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# Pet Travel Guidance for Pets

## Traveling to Another Country from the United States

Last Modified:

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**Pet Travel to a foreign country can be complex and time-consuming.** Before you start the process, you will need to know the following: the type of animal traveling, the destination country, the date of departure from the United States, and whether or not the pet will be traveling alone, as cargo, or with a person in the cabin of the plane.

**Determine whether your animal qualifies as a pet.** A pet is a privately-owned companion animal not intended for research or resale and includes the following animal groups only:

Dogs, Cats, Ferrets, Rabbits, Rodents, Hedgehog/Tenrecs, Reptiles, Amphibians, and Pet Birds (non-poultry).

Birds considered poultry include chickens, doves, ducks, geese, grouse, guinea fowl, partridges, pea fowl, pheasants, pigeons, quail, swans, and turkeys).

If your animal is not one of the types listed above or considered poultry, it does not qualify as a pet. View the [requirements for exporting non-pet animals](#).

# What are the requirements to take my pet from the United States to another country?

Work with the pet's veterinarian to determine the destination country's requirements, including any necessary vaccinations, tests, or treatments. We recommend creating a schedule to make sure all requirements are met within the specified timeframe.

Every country has its own set of health requirements for pets that may require your pet to get a microchip, specific vaccinations, or undergo certain tests. The [requirements pages](#) provide essential information for civilians, military service members, brokers, pet shipping companies, and accredited veterinarians.

Use the Worksheet list to capture the information needed to plan for the pet's trip and complete the process for obtaining a health certificate.

- [Pet Owner Worksheet for Preparing Visit with Accredited Veterinarian to Complete Health Certificate](#) (103.1 KB)

## What is a USDA Accredited Veterinarian?

A USDA Accredited Veterinarian has completed formal training from the National Veterinary Accreditation Program (NVAP) in the state(s) they are licensed to practice medicine in. Accreditation is state-specific and is voluntary (not all veterinarians are accredited).

### [How do I find a USDA Accredited Veterinarian to complete my animal's health certificate?](#)

**Use the drop-down menu below to select your destination country and view their requirements.** Country requirements can change frequently. Be sure to verify your destination's requirements every time you plan to travel with your pet.

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# How do I Get My Pet's Health Certificate Endorsed by USDA?

If the destination country requires a USDA-endorsed (countersigned and embossed/stamped) health certificate, work with your accredited veterinarian to complete, sign, and date the health certificate. The accredited veterinarian should submit the certificate to the USDA Endorsement Office in the Veterinary Export Health Certification System (VEHCS) on your behalf or provide the paperwork to you to submit to the USDA Endorsement Office.

## Important

Most health certificates become valid the day the accredited veterinarian signs it, so make sure yours is issued within your [destination country's](#) required timeframe. The original endorsed hard copy health certificate must accompany your pet to the destination country.

### Option 1: Use VEHCS to submit the Health Certificate

([Accredited Veterinarians can access VEHCS on your behalf](#)).

Choose Option 1 or Option 2, not both.

### Option 2: Ship the Paperwork to USDA

Choose Option 1 or Option 2, not both.

*Your submission must include:*

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- International health certificate
  - Vaccination certificates (if vaccination required by the destination country)
  - Test results for laboratory tests (if required by the destination country)
  - Import permit (if required by the destination country)
  - Payment (See below for fees and how to submit payment)
  - Pre-paid express shipping label if USDA APHIS's digital endorsement is not accepted by the destination country (See below for more information)
- The ORIGINAL International health certificate
  - Vaccination certificates (if vaccination required by the destination country)
  - Test results for laboratory tests (if required by the destination country)
  - Import permit (if required by the destination country)
  - Payment (See below for fees and how to submit payment)
  - Pre-paid express shipping label (See below for more information)
    - Include [The Pet Owners Checklist for Shipping Health Certificate\(s\) to a USDA Endorsement Office](#) to be sure you have all required paperwork in your shipping package

**Give adequate time and proper planning for the endorsement of your health certificate.** Incomplete submissions or incorrect information on health certificates will cause endorsement delays until the USDA Accredited Veterinarian or the owner/exporter of the animal can correct the problem. Endorsement of a correctly completed health certificate can take upwards of 3 business days.

## Endorsement Fees and Payment Options

There are fees for USDA to endorse your health certificate. Learn more about the [Cost to Endorse Your Pet's Health Certificate](#) (USDA fees).

**Payment options using the Veterinary Export Health Certification System (VEHCS):** For health certificates submitted in VEHCS, your USDA Accredited Veterinarian must ensure that payment is provided by either depositing money in the VEHCS account or by providing a USDA APHIS User Fee Credit Account in the submission.

**Payment options when shipping the health certificate to USDA:** For health certificates submitted by express shipping, payment may be made by using the following acceptable methods of payments:

- USDA APHIS User Fee Credit Account
- Check or Money Order (made payable to USDA)
- Credit or Debit Card: For payment of health certificates submitted by overnight shipping, please use the [credit card information sheet](#) (90 KB) to provide your credit or debit card information.

If you have questions about the cost of the endorsement of a health certificate, payment method, or if the pet is traveling to multiple countries, please contact your [USDA Endorsement Office](#).

## Payment Exemption for Service Animals

There is no endorsement fee for service animals (dogs) belonging to individuals with disabilities as defined by the [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#). Although USDA APHIS recognizes the importance of all animals in their owners' lives, health certificate endorsement fees apply to emotional support animals and any other animal not officially covered by the ADA.

## Shipping the health certificate to USDA for Endorsement

If your accredited veterinarian provides the signed health certificate to you to send to the [USDA Endorsement Office](#), we strongly recommend sending the paperwork via overnight express service, such as FedEx or UPS, to minimize delays.

### Please include the following in your package:

1. **A self-addressed pre-paid express return shipping label** (*see instructions below for preparing the shipping label*). We will use the label to return your endorsed health certificate to you.

2. Be sure you include **all original documents** required by your destination country:
  - a. **International Health Certificate**
  - b. **Vaccination certificates** (if vaccinations are required by the destination country)
  - c. **Test results for laboratory tests** (if tests are required by the destination country)
  - d. **Import Permit** (if a permit is required by the destination country)
3. The [Pet Owners Checklist for Shipping Health Certificate\(s\) to a USDA Endorsement Office](#) (198.45 KB) so that we can contact you or your accredited veterinarian if we find a problem with your pet's health certificate. If you provide a phone number, make sure you're able to receive voicemails.
4. The [Credit Card Information Sheet](#) (90 KB), if you are paying the endorsement fee by credit card.

## Preparing the Return Shipping Label

### Important Information about the pre-paid express return shipping label.

- Put **YOUR name and address in both the TO and FROM** section of the return label. The USDA address **should not appear anywhere** on your return label.
  - If you need to include an envelope size and weight on the label, use 12.5 x 9.5 inches and 1 pound in weight.
  - Your USDA Endorsement has shipping envelopes to return your paperwork.
- The return label **must be pre-paid**. We do not accept shipping labels with credit card numbers.
- Use a shipping service that provides a **tracking number**. It is your responsibility to keep a record of the tracking information.
- **UPS Ground, FedEx Ground, or FedEx Home service do not pick up from our offices**. Choosing this type of shipping service label may delay your package's return to you by one business day.
- **If you do not include a return label in your package**, and we are unable to reach you to arrange for another method of return delivery, we will send your package to you via United States Postal Service First Class Mail.

# When can I travel with my Pet?

Once the pet's health certificate has been issued by a USDA Accredited Veterinarian and endorsed by USDA (when required), finish any outstanding requirements.

- Some countries allow treatments to be completed after endorsement.
- For example, tapeworm treatment for dogs traveling to Finland, Ireland, Norway, UK and Malta.
- Some countries require consulate approval or pre-notification.
- Airlines may have different or additional requirements. Check with your airline to determine what requirements they may have, if any.
- Be sure all the required paperwork is completed correctly, and the health certificate(s) are endorsed (if needed). **The original signed or endorsed paperwork must accompany your pet during travel. *Electronic versions of documents will not be accepted by officials of the destination country.***

**You are now ready to travel with your pet!**

# How do I return to the United States with my Pet?

Visit the USDA APHIS Pet Travel Website's [Bring Your Pet into the U.S. From a Foreign Country](#) to obtain *detailed and important* information for pets entering the U.S.

## Resources

- [Pet Owner Worksheet for Obtaining an International Health Certificate for Pets](#) (103.1 KB): Use the list to capture the information needed to plan for the pet's trip and complete the process for obtaining a health certificate.
- [Pet Owners Checklist for Shipping Health Certificate\(s\) to a USDA Endorsement Office](#)
- [Cost to Endorse Your Pet's Health Certificate](#)
- [Find an Accredited Veterinarian](#)
- [USDA Endorsement Offices](#)

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