Pet Travel From the United States to Switzerland

Last Modified:

Electronic Signature ACCEPTED; Original Ink Endorsement REQUIRED

For Accredited Veterinarians: Electronic signature ACCEPTED

For APHIS VMO: Original ink endorsement REQUIRED

USDA-accredited veterinarians can electronically issue health certificates and use VEHCS (Veterinary Export Health Certification System) to submit them to USDA for endorsement.

USDA must ink-sign and emboss the health certificate.

What This Means for You

Accredited Veterinarians: Use the links below to access or get help with VEHCS. Learn more about how to issue export health certificates.

Animal Owners/Shippers: You can arrange to have your health certificate returned by mail (a prepaid, preaddressed return label must be provided during

certificate submission). The endorsed health certificate—ink-signed and embossed—must accompany the animal(s) during shipment or travel.

VEHCS Help | VEHCS Guide (7.6 MB) | VEHCS Login

Electronic Signature and Digital Endorsement ACCEPTED

For Accredited Veterinarians: Electronic signature ACCEPTED

For APHIS VMO: Digital endorsement ACCEPTED

USDA-accredited veterinarians can electronically issue health certificates and use VEHCS (Veterinary Export Health Certification System) to submit them to USDA for digital endorsement.

USDA can digitally endorse the health certificate and return it electronically.

What This Means for You

Accredited Veterinarians: Use the links below to access or get help with VEHCS. Learn more about how to issue export health certificates.

Animal Owners/Shippers: The endorsed health certificate can be printed out directly from VEHCS and does **not** have to be mailed back to you. The printed, endorsed health certificate must accompany the animal(s) during shipment or travel.

VEHCS Help | VEHCS Guide (7.6 MB) | VEHCS Login

Electronic Signature ACCEPTED; Digital Endorsement for SOME COMMODITIES ONLY

For Accredited Veterinarians: Electronic signature ACCEPTED

For APHIS VMO: Digital endorsement for SOME COMMODITIES ONLY

USDA-accredited veterinarians can electronically issue health certificates and use VEHCS (Veterinary Export Health Certification System) to submit them to USDA for endorsement.

Digital endorsement varies by species—see requirements on this page for details. The health certificate either bears the original ink signature and embossed seal ***or*** digital signature/seal.

What This Means for You

Accredited Veterinarians: Use the links below to access or get help with VEHCS. Learn more about how to issue export health certificates.

Animal Owners/Shippers: Digitally endorsed health certificates can be printed out directly from VEHCS. For non-digitally endorsed health certificates, you can arrange to have your health certificate returned by mail (a prepaid, preaddressed return label must be provided during certificate submission). A paper version of the endorsed health certificate must accompany the animal(s) during shipment or travel.

VEHCS Help | VEHCS Guide (7.6 MB) | VEHCS Login

New Health Certificates Available Now

Starting October 2026, new health certificates are required for the export of non-commercial dogs, cats, ferrets, and birds and commercial dogs, cats, and ferrets to the European Union (EU). This is due to changes in EU legislation issued earlier this year (EU2026/131 and EU 2026/848).

- The new **non-commercial** health certificates are effective **October 1, 2026.** Old certificates already in process can be endorsed on or before September 30, 2026.
- The new **commercial** health certificate is effective **October 17, 2026.** Old certificates already in process can be endorsed on or before October 16, 2026.

Travel Requirements Based on Pet Type

Carefully read ALL of the requirements related to your pet on this page.

- This page provides the most recent entry requirements and can change without notice.
- It is the responsibility of the veterinarian to make sure the pet has met all health requirements of the destination country before issuing a health certificate.
- Failure to meet the requirements may result in problems gaining certificate endorsement or difficulties upon arrival in the destination country.
- Health certificates must be legible, accurate, and complete.

If only **transiting** the EU on the way to another country, non-commercial dogs, cats, ferrets, and birds **may not** need an EU health certificate (per EU 2026/131 Article 5). Learn more.

Transiting the European Union

Under EU Regulation 2026/131 Article 5, non-commercial dogs, cats, ferrets, or birds transiting the EU on their way to another country may not need an EU health certificate.

- **Only pets that meet the criteria for *non-commercial* movement qualify for this exemption.** If the pet is traveling unaccompanied, they must have a commercial health certificate and are not eligible for the transit exemption.
- If the pet will stay in an airport pet hotel between flights, be aware that the pet hotel may not be part of the international transit zone. Each port may define the transit zone differently. Confirm this with the port officials in advance and plan accordingly.

Expand All

Dogs, Cats, and Ferrets

Expand All

Step 1: Meet the EU's microchip and rabies vaccination requirements.

Microchip Requirements

Your pet must have a working microchip (also called a “transponder”) **before** getting its rabies vaccination for travel to the EU. Your veterinarian must always scan the microchip before giving your pet a rabies vaccination.

- If your pet doesn’t have a microchip or the microchip doesn’t work, ask your veterinarian to implant an **ISO-compliant*** microchip.
- If your pet has a working microchip that is not ISO-compliant, you must either travel with a scanner that can read it or have your veterinarian implant a second, ISO-compliant microchip. Make sure **both** microchip numbers are listed on the health certificate.

**ISO-compliant microchips are usually 15 digits long and meet specific international standards (ISO 11784 and 11785). You can check ISO compliance with the microchip manufacturer.*

Rabies Vaccination Requirements

Pets that do not meet the EU's rabies requirements (EU 576/2013 Annex III) may be **refused entry or quarantined upon arrival** at the owner’s expense.

- Rabies vaccines must be given by an authorized veterinarian.
- After primary vaccination, your pet must wait **at least 21 days—or the vaccine manufacturer's recommended immunity period—**before traveling. Some manufacturers recommend waiting 30 days for the pet to gain immunity. Ask your veterinarian to confirm and record the correct period on the rabies certificate; this determines how long the vaccine is valid for travel.

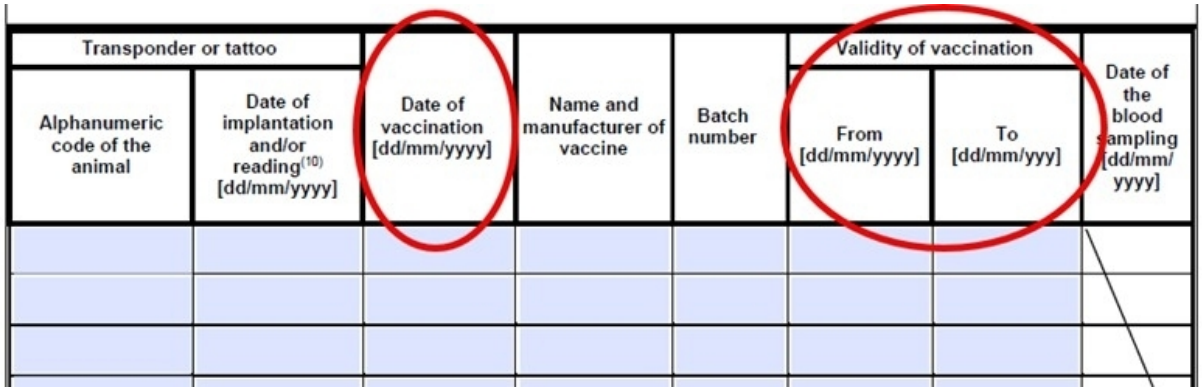
- A **primary** rabies vaccination is the first rabies shot your pet receives after microchipping or after any lapse in coverage. For all pets vaccinated in the United States:
    - A primary rabies vaccination is only valid for **1 year**—even if your pet is an adult and received a 3-year vaccine.
    - A booster is required **within 12 months.** Any lapse, even one day, resets the vaccine to “primary” again (valid for only 1 year).
- A **booster** is any rabies vaccination given within 1 year of the primary vaccination.
    - Valid for **1–3 years,** depending on the manufacturer.
    - Pets may travel immediately after a booster (no 21-day wait), as long as the primary vaccination is also listed on the health certificate.

Completing the Rabies Vaccination Table on the Health Certificate

- **Primary vaccination:** The “From” date under "Validity of vaccination" must be 21 days (or the recommended immunity period) after the vaccination date.

    Example (21 days):
    Date of vaccination: 01/03/2019
    Validity of vaccination: From: 22/03/2019 To: 01/03/2020
    Example (30 days):
    Date of vaccination: 01/03/2019
    Validity of vaccination: From: 31/03/2019 To: 01/03/2020
- **Booster:** The “From” date is the date the booster was given. No waiting period is required as long as there was no lapse between the primary vaccination and the booster.

    Example:
    Date of vaccination: 01/03/2019
    Validity of vaccination: From: 01/03/2019 To: 01/03/2022



Transponder or tattoo		Date of vaccination [dd/mm/yyyy]	Name and manufacturer of vaccine	Batch number	Validity of vaccination		Date of the blood sampling [dd/mm/yyyy]
Alphanumeric code of the animal	Date of implantation and/or reading(10) [dd/mm/yyyy]				From [dd/mm/yyyy]	To [dd/mm/yyy]	

Important Reminders and Tips

- If your pet's most recent rabies vaccination before traveling to the EU is a **booster,** you must provide **all relevant rabies certificates** to show there was **no lapse in coverage** since the primary vaccination.
- Rabies vaccinations do **not** count per EU rules if your pet got the vaccination:
  - Before it had a microchip, or
  - Without the microchip being scanned first.
- Your pet should travel with all relevant rabies vaccination certificates. We strongly recommend making sure the **microchip number appears on every rabies certificate.**

Want to simplify your paperwork?

Ask your veterinarian to give your pet a **1-year rabies vaccination** (after scanning the microchip) at least 21 days but less than 1 year before your trip to the EU. Getting a fresh 1-year vaccine—ideally **3–6 months before travel**—means you only need one vaccination certificate, no matter your pet's past rabies vaccination history.

This also makes it easier for the USDA endorsement office to review, so you can get your endorsed certificate back faster.

If your pet is less than 16 weeks old and cannot meet the above requirements, follow this guidance.

Step 2: Have a USDA-accredited veterinarian or military veterinarian* issue the EU health certificate.

The EU has two types of pet health certificates: **non-commercial** and **commercial.**

Both require an accredited veterinarian to **issue** (complete, sign, and date) the certificate and USDA to **endorse** it (countersign and emboss/stamp) before your pet travels. Read the information below carefully to learn which certificate you will need to use given your logistical circumstances.

Non-Commercial Health Certificate

When To Use It

- The pet owner is traveling with the pet on the same flight, or a designated person** is traveling with the pet no later than 5 days after the pet owner, and **five or fewer pets** are traveling on the same movement.
- You may also use the non-commercial certificate for **six or more pets** if they are traveling for specific events like competitions, exhibitions, or sporting events and the pet owner or designated person is traveling with the pets.

What You Need To Know

- The non-commercial health certificate is valid for **30 days *after*** the accredited veterinarian issues it.
- USDA must endorse the completed certificate **within 10 days** of your pet's arrival in the EU. See "Step 3" below for more information on endorsement.
- The final page includes a **Declaration** that must be completed and signed by the owner and/or designated person** as applicable. This Declaration must travel with the pet and the certificate.
- You may use the non-commercial certificate to travel **within the EU for up to 6 months from the day of entry into the EU,** as long as your pet's rabies vaccination remains valid.

- **Dogs** entering **Finland, Malta, Ireland (including Northern Ireland), or Norway** after entering the EU must receive a tapeworm treatment from an EU veterinarian **1–5 days before entry** into those countries.
- The certificate **must** arrive with the pet to the port of entry.

View the Certificate

A USDA-accredited veterinarian must issue the certificate and submit it through the Veterinary Export Health Certification System (VEHCS) for endorsement by USDA. A printed copy of the completed, endorsed certificate **must** accompany the pet(s).

Non-Commercial Health Certificate for Pet Dogs, Cats, and Ferrets (880.96 KB)

Non-Commercial Health Certificate for Pet Dogs, Cats, and Ferrets (877.9 KB)

Guidance for Non-Commercial Health Certificate for Pet Dogs, Cats, and Ferrets (267.63 KB)

Commercial Health Certificate

When To Use It

- The pet owner or a designated person** **cannot** travel with the pet.
- You are traveling with **6 or more pets.**
- The pet is **changing owners** when it arrives in the EU.

What You Need To Know

- Your pet(s) must be inspected by a USDA-accredited veterinarian **within 48 hours** of departing the United States. Discuss your travel logistics with your veterinarian and plan accordingly.
- The certificate **must** arrive with the pet to the port of entry.

View the Certificate

The USDA-accredited veterinarian must issue the certificate and submit it through the Veterinary Export Health Certification System (VEHCS) for endorsement by USDA. A printed copy of the completed, endorsed certificate **must** accompany the pet(s).

Commercial Health Certificate for Pet Dogs, Cats, and Ferrets (378.17 KB)

Guidance for Commercial Health Certificate for Pet Dogs, Cats, and Ferrets (251.23 KB)

Military veterinary personnel: Please direct all questions regarding health certificates through Defense Health Agency dha.vet-ops@health.mil and cc your regional 64F and MEDCOM VS. **Do not use the watermark certificate on the USDA Pet Website.** It is for informational purposes only and it's not usable as a health certificate.

If a **military veterinarian*** issues the health certificate, USDA endorsement is **not** required. However, the military veterinarian must issue the non-commercial health certificate within 10 days of the pet's arrival in the EU or the commercial health certificate within 48 hours of the pet leaving the United States.

* Military Veterinarian is defined as a Veterinary Corps Officer or civilian GS-0701 series Government veterinarian employed by the U.S. Army Veterinary Service working at military treatment facilities. It does not apply to Army Veterinary Service nonappropriated funds or U.S. Department of Defense civilian contract veterinarians.

** Designated person is a family member, friend, or other person authorized by the owner to travel with the pet.

Step 3: Have your accredited veterinarian submit the health certificate to USDA for endorsement.

After your pet's accredited veterinarian issues the health certificate, have them submit it to USDA for endorsement through the Veterinary Export Health Certification System (VEHCS).

- **Non-commercial health certificate:** The endorsement must happen within **10 days** of your pet's arrival in the EU.
- **Commercial health certificate:** The endorsement must happen within **48 hours *after*** the accredited veterinarian issues the certificate.

For more information about the endorsement process and fees, visit Working With an APHIS Endorsement Office and Cost To Endorse Your Pet's Health Certificate.

Step 4: Treat for tapeworm—DOGS ONLY.

Dogs must be treated for tapeworm by an accredited veterinarian *before* traveling to Finland, Malta, or Ireland (including Northern Ireland), or Norway.

- The treatment timeframes are:
  - 24 to 120 hours (1–5 days) before scheduled arrival in the destination country if using the **non-commercial** health certificate.
  - 24 to 48 hours (1–2 days) before scheduled departure from the United States if using the **commercial** health certificate.
- The medication the accredited veterinarian gives your dog must be labeled to treat the tapeworm species *Echinococcus multilocularis*. The recommended active ingredient is praziquantel.
- The tapeworm treatment can be given before or after USDA endorses the health certificate.
- At the time of the treatment, the accredited veterinarian should complete the “Anti-Echinococcus treatment” table in Part II of the health certificate.

The accredited veterinarian **cannot issue (sign)** the Anti-Echinococcus treatment table **until they administer the tapeworm treatment.**

If the pet has a valid EU Pet Passport, it may not need an export health certificate. Learn more.

Rabbits

- The pet rabbit must travel accompanied by its owner or the owner's representative.
- The pet rabbit must have been examined and the health certificate issued by a USDA Accredited Veterinarian within 5 days of leaving the United States.
- Only one pet rabbit may be listed on each health certificate.
- USDA endorsement (counter-sign and emboss/stamp) of the health certificate is required after it has been issued by a USDA Accredited Veterinarian.

International Health Certificate (264.33 KB)

Reptiles and Amphibians

- The pet reptile or amphibian and must travel accompanied by its owner or the owner's representative.
- The pet reptile or amphibian must have been examined and the health certificate issued by a USDA Accredited Veterinarian within 5 days of leaving the United States.
- Only one pet reptile or amphibian may be listed on each health certificate.
- USDA endorsement (counter-sign and emboss/stamp) of the health certificate is required after it has been issued by a USDA Accredited Veterinarian.

International Health Certificate

Pet Rabbits, Rodents, Amphibians, and Reptiles

- The pet must travel with its owner or the owner’s representative to Italy, and must not be intended for resale or transfer of ownership.
- The pet must be examined and the health certificated issued (completed and signed) by a USDA Accredited Veterinarian within 48 hours before leaving the United States.
- The health certificate must be endorsed (counter-signed and embossed/stamped) by USDA after it is signed by the USDA Accredited Veterinarian.

International Health Certificate (20.08 KB)

Amphibians, Reptiles, and Rodents

If the pet reptile/rodent/amphibian will not travel on the same plane as the owner, the owner must provide a letter to the transport broker or airline pet services to authorize the aircraft staff to be responsible for the pet during travel to Hungary, and that responsibility for the pet will return to the owner on arrival in Hungary.

For additional requirements for taking a pet amphibian, reptile, and/or rodent to Hungary, please contact a government official of Hungary.

Rodents

- The pet rodent must travel accompanied by its owner or the owner’s representative.
- The pet rodent must have been examined and the health certificate issued by a USDA Accredited Veterinarian within 5 days of leaving the United States.
- Only one pet rodent may be listed on each health certificate.
- USDA endorsement (counter-sign and emboss/stamp) of the health certificate is required after it has been issued by a USDA Accredited Veterinarian.

International Health Certificate (274.32 KB)

Amphibians, Rodents, Rabbits, Reptiles, Invertebrates (excluding bees and crustaceans), Tropical Ornamental Fish

- Each family is limited to five pets.
- Pets are not to be sold under any circumstances.
- The pets must have been examined and the health certificate issued by a USDA-accredited veterinarian within a day of loading and must arrive in France within 10 days.
- USDA endorsement (counter-sign and emboss/stamp) of the health certificate is **not** required for this certificate.
- Additional requirements are described in the health certificate.
- Health information that does not apply to the type of pet traveling must be lined out and initialed by the USDA-accredited veterinarian.

International Health Certificate (92.88 KB)

Birds

Before you travel, carefully read all requirements for taking pet birds to the European Union (EU).

The information below applies to pet birds traveling to the EU in a group of five or fewer.

Identification of Pet Birds

- Pet birds **must** have an identification number, such as a clip, leg band, microchip (transponder), or tag.
- The only exception is if the birds will be moved to an approved quarantine facility in the EU. In that case, a physical description of the birds is acceptable. However, APHIS must seal the birds in their container, and the seal number must be recorded on the health certificate.

Health Certificate Requirements

There are two options for preparing pet birds for export to the EU. Select the option that applies to your situation to obtain the correct health certificate. For both options:

- A USDA-accredited veterinarian must examine the pet birds and issue an EU health certificate within 48 hours of travel or on the last working day before departure to the EU.
- After the veterinarian issues the certificate, it must be endorsed by APHIS.

Important: If the pet birds will return to the United States, certain re-entry requirements may need to be completed ***before*** leaving the United States. View the requirements for pet birds returning to the United States.

Expand All

Option 1: The pet bird was isolated under official supervision for at least 30 days before the date of departure with no contact with any other birds.

Use the health certificate below if the pet bird was isolated from other birds under a USDA-accredited veterinarian's supervision for at least 30 days before leaving the United States. For more information, see EU instructions for completing the certificate (55.99 KB).

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 1 (355.65 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 1 (233.39 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 1 (471.02 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 1 (578.54 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 1 (401.12 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 1 (357.68 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 1 (446.81 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 1 (1.16 MB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 1 (1019.61 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 1 (442.48 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 1 (534.7 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 1 (1.35 MB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 1 (3.85 MB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 1 (4.73 MB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 1 (465.12 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 1 (1.48 MB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 1 (389.28 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 1 (412.88 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 1 (167.48 KB)

Option 2: The pet bird was isolated for at least 14 days before departure, and it was tested for avian influenza no earlier than 7 days after isolation began.

Use the health certificate below if the pet bird was isolated from other birds for at least 14 days before leaving the United States **and** tested for avian influenza H5 and H7 antigens or genomes with a virus isolation or a real-time polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) test.

Regardless of test type:

- Both a cloacal swab and an oropharyngeal swab must be collected by a USDA-accredited veterinarian no earlier than 7 days after the 14-day isolation period begins. **The day isolation starts is considered day 0.**
- Testing must be performed at a laboratory approved by APHIS to conduct avian influenza testing. To learn more, visit the National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) or the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN).

For more information, see EU instructions for completing the certificate (55.99 KB).

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 2 (360.41 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 2 (554.74 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 2 (458.94 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 2 (916.46 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 2 (380.53 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 2 (3.39 MB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 2 (335.92 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 2 (1.27 MB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 2 (432.98 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 2 (459.29 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 2 (532.64 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 2 (509.54 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 2 (735.58 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 2 (4.01 MB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 2 (463.93 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 2 (401.76 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 2 (397.09 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 2 (759.43 KB)

Health Certificate for Pet Birds: Option 2

Planning to use a quarantine facility in the EU upon arrival? Email APHIS' Live Animal Import and Export team at laie@usda.gov to request a health certificate.

Other Pets

For pet travel requirements not listed, APHIS has not been officially informed by the foreign country about the requirements for your pet’s travel. We recommend that you contact a government official of the country you are traveling to for more information.

Country of Destination Contact Information

World Organisation for Animal Health: Members

U.S. Department of State: Foreign Embassies and Consulates

Countries Participating in the European Union

Austria
Belgium
Bulgaria
Croatia
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Denmark
Estonia

Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Republic of Ireland
Italy
Latvia

Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta

Netherlands
Northern Ireland*
Norway**
Poland
Portugal

Romania
Slovakia
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland**

* Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom (UK), but will continue to follow European Union (EU) requirements even though the UK is no longer part of the EU.
** Norway and Switzerland are **not** part of the EU but have adopted EU legislation for import of most species of live animals.

Important Travel Considerations

Considerations for airline travel and cruises:

Airlines and shipping lines have their own policies and requirements for transporting pets. Check with your airline or shipping representative to determine what requirements they may have.

Learn how you can improve the safety of dogs and cats during air travel.

View additional information for pet owners, airlines, and others about APHIS endorsement of international health certificates (239.52 KB).

If pets or support animals accompany you on a cruise, you must comply with entry rules for **every** country or port where your pet or support animal exits the ship.

Will you be returning to the United States with your pet?

View APHIS Requirements

ALERT: CDC is the primary authority for dog imports. For requirements or questions about dogs entering or returning to the United States, visit the CDC website.

See More See Less

Need Help?

Guidance for Pet Owners

Read an overview of the process for taking your pet to another country and related resources.

Frequently Asked Questions

View frequently asked questions about traveling with your pet.

Still Have Questions?

USDA-Accredited Veterinarians

Contact a USDA-accredited veterinarian for questions about your destination country's entry requirements for pets (including any needed vaccinations, tests, or treatments); issuance of health certificates; and status updates on certificate endorsement.

Find a USDA-Accredited Veterinarian

APHIS Endorsement Offices

Contact APHIS Veterinary Export Trade Services if you have questions about endorsing an international pet health certificate. For quickest help, see **tips for pet owners and accredited veterinarians.**

Generalist Team

Veterinary Export Trade Services

Email: askvets@usda.gov

Helpful Links:

- Frequently Asked Questions About Pet Travel for Accredited Veterinarians

Helpful Links:

- Frequently Asked Questions About Pet Travel for Accredited Veterinarians

All Contacts

Looking for Another Country?

Find your destination country requirements by using the dropdown menu below. If your country is not listed in the menu, visit Pet Travel: Unknown Requirements.

Select Destination Country Select Destination Cour ▼ Go

Print