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Frequently Asked Questions About Pet Travel for Accredited Veterinarians

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Does one health certificate work in all countries?

No, there is not one standard health certificate. Each country establishes its requirements based on the type of animal traveling. Check your client's destination country for the most current requirements for entry with a pet.

Do I also need to issue an APHIS Form 7001 in addition to the country-specific health certificate?

If a country-specific health certificate is available on the APHIS pet travel web pages, that is the only health certificate the pet needs to **enter the destination country** and the only health certificate that APHIS can endorse.

Airlines sometimes have requirements separate from those of the destination country **for the pet to board the plane,** so you or your client should contact the

airline to determine their needs. If the airline requirements differ from the destination country, you may issue the airline's health certificate. Please remind your client that APHIS only endorses the country-specific export health certificate. If the airline does not require specific paperwork, you may use the APHIS Form 7001 (438.8 KB) for the pet to board the plane.

What is the Veterinary Export Health Certification System (VEHCS)?

VEHCS is APHIS' online, secure electronic system for the creation; issuance (complete, sign, date); submission; and endorsement of hard copy 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. An AV's support staff and exporters may prepare health certificates in VEHCS for the AV to issue and electronically sign. Once signed, the health certificate and supporting documentation for the submission are submitted electronically by the AV via VEHCS to APHIS for review and endorsement.

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 hard copy health certificate for endorsement.

For more information, visit VEHCS Help.

How long does it take before a pet can travel to a foreign country?

Get started as soon as possible! The process could take a few weeks to many months, depending on the destination country's requirements. Start working with your client as soon as they've advised their pet will travel to another country.

Does APHIS need to examine the pet when the health certificate is endorsed (stamped)?

With few exceptions, APHIS does not inspect pets prior to travel. To endorse the health certificate, APHIS will need the health certificate you completed, signed, and dated; any required supporting documents; and payment for the endorsement fee. For more information, visit Pet Travel Guidance for Pets Traveling to Another Country From the United States.

The pet will travel to multiple countries or travel through various countries before arriving at the destination. What does the pet need for each of those countries?

The pet will need a health certificate for the first country it will be traveling to and clearing customs after it leaves the United States. The requirements the pet will have to meet for travel to additional countries will depend on the mode of transportation (for example, a car or ship) and how long the pet will spend in each country. The pet owner is responsible for ensuring the pet is accepted at each border the pet will cross.

For help with pet travel to multiple foreign counties, contact your local APHIS Veterinary Export Trade Services Endorsement Office.

I cannot find the destination country or the pet species on the pet travel web pages. What do I do?

If the destination country or the requirements for the pet are not listed on the APHIS pet travel web pages, the country's government has not informed APHIS about the conditions for the pet's travel. Although there are countries with unknown requirements or countries with requirements not provided for that type of pet, it does not mean the destination country does not have requirements the pet must

meet. It is your client's responsibility to obtain the import regulations. We recommend your client contact a government official of the destination country for more information. For example, an official at the destination country's embassy or consulate in the United States; where the pet will cross customs to enter the destination country (for example, airport); or their ministry of agriculture. Any information the foreign official gives, please obtain it in writing (in English) and share it with those involved in the pet's travel. If your client has difficulty reaching a government official of the destination country, the U.S. Department of State may help.

In some cases, countries require issuing an import permit before the pet's travel. It is essential that you thoroughly read and understand the import permit as it may provide specific instructions or requirements for the pet.

What if the pet doesn't meet any of the requirements of the destination country?

The pet must meet the import requirements before traveling. You cannot issue the health certificate until the pet meets the requirements. If the pet cannot meet the entry requirements, you or your client can attempt to get a waiver for the requirements by reaching out to the ministry of agriculture in the destination country. If the government official allows the pet to still enter the country without meeting all requirements, you must obtain written permission (in English) and share it with those involved in your pet's travel. Neither you nor APHIS can waive the requirements of another country.

If you cannot reach an official in the destination country, please get in touch with your APHIS endorsement office as they may recommend possible solutions.

What do I need to send a pet from one U.S. State or Territory to another U.S. State or Territory (travel within the United States)?

APHIS does not set requirements or endorse health certificates for the movement of pets across State or Territorial lines. Each State or Territory, including Hawaii, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, establishes their requirements. Contact the State animal health official in the pet's destination State or Territory if you have questions or need clarification on any of the requirements.

There is not enough space to record other vaccinations, tests, or treatments the pet has received on the health certificate. Where should I include this information?

The only information recorded on the health certificate should be the information required by the destination country. **Do not provide information beyond what is needed.** For example, if the destination country only requires rabies vaccination for a pet dog, do not provide the dog's DHPP vaccination. If there's not a section on the health certificate allocated for specific vaccine information to be entered, do not include it.

What do I do when the requirements do not specify which products or active ingredients to use for internal or external parasite treatment?

Some countries specify which product or active ingredient to use for internal or external parasite treatment. If a specific product or active ingredient is not required, you should apply a product licensed and approved in the United States to treat the target parasite(s). The specific treatment should only be documented on the health certificate when required by the destination country.

Note: *For exports, collar-type products intended to treat external parasites are not acceptable because the collar is removable.*

The destination country requires treatment for internal parasites. Can I test for them instead of treating the pet?

What about vice versa?

Testing and treatment requirements are not interchangeable. If a destination country requires a pet to be tested, a laboratory test must be performed; if a treatment is required, then a treatment must be administered.

Some countries specify which product or active ingredient must be used, so be sure to follow any requirements for which treatment to administer. If a specific product or active ingredient is not required, the pet must be treated with a pharmaceutical product licensed for use in the United States and labeled as effective against that specific parasite.

The destination country requires that the testing be performed by an approved laboratory. What is an approved laboratory?

Some destination countries require tests be performed at specific or approved laboratories (for example, rabies titer testing can only be performed by specific labs). If a specific or approved laboratory is required, but the pet travel web pages do not identify which laboratory to use, then general guidelines for an “approved” laboratory are as follows:

- Official APHIS-approved laboratory (for example, the National Veterinary Services Laboratories, Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory)
- Federal, State, and university laboratories
- Private accredited laboratory documenting their scope of accreditation for the required testing

If you have questions about whether a particular laboratory is acceptable to perform testing for international pet travel, contact your APHIS endorsement office.

Where do I find import requirements for non-privately owned companion animals intended for research or resale?

For destination countries who officially notified APHIS of their requirements, the import regulations for non-privately owned companion animals intended for research or resale are located under "Country Requirements" at Live Animal Exports (Moving Animals to Another Country).

I have more questions. Where can I get more information or help with this process?

If you need more help on the requirements for international pet travel, contact your APHIS endorsement office.

If you need technical help with using VEHCS:

- Contact eAuthentication Support for help with user ID and password (logging in) by visiting the eAuth Help Desk page
- Contact the VEHCS Help Desk for technical glitches and organization administration issues by emailing pcithelpdesk@usda.gov.

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