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Non-U.S. Origin Pet Birds Entering the U.S. from Mexico

Last Modified:

Carefully read ALL requirements on this page.

- It is the pet owner's responsibility to make sure their pet meets U.S. entry requirements. Failure to meet these import requirements will result in problems upon arrival in the United States, and the pet may be refused entry.
- Multiple U.S. agencies regulate pets imported into the United States. It is important that you notify and coordinate with all responsible government agencies.

Import Permit

Please use the [Veterinary Services Permitting Assistant \(VSPA\)](#) to confirm your pet import permit requirements. Click on the Live Animals tab. The VSPA will provide you with a summary of required import documents including permit applications, certificates, informational letters, and more.

Summary

For **non-U.S. origin pet birds entering the United States (U.S.) from Mexico**, the requirements generally include:

- a Veterinary Services (VS) import permit.
- an original health certificate issued or endorsed by the government of Mexico
- upon entry in the U.S., disease testing and a 30 day quarantine
- If applicable, [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service \(FWS\)](#) certifications and permits;

Fees

There are fees associated with all VS services; in general, you can expect to pay a minimum of \$700.00 for these services.

Do you need a permit?

	If your bird is entering at a LAND border port	If your bird is entering at an AIR or SEA port
Import Permit	Entry Prohibited	Required
Veterinary Health Certificate	Entry Prohibited	Required
Quarantine	Entry Prohibited	30-Day Federal Quarantine
Veterinary Inspection upon Entry	Entry Prohibited	Required

[Return of declared pet birds to Mexico refused entry to United States](#) (65.31 KB)

Travel Requirements

To make the travel process easier for you, we have broken the process into steps and have listed the approximate time frame that each step will likely take to complete. Please note that each step below has expandable text that will provide additional detail on the requirements including fees.

STEP 1: Make tentative travel plans

SUGGESTED TIME FRAME: 60-90 days prior to scheduled departure

Your pet bird must have been in your possession for a minimum of 90 days immediately before travel, and must not have been in contact with any other birds or poultry.

All pet birds from Mexico, regardless of whether they have ever been in the U.S., must go to federal quarantine for at least 30 days upon entry in the U.S. These pet birds may also only enter the U.S. at certain designated ports.

You must make arrangements for your pet bird to fly into the U.S. at one of the airports associated with a USDA Animal Import Center.

Designated Airports

Permanently Staffed Airports

Jamaica, New York (JFK)	Miami, Florida (MIA)
718-553-3570	305-876-2200
vspsjfk@aphis.usda.gov	vspsmia@aphis.usda.gov

Los Angeles, California (LAX)
310-955-3311
vspslax@aphis.usda.gov

FOR TRANSITS ONLY

Your bird must travel directly to one of these ports of entry without first stopping at any other U.S. port. Contact VS personnel at the Animal Import Center to make a reservation for your pet bird and to discuss arrangements to transport your pet bird to quarantine upon arrival into the U.S.

You will need to allow plenty of time at the designated port to complete all activities involved in getting your pet bird to federal quarantine. If the designated port is not your final destination and you need to make a connecting flight, please make sure

you have a *minimum* of 4 hours between your flights. The time required may vary by port; you can contact VS personnel at the port to discuss logistics.

Please note: FWS may have additional restrictions related to eligibility, please see STEP 2 for contact information.

STEP 2: Contact U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

SUGGESTED TIME FRAME: 60-90 days prior to scheduled departure

In the U.S., FWS regulates birds protected by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and the Wild Bird Conservation Act of 1992 (WBCA).

There are extensive U.S. entry and exit requirements for birds regulated under these laws, so it is critical that you contact FWS to discuss their processes and fees if your bird is regulated by them. To determine your pet bird is regulated by FWS, visit the FWS [Traveling Abroad with Your Pet Bird](#) website to learn more.

You may also contact them directly at 703-358-2104 or 800-358-2104.

STEP 3: Apply for an import permit

SUGGESTED TIME FRAME: 30 days prior to scheduled departure

All pet birds entering the U.S. at an airport or seaport must have a VS import permit. For all pet birds from Mexico, you will submit the permit application to the VS National Import Export Services (NIES) Staff in Riverdale, Maryland.

You must apply for a VS import permit approximately **30 days prior to departure**. You need to know your route of travel and specify a travel date before applying. The import permit is valid for 30 days from your specified travel date. If your travel plans change and your pet bird will be arriving in the U.S. more than 30 days after the travel date specified on the import permit, you will have to apply for an amended permit or a new permit. Permits can only be amended (for an additional fee) before they expire. Once your permit expires, you will need to submit a new import permit application.

Fees for VS import permits:

[9CFR 130.4](#) “initial permit” – this fee is charged per application so if you have more than one pet bird but they are all traveling with you at the same time, then all of the birds should all be listed on the application and one permit can cover them all.

[9CFR 130.4](#) “amended permit” – this fee is charged ONLY if you need to amend a permit that has already been issued (for example if your travel route or port of entry changes).

Applying for an import permit is done by completing and submitting an Application for Import or Intransit Permit, called the VS Form 17-129. The VS Form 17-129 can be completed and submitted via e-mail, standard mail, or fax **OR** completed and submitted electronically on-line via the ePermits system. Please allow 7-10 business days from the time your import permit application is received for it to be issued.

- Manual submission of the VS Form 17-129 to NIES Riverdale Staff via e-mail, standard mail, or fax
 - Complete the fillable [VS 17-129 General Instructions](#) (73.07 KB))
 - Submit via **one** of the following methods:
 - E-mail: VS.Live.Animals.Import.Permits@aphis.usda.gov
 - Fax: 301-734-4704
 - Mail:
USDA-APHIS-VS-NIES
4700 River Road, Unit 40
Riverdale, MD 20737
- Electronic submission of the VS Form 17-129 via the ePermits System
 - [Online Instructions for the VS 17-129 form in ePermits](#) (556.61 KB)

Permits can be emailed or mailed to the importer via U.S. Postal Service. You should indicate how you would like to receive your permit when you submit the permit application. If you have not received your permit at least 72 hours ahead of scheduled travel, call the office where you submitted the application and ask about the status. Note: If receiving the permit by email, use a color printer to print your document, as you must have one with a blue signature.

STEP 4: Pre-export isolation (Birds arriving from countries the US considers to be affected by HPAI)

SUGGESTED TIME FRAME: 60-90 days prior to scheduled departure

All pet birds arriving from Mexico must undergo a pre-export isolation for **at least 21 days prior to travel**.

The pre-export isolation must:

- Occur for a minimum of 21 days immediately preceding the date of travel to the U.S.
- Be supervised by either an official government veterinarian, or by a veterinarian who has been authorized by the foreign government to supervise the isolation and issue the export health certificate.
 - **NOTE: This isolation can be accomplished in the home so long as it is under the approval of the veterinarian who will issue the health certificate. There can be no other birds in the home, unless those birds are also being shipped, and are listed on the U.S. import permit.**
- Once pre-export isolation has been completed, the pet bird must be transferred directly from the isolation location to the port of embarkation (ex: airport) in a carrier that has been sealed by either the government veterinarian or, if permitted by the foreign government, an authorized veterinarian.
 - The seals must have identifying marks or numbers which are then recorded on the health certificate that is issued or endorsed by the foreign government.
 - The seals must have a locking mechanism to ensure the cage has not been opened during transit to the United States.
 - Any signs of seal tampering or damage could result in refusal entry of your pet bird into the United States.

STEP 5: Obtain health certificate from Mexico

SUGGESTED TIME FRAME:

within 30 days prior to travel (airlines may require a shorter time frame)

All pet birds entering the U.S. from Mexico are required to have a health certificate issued within 30 days of travel by a veterinarian in Mexico. The health certificate must be stamped by the official government veterinarian of Mexico.

Either the model health certificate provided [HERE](#) (297.7 KB), or a health certificate issued by the country of export (with English translation) that meets the U.S. guidelines maybe used in this process.

Pet birds returning to the United States (i.e. U.S. origin) have different import requirements than those birds of non-U.S. origin. The health certificate specific for this category of pet bird is provided [HERE](#) (206.48 KB)

Additionally, you should carefully review your VS import permit to make sure there are no other requirements or certification statements listed. If you see requirements on your import permit that are different from what is listed above, please check with the office that issued your permit to be sure you understand all the requirements.

Note: It is important to check with the veterinary authorities of Mexico make sure they do not have additional export requirements (some countries require testing for birds to leave the country, even though it is not required by the U.S. when entering). The veterinarian issuing the health certificate should be your contact for any local government requirements.

STEP 6: Consult airline carrier

SUGGESTED TIME FRAME: when flight is scheduled

You will need to discuss with your airline carrier any specific requirements they have related to your pet bird travel.

Airlines may have different requirements for when the health certificate must be issued. They may also require that the pet birds travel as cargo, which can impact where your inspection occurs on arrival. The airline can also provide information on their requirements for carriers/cages, feed/water, and documentation.

STEP 7: Contact Veterinary Services port office to discuss and finalize arrival.

SUGGESTED TIME FRAME: minimum of 72 hours prior to arrival, preferably as soon as flight is scheduled

You must contact the VS port office at least 72 hours prior to arrival to alert port personnel of your arrival and discuss arrival plans.

Your VS import permit will list contact information for the first port of arrival. You should call or email the port as soon as possible to make arrangements for when you arrive. The port personnel can provide you more information about the specific process at that airport and what you should expect on arrival. Make sure to tell the port personnel whether your bird is traveling in the cabin with you, as accompanied baggage, or as unaccompanied cargo (manifest cargo), since that will alter where the vs personnel will meet you to take your pet bird. The port personnel will review your import permit and discuss any additional requirements that might be listed, and can discuss fees and payment options.

Based on your earlier contact with FWS (STEP 2), you should know whether your pet bird is subject to any additional FWS requirements. You will need to coordinate with port FWS personnel to arrange for any inspection or document review that might be needed.

For more information on FWS requirements, please visit the FWS [Traveling Abroad with Your Pet Bird](#) website to learn more.

You may also contact them directly at 703-358-2104 or 800-358-2104.

STEP 8: Departing for the U.S.

SUGGESTED TIME FRAME: variable, to be done day of departure

Make sure to send all the required documentation with your pet bird.

You will need to have the following items:

- The original health certificate issued in Mexico
- The original VS import permit
- Original CITES documents (if your pet bird is regulated by FWS)
 - Contact FWS with any questions about CITES documents.

All documentation should accompany the pet bird during travel.

STEP 9: Arrive in U.S. and declare your bird to U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP)

SUGGESTED TIME FRAME: on arrival, allow 4 or more hours

You will need to clear your pet bird with Customs and Border Protection (CBP) when you arrive in the U.S.

The [CBP One™ mobile application](#) is available at select U.S. ports of entry to expedite your pet bird's CBP agriculture inspection. You may request an inspection, upload required documentation, and view the status and details of your inspection prior to arrival.

If your bird is flying with you and is not manifested as cargo (i.e. you do not have an airway bill), you will need to declare your bird to CBP when you clear customs. Typically you will then be directed to a secondary CBP agriculture inspection, which is most likely where the VS port personnel (and FWS inspector if required) will meet you.

If your bird is flying as cargo, you will have to talk to the airline cargo company to find out where your bird will be transported after landing, where to obtain your documentation, and what the procedures are for clearing your bird through customs. If you are on the same flight, you may have to travel to the cargo facility warehouse to meet the port personnel (and FWS inspector if required) after you clear customs and passport control. You may need to take your bird's paperwork to another location to clear your bird through customs.

STEP 10: Meet port personnel and enter into quarantine

SUGGESTED TIME FRAME: on arrival

For **all pet birds** traveling to the U.S. from Mexico, VS port personnel will meet you to take your bird to a federal quarantine facility at an Animal Import Center (AIC). All pet birds traveling from Mexico must complete a 30-day federal quarantine.

You are required to provide a notice of arrival to VS port personnel at least 72 hours prior to arriving at the U.S. port. Once your bird arrives, it must clear U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) inspection. If CBP port personnel notice a health concern, or there is a problem with your paperwork, CBP will notify the VS port veterinarian who will discuss U.S. entry options with you at that time. Otherwise, once the bird clears U.S. customs entry, VS port personnel will meet your bird at the port location discussed during your notice of arrival.

VS port personnel will oversee the transport of your pet bird to the Animal Import Center (AIC) to start the 30-day quarantine period. Transport arrangements vary by port of entry and should be discussed with the AIC staff prior to arrival in the United States. Importers/bird owners cannot visit pets while the birds are in quarantine.

Fees for federal quarantine

[9CFR 130.10](#) "User fees for pet birds (b)" – daily user fees vary depending on the number of birds in an isolate (as determined by the APHIS personnel at the AIC). Fees include standard care, feed, and handling per day during the quarantine period.

Fees for testing:

[9CFR 130.15](#) "Virus isolation" – this fee is charged per "lot" and samples from up to 5 pet birds may be combined. This fee is charged twice – once for the initial cloacal swab test upon arrival at the AIC, and again for the second set of samples are collected during quarantine. These fees are charged directly by the National

Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) after the samples are received, therefore you must provide a separate form of payment that is sent directly to NVSL (check, money order, credit card, or APHIS user fee account are acceptable).

Overtime charges:

[9CFR 97.1](#) “Overtime work at laboratories, border ports, ocean ports, and airports” – see the first chart. If your flight arrives before or after normal port duty hours (these will vary from port to port but are typically 8:00AM-4:30PM), additional overtime fees apply. These fees vary depending on the port location and the specific times of service. Contact the port of arrival to get a cost estimate.

Compliance assistance charges:

[9CFR 130.4](#) “Import compliance assistance – simple or complicated” – this fee is charged once per lot. You may be required to pay an import compliance assistance fee if there are any discrepancies in your paperwork.

Note: Non-compliance could result in refusal entry of your pet bird into the United States.

STEP 11: Second sample collection

SUGGESTED TIME FRAME: 7-14 days after arrival

All pet birds are required to be sampled while in quarantine for avian influenza and Newcastle disease. The sample is collected upon quarantine arrival or before day 7 at the latest, at the quarantine facility.

VS personnel at the federal quarantine facility will collect samples from your bird. You will be responsible for paying the laboratory testing fee.

STEP 12: Release from quarantine

SUGGESTED TIME FRAME: 30 days after arrival

All pet birds are eligible for release from quarantine 30 days after arrival, assuming the birds are healthy and both sets of samples collected by VS tested negative. Your bird is not officially released from quarantine until you are notified by VS. Once your bird has been in quarantine for 30 days, and has negative test results, it can be released from quarantine. You will need to make arrangements with the quarantine facility to pick up your bird after the 30 days are up. These arrangements should be made prior to the end of the quarantine to avoid extra charges.

U.S. State and Territory Requirements

Domestic movement requirements are set by the receiving State or Territory.

Visit the [National Association of State Departments of Agriculture](#) to find your destination's agriculture department and check its website for requirements.

For questions or clarification on any of the requirements, contact the [State or Territorial veterinarian's office](#).

Airline Requirements

Check with your airline to determine whether they have any additional requirements.

Need Help?

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

Live Animal Import and Export

Email: laie@usda.gov

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

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