Pet Travel From the United States to Japan

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

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.

Expand All

General Requirements

For all pets other than those listed* below to Japan, USDA Accredited Veterinarians may issue health certificates electronically through the online Veterinary Export Health Certification System (VEHCS). These certificates will be digitally endorsed by APHIS once received in the system and available for printing by the USDA Accredited Veterinarian once the endorsement is completed by APHIS. An APHIS-endorsed, printed paper copy **must** accompany the shipment.

Health certificates for the types of pets listed* below, may be submitted by the USDA Accredited Veterinarian through VEHCS; however, the APHIS Veterinary Medical Officer's ink (wet) signature with the application of the APHIS embossed seal must appear on the health certificate. Certificates received by APHIS through the VEHCS system will be printed and endorsed in our offices, and the hard copy will be returned when complete. This APHIS-endorsed and embossed paper copy **must** accompany the shipment.

* Pet Birds
  Pet Ferrets

Pet Dogs and Cats from HAWAII or GUAM

Taking Dogs and Cats into Japan from Hawaii or Guam

If you are traveling from Hawaii or Guam to Japan, visit Japan’s Animal Quarantine Service Website for more information.

Expand All

STEP 1: Advanced Notification

The importer must provide advance notification of the animal to be imported to the Animal Quarantine Service (AQS) with jurisdiction over the intended air or seaport of arrival at least 40 days prior to arrival in Japan by fax or mail.

- **DOGS** – Notification of Import Inspection of Dog
- **CATS** – Notification of Import of Animals under the Rabies Prevention Law

Expand All

STEP 2: Individual Identification by microchip

Dogs and cats must be individually identified by an ISO compliant microchip. If the animal is not fitted with an ISO compliant (11784 and 11785) microchip, the importer must bring a microchip reader with the pet.

Expand All

STEP 3: Health Certificate

Dogs and cats must be inspected by a USDA Accredited Veterinarian and confirmed free of clinical signs of infectious disease including rabies and leptospirosis (for dogs) prior to departure.

- **Export Health Certificate (Form AB)** may only be used for U.S. origin pet dogs and cats traveling to Japan from the state of Hawaii or the U.S. territory of Guam. Form AB contains the information required for both the owner declaration and health certificate. The exporter will need to have this form endorsed by APHIS-VS.
  - Form AB (Hawaii) (152.33 KB)
  - Form AB (Guam) (151.08 KB)

NOTE: The “Clinical Inspection by Veterinarian” and the “Certification by Official Government Veterinarian” attestation sections of the health certificate should be completed by the issuing USDA Accredited Veterinarian. When completing these

sections, note that Hawaii and Guam are considered “Rabies-Free Designated Regions” of the United States. As such, when Form AB refers to the “exporting county” this should be interpreted as either the state of Hawaii or the territory of Guam, and not the entire United States. For instance, when the statement says “The animal has been continuously resident in the exporting country for at least 180 days immediately before shipment to Japan, or since its birth,” this means the animal has been a resident of Hawaii/Guam for the last 180 days or since birth.

The “Endorsement by Official Government Veterinarian” section should be completed by the USDA-APHIS-VS endorsing Veterinary Medical Officer.

Other Options for Acceptable Health Certificates Include:

Using **Form AB** above fulfills all health certificate requirements for U.S. pet dogs and cats from Hawaii/Guam to Japan. However, the exporter may choose to use the following other options instead of the Form AB:

International Health Certificate (APHIS Form 7001) (438.8 KB): The APHIS Form 7001 (438.8 KB) can be obtained from the issuing USDA accredited veterinarian. This form can be used, as a stand-alone entity, providing that it includes all the information required on both Form AB **and** the Exporter's declaration (Form A) (175.1 KB).

OR

International Health Certificate (APHIS Form 7001) (438.8 KB) **&** Exporter's declaration (Form A): The APHIS Form 7001 (438.8 KB) can be obtained from the issuing USDA accredited veterinarian. The APHIS Form 7001 **must** contain all the information required on Form AB. The traveler must prepare the Exporter’s Declaration (Form A) with the assistance of their USDA accredited veterinarian. Both the Exporter’s Declaration (Form A) and the APHIS Form 7001 need to be endorsed by APHIS-VS, and both must accompany the shipment.

Expand All

STEP 4: Recommended treatments and measures

Japan recommends the following measures for bringing pets into Japan.

Immunization: Japan recommends that the following immunizations be given to dogs and cats that are 91 days old or older 30 days prior to their arrival in Japan (within the vaccine immunization effectiveness period).

a. **Dogs:** distemper, contagious hepatitis (Adenovirus type II acceptable), parvovirus infectious disease trivalent vaccine (parainfluenza, leptospirosis, coronavirus)
b. **Cats:** feline viral rhinotracheitis, feline calicivirus, feline panleukopenia trivalent vaccine

Parasite treatment: Japan recommends the following parasite treatments before departure (no more than 4 days before boarding):

c. **External parasites:** Treat with medicines effective against mites and fleas, and at the time of export have a clinical inspection to confirm that the animal is free from these parasites.
d. **Internal parasites:** administer medicine effective against nematodes and tapeworms.

Visit Japan's AQS Website for more information on taking your dog or cat to Japan

Pet Dogs and Cats from All other States

Taking Dogs and Cats into Japan from the United States (all other states)

Pets (dogs and cats) may be imported into Japan with a quarantine of less than 12 hours if the following conditions are met.

For a step-by-step guide and additional information on the process, please read the "Guide to importing dogs and cats into Japan from Non-designated regions" published by the Japanese import authority.

Also, refer to this **HELPFUL FLOWCHART.**

Expand All

STEP 1: Advanced Notification

The importer must provide advance notification of the animal to be imported to the Animal Quarantine Service (AQS) with jurisdiction over the intended air or seaport of arrival at least 40 days prior to arrival in Japan by fax or mail.

- **DOGS** – Notification of Import Inspection of Dog
- **CATS** – Notification of Import of Animals under the Rabies Prevention Law

Expand All

STEP 2: Individual Identification by microchip

Dogs and cats must be individually identified by an ISO compliant microchip. If the animal is not fitted with an ISO compliant (11784 and 11785) microchip, the importer must bring a microchip reader with the pet.

The pet must be microchipped on the day of or before the 1st vaccination.

Exception: Microchip implantation can occur on the day of or before the 2nd vaccination when the export health certificate, endorsed by APHIS, shows that:

1. the 1st vaccination was administered prior to microchip implantation, **and**
2. the animal had a rabies antibody titer of at least 0.5 IU/ml on a serum sample collected on the day of administration of the 2nd vaccination.

Expand All

STEP 3: Rabies Vaccination

Dogs and cats must be vaccinated against rabies twice or more after the microchip implanting.

First rabies vaccination

- **At least 91 days old at the time of vaccination**： the date of birth is counted as day 0；
- **After the microchip implanting**： including the same day of implanting；

Second rabies vaccination

- **More than 30 days apart from the first vaccination (the date of the first one is counted as day 0)**
- **Within the effective period (duration of immunity) of the first vaccination**

Expand All

STEP 4: Measurement of rabies antibody levels

Dogs and cats must be evaluated for serum rabies antibody level. The animal must have been vaccinated for rabies in accordance with section 3 above.

Animals microchipped before or on the day of the 1st vaccination, the serum sample may be collected on the date of 2nd vaccination or any day until the end of the effective period of the 2nd vaccination.

The rabies titer test must be carried out at a laboratory approved by the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan. The results of the rabies titer test must be greater than or equal to 0.5 IU/ml. The result of rabies titer test is valid for two years from the date of sampling. The laboratory results must be originals (no USDA endorsement needed) or copies with USDA endorsement. No report is needed if the animal is a returning pet that has a valid “Export Quarantine Certificate” with lab results listed within the last two years.

Approved Laboratories:

1. Kansas State University Rabies Laboratory
2. DOD Veterinary Food Analysis and Diagnostic Laboratory

Expand All

STEP 5: 180 days wait

Dogs and cats are required to undergo a wait of at least 180 days between the date the sample is collected for the rabies titer test and the date the animal arrives in Japan. If 180 days have not passed before the animal's arrival in Japan, the animal will be quarantined in an AQS facility to make up the number of days remaining in the 180-day wait period. Antibody levels are measured in order to confirm whether or not the animal has developed immunity to rabies. The reason for the wait is to make sure that the animal has not contracted rabies prior to developing immunity to it as a result of immunization, 180 days corresponds to the incubation period for the disease.

Expand All

STEP 6: Health Certificate

Dogs and cats must be inspected by a USDA Accredited Veterinarian and confirmed free of clinical signs of infectious disease including rabies and leptospirosis (for dogs) prior to departure. The traveler needs an Exporter's Declaration and an Export Health Certificate.

- **Health Certificate for dogs and cats to Japan (Form AC):** Form AC contains the information required for both the owner declaration and health certificate. This document can be used to fulfill both requirements. The exporter will need to have this form endorsed by APHIS-VS.

Other Options for Acceptable Health Certificates Include:
Using **Form AC** above fulfills all health certificate requirements for U.S. pet dogs and cats to Japan. However, the exporter may choose to use any of the following other options instead of the Form AC:

- Exporter's declaration (Form A)**:** The traveler needs to prepare the Exporter's Declaration (Form A) with the assistance of their USDA accredited veterinarian. This form needs to be endorsed by APHIS-VS. This form must be accompanied by a Form C.
- Export health certificate (Form C): Form C is completed by the issuing USDA accredited veterinarian. The exporter will need to have this form endorsed by APHIS-VS. This form must be accompanied by a Form A.
- International Health Certificate (APHIS Form 7001) (438.8 KB): Another health certificate option is the APHIS Form 7001 (438.8 KB) which can be obtained from the issuing accredited veterinarian. This form must contain all the information required on Form C, must be accompanied by a Form A, and needs to be endorsed by APHIS-VS.

Military Personnel Options:

- **Active duty military** personnel and their families may use a valid health certificate for dogs and cats only issued by a military veterinarian **without** APHIS endorsement.

- **Retired military** personnel and their families: Japan requires APHIS endorsement of a valid health certificate. APHIS VS may endorse health certificates for pet dogs and cats for military personnel, when they meet the importing requirements of Japan on an APHIS Form 7001 (438.8 KB), Japan's Export health certificate (Form C), MDJ 2209 Form or other suitable health certificate format.

Expand All

STEP 7: Recommended treatments and measures

Japan recommends the following measures for bringing pets into Japan.

Immunization: Japan recommends that the following immunizations be given to dogs and cats that are 91 days old or older 30 days prior to their arrival in Japan (within the vaccine immunization effectiveness period).

a. **Dogs:** distemper, contagious hepatitis (Adenovirus type II acceptable), parvovirus infectious disease trivalent vaccine (parainfluenza, leptospirosis, coronavirus)
b. **Cats:** feline viral rhinotracheitis, feline calicivirus, feline panleukopenia trivalent vaccine

Parasite treatment: Japan recommends the following parasite treatments before departure (no more than 4 days before boarding):

c. **External parasites:** Treat with medicines effective against mites and fleas, and at the time of export have a clinical inspection to confirm that the animal is free from these parasites.
d. **Internal parasites:** administer medicine effective against nematodes and tapeworms.

Visit Japan's AQS Website for more information on taking your dog or cat to Japan

Pet Birds

- Guidance Document for Export of Pet Birds from the United States of America to Japan (74.02 KB)
- International Health Certificate for Export of Pet Birds from the United States of America to Japan

Pet Ferrets

A Health Certificate is required to take ferrets to Japan.

- U.S. Origin Health Certificate for Export of Ferret(s) to Japan

Please visit the Japan MHLW website for additional requirements and more information on taking ferrets to Japan.

Other Pets

Please visit the Japan AQS website for more information on taking other pets to Japan.

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