

Animal Care Tech Note

Minimum Age Requirements for Transporting Dogs and Cats in Commerce



The Animal Welfare Act (AWA) sets standards of care and treatment for animals bred for commercial sale, used in research, exhibited to the public, or transported in commerce. One of these standards is that dogs and cats must be a certain age before they are transported in commerce. If you own or operate an AWA-regulated business, you need to know about the age requirement and how it applies to your animals. Below is a summary of the requirement and related information to help you comply with the law.

What Is the Age Requirement?

Dogs and cats must be at least 8 weeks old and weaned before you, a commercial carrier, or an intermediate handler can transport them for commercial purposes.

Exception: This requirement does **not** apply if you are transporting dogs or cats to a registered research facility.

For More Information

To view the full text of the AWA and the Animal Welfare Regulations, refer to the *United States Code*, Title 7, Chapter 54, Sections 2131–2159 and the *Code of Federal Regulations*, Title 9, Chapter 1, Subchapter A, Parts 1–4.

If you have questions, contact the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal Care staff at (970) 494-7478 or animalcare@usda.gov.

Age Chart

Use the chart on the back of this page to determine whether the dogs or cats you want to transport are old enough:

1. Find the month the animal was born on at the top of the chart.
2. Find the day of the month the animal was born on the left side of the chart.
3. Move down from the month and across from the day until the column and row intersect. This date is when the dog or cat is 8 weeks old, and you can transport them legally under the AWA.

Example: A cat or dog born on August 18 can be transported in commerce on or after October 13.

What if the animal was born in a leap year?

During a leap year, you can transport animals born from January 4 to February 28 one day earlier than indicated in the chart on the back of this page. Animals born on February 29 can be transported on April 25.

DAY	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
1	26-Feb	29-Mar	26-Apr	27-May	26-Jun	27-Jul	26-Aug	26-Sep	27-Oct	26-Nov	27-Dec	26-Jan
2	27-Feb	30-Mar	27-Apr	28-May	27-Jun	28-Jul	27-Aug	27-Sep	28-Oct	27-Nov	28-Dec	27-Jan
3	28-Feb	31-Mar	28-Apr	29-May	28-Jun	29-Jul	28-Aug	28-Sep	29-Oct	28-Nov	29-Dec	28-Jan
4	1-Mar	1-Apr	29-Apr	30-May	29-Jun	30-Jul	29-Aug	29-Sep	30-Oct	29-Nov	30-Dec	29-Jan
5	2-Mar	2-Apr	30-Apr	31-May	30-Jun	31-Jul	30-Aug	30-Sep	31-Oct	30-Nov	31-Dec	30-Jan
6	3-Mar	3-Apr	1-May	1-Jun	1-Jul	1-Aug	31-Aug	1-Oct	1-Nov	1-Dec	1-Jan	31-Jan
7	4-Mar	4-Apr	2-May	2-Jun	2-Jul	2-Aug	1-Sep	2-Oct	2-Nov	2-Dec	2-Jan	1-Feb
8	5-Mar	5-Apr	3-May	3-Jun	3-Jul	3-Aug	2-Sep	3-Oct	3-Nov	3-Dec	3-Jan	2-Feb
9	6-Mar	6-Apr	4-May	4-Jun	4-Jul	4-Aug	3-Sep	4-Oct	4-Nov	4-Dec	4-Jan	3-Feb
10	7-Mar	7-Apr	5-May	5-Jun	5-Jul	5-Aug	4-Sep	5-Oct	5-Nov	5-Dec	5-Jan	4-Feb
11	8-Mar	8-Apr	6-May	6-Jun	6-Jul	6-Aug	5-Sep	6-Oct	6-Nov	6-Dec	6-Jan	5-Feb
12	9-Mar	9-Apr	7-May	7-Jun	7-Jul	7-Aug	6-Sep	7-Oct	7-Nov	7-Dec	7-Jan	6-Feb
13	10-Mar	10-Apr	8-May	8-Jun	8-Jul	8-Aug	7-Sep	8-Oct	8-Nov	8-Dec	8-Jan	7-Feb
14	11-Mar	11-Apr	9-May	9-Jun	9-Jul	9-Aug	8-Sep	9-Oct	9-Nov	9-Dec	9-Jan	8-Feb
15	12-Mar	12-Apr	10-May	10-Jun	10-Jul	10-Aug	9-Sep	10-Oct	10-Nov	10-Dec	10-Jan	9-Feb
16	13-Mar	13-Apr	11-May	11-Jun	11-Jul	11-Aug	10-Sep	11-Oct	11-Nov	11-Dec	11-Jan	10-Feb
17	14-Mar	14-Apr	12-May	12-Jun	12-Jul	12-Aug	11-Sep	12-Oct	12-Nov	12-Dec	12-Jan	11-Feb
18	15-Mar	15-Apr	13-May	13-Jun	13-Jul	13-Aug	12-Sep	13-Oct	13-Nov	13-Dec	13-Jan	12-Feb
19	16-Mar	16-Apr	14-May	14-Jun	14-Jul	14-Aug	13-Sep	14-Oct	14-Nov	14-Dec	14-Jan	13-Feb
20	17-Mar	17-Apr	15-May	15-Jun	15-Jul	15-Aug	14-Sep	15-Oct	15-Nov	15-Dec	15-Jan	14-Feb
21	18-Mar	18-Apr	16-May	16-Jun	16-Jul	16-Aug	15-Sep	16-Oct	16-Nov	16-Dec	16-Jan	15-Feb
22	19-Mar	19-Apr	17-May	17-Jun	17-Jul	17-Aug	16-Sep	17-Oct	17-Nov	17-Dec	17-Jan	16-Feb
23	20-Mar	20-Apr	18-May	18-Jun	18-Jul	18-Aug	17-Sep	18-Oct	18-Nov	18-Dec	18-Jan	17-Feb
24	21-Mar	21-Apr	19-May	19-Jun	19-Jul	19-Aug	18-Sep	19-Oct	19-Nov	19-Dec	19-Jan	18-Feb
25	22-Mar	22-Apr	20-May	20-Jun	20-Jul	20-Aug	19-Sep	20-Oct	20-Nov	20-Dec	20-Jan	19-Feb
26	23-Mar	23-Apr	21-May	21-Jun	21-Jul	21-Aug	20-Sep	21-Oct	21-Nov	21-Dec	21-Jan	20-Feb
27	24-Mar	24-Apr	22-May	22-Jun	22-Jul	22-Aug	21-Sep	22-Oct	22-Nov	22-Dec	22-Jan	21-Feb
28	25-Mar	25-Apr	23-May	23-Jun	23-Jul	23-Aug	22-Sep	23-Oct	23-Nov	23-Dec	23-Jan	22-Feb
29	26-Mar	25-Apr	24-May	24-Jun	24-Jul	24-Aug	23-Sep	24-Oct	24-Nov	24-Dec	24-Jan	23-Feb
30	27-Mar	-	25-May	25-Jun	25-Jul	25-Aug	24-Sep	25-Oct	25-Nov	25-Dec	25-Jan	24-Feb
31	28-Mar	-	26-May	-	26-Jul	-	25-Sep	26-Oct	-	26-Dec	-	25-Feb