

Bringing an Animal into the United States

Importation of dogs

A general certificate of health is not required by CDC for entry of pet dogs into the United States, although some airlines or states may require them. However, pet dogs are subject to inspection at ports of entry and may be denied entry into the United States if they have evidence of an infectious disease that can be transmitted to humans. If a dog appears to be ill, further examination by a licensed veterinarian at the owner's expense might be required at the port of entry.

Proof of Rabies Vaccination: Dogs must have a certificate showing they have been vaccinated against rabies at least 30 days prior to entry into the United States. These requirements apply equally to service animals such as Seeing Eye dogs.

Importation of Unvaccinated Dogs: Dogs not accompanied by proof of rabies vaccination, including those that are too young to be vaccinated (i.e. less than 3 months of age), may be admitted if the importer completes a confinement agreement (see below) and confines the animal until it is considered adequately vaccinated against rabies (the vaccine is not considered effective until 30 days after the date of vaccination). Spanish, French, and Russian translations of form CDC 75.37 are available, but must be completed in English.

Puppies that are too young to be vaccinated (i.e. less than 3 months of age) must be kept in confinement until they are old enough to be vaccinated, and then confined for at least 30 days after the date of vaccination.

Unvaccinated dogs must be vaccinated within 4 days of arrival at their final U.S. destination and within 10 days of entry into the United States, and must be kept in confinement for at least 30 days after the date of vaccination.

Dogs may not be sold or transferred to other owners during this period of confinement, and the person that signs the confinement agreement is responsible for ensuring the conditions of the agreement are met.

Importers must provide a contact address where the dog will be kept during the confinement period. If the importer will be housing the dog at several addresses or traveling with the animal, all points of contact must be provided.

Importation of Dogs from Rabies-free Countries: Unvaccinated dogs may be imported without a requirement for proof of rabies vaccination if they have been located for a minimum of 6 months or more in countries that are free of rabies.

Following importation, all dogs are subject to state and local vaccination or health certificate requirements. All pet dogs arriving in the state of Hawaii and the territory of Guam, even from the U.S. mainland, are subject to locally imposed quarantine requirements. Additional information can be found in the Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control.

Importation of Dogs for Commercial/Breeding purposes: There are no separate CDC regulations for dogs to be used for commercial purposes, rather than as pets. The

rules for bringing domestic dogs into the United States are covered under regulation 42CFR71.51. When importing puppies, the importer is responsible for maintaining quarantine according to the vaccination and confinement agreement signed

Importation of cats

A general certificate of health is not required by CDC for entry of pet cats into the United States, although some airlines or states may require them. However, pet cats are subject to inspection at ports of entry and may be denied entry into the United States if they have evidence of an infectious disease that can be transmitted to humans. If a cat appears to be ill, further examination by a licensed veterinarian at the owner's expense might be required at the port of entry.

Cats are not required to have proof of rabies vaccination for importation into the United States. However, some states require vaccination of cats for rabies, so it is a good idea to check with state and local health authorities at your final destination.

All pet cats arriving in the state of Hawaii and the territory of Guam, even from the U.S. mainland, are subject to locally imposed quarantine requirements.