QRGs)
◦ **VEHCS Online Help Manual** (available within VEHCS)
◦ **Your USDA Endorsement Office.** If you contact your USDA Endorsement Office about a submitted certificate, you must provide the state you are located in and the tracking number VEHCS assigned to your submission.
◦ **PCIT Help Desk for VEHCS IT troubleshooting** at pcithelpdesk@usda.gov or 1-866-HLP-PCIT (1-866-457-7248)
◦ **eAuthentication Support** for troubleshooting logging into VEHCS at aehd@usda.gov or 1-866-794-2827
Where to find the VEHCS Help Page

Click the link in the non-red VEHCS banners:
Where to find the VEHCS Help Page

Click the VEHCS icon on some pages of the IRegs and PTW:
Where to find the Online Help Manual

Welcome to the Veterinary Export Health Certification System (VEHCS). VEHCS allows you to quickly create and submit certificates for Veterinary Export Health Certificates for the export of live animals from the United States.

New to VEHCS? Online help is always a click away - just click Need Help? located toward the top right corner of any page.

Messages

Pre-Purchase Account Balance: $0


Accredited Veterinarians, please read the following to prevent delays in endorsement:
Where to find the Online Help Manual
Where to find the Quick Reference Guides
Where to find the Quick Reference Guides
Where to find the Quick Reference Guides

Table of Contents
USDA APHIS Resources

USDA APHIS Pet Travel Website (PTW)
• Requirements for exporting and importing pets from and into the U.S., and interstate
  • https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pet-travel

USDA APHIS International Regulations for Live Animal Exports (IRegs)
• For international movement requirements for non-pets
  • https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animalhealth/animal-exports

USDA APHIS Import: Bring Live Animals into the United States
• For importing non-pet animals into the U.S.

VEHCS
• Log in to VEHCS here
  • https://www.aphis.usda.gov/vehcs

USDA APHIS National Veterinary Accreditation Program
• For USDA Accredited Veterinarians to check their accreditation status
  • https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/nvap
• To find a USDA Accredited Veterinarian
Do you still have questions?

Contact us!

USDA Endorsement Offices

https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animalhealth/endorsement-offices