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Pet Travel From the United States to the United Kingdom/Great Britain (England, Scotland, Wales, Channel Islands and Isle of Man)

Last Modified:

Electronic Signature ACCEPTED; Original Ink Endorsement REQUIRED

For Accredited Veterinarians: Electronic signature ACCEPTED

For APHIS VMO: Original ink endorsement REQUIRED

USDA-accredited veterinarians can electronically issue health certificates and use VEHCS (Veterinary Export Health Certification System) to submit them to USDA for endorsement.

USDA must ink-sign and emboss the health certificate.

What This Means for You

Accredited Veterinarians: Use the links below to access or get help with VEHCS. Learn more about how to issue export health certificates.

Animal Owners/Shippers: You can arrange to have your health certificate returned by mail (a prepaid, preaddressed return label must be provided during certificate submission). The endorsed health certificate—ink-signed and embossed—must accompany the animal(s) during shipment or travel.

VEHCS Help | VEHCS Guide (7.6 MB) | VEHCS Login

Electronic Signature and Digital Endorsement ACCEPTED

For Accredited Veterinarians: Electronic signature ACCEPTED

For APHIS VMO: Digital endorsement ACCEPTED

USDA-accredited veterinarians can electronically issue health certificates and use VEHCS (Veterinary Export Health Certification System) to submit them to USDA for digital endorsement.

USDA can digitally endorse the health certificate and return it electronically.

What This Means for You

Accredited Veterinarians: Use the links below to access or get help with VEHCS. Learn more about how to issue export health certificates.

Animal Owners/Shippers: The endorsed health certificate can be printed out directly from VEHCS and does **not** have to be mailed back to you. The printed, endorsed health certificate must accompany the animal(s) during shipment or travel.

VEHCS Help | VEHCS Guide (7.6 MB) | VEHCS Login

Electronic Signature ACCEPTED; Digital Endorsement for SOME COMMODITIES ONLY

For Accredited Veterinarians: Electronic signature ACCEPTED

For APHIS VMO: Digital endorsement for SOME COMMODITIES ONLY

USDA-accredited veterinarians can electronically issue health certificates and use VEHCS (Veterinary Export Health Certification System) to submit them to USDA for endorsement.

Digital endorsement varies by species—see requirements on this page for details. The health certificate either bears the original ink signature and embossed seal ***or*** digital signature/seal.

What This Means for You

Accredited Veterinarians: Use the links below to access or get help with VEHCS. Learn more about how to issue export health certificates.

Animal Owners/Shippers: Digitally endorsed health certificates can be printed out directly from VEHCS. For non-digitally endorsed health certificates, you can arrange to have your health certificate returned by mail (a prepaid, preaddressed return label must be provided during certificate submission). A paper version of the endorsed health certificate must accompany the animal(s) during shipment or travel.

VEHCS Help | VEHCS Guide (7.6 MB) | VEHCS Login

Travel Requirements Based on Pet Type

Carefully read ALL of the requirements related to your pet on this page.

- This page provides the most recent entry requirements and can change without notice.

- It is the responsibility of the veterinarian to make sure the pet has met all health requirements of the destination country before issuing a health certificate.
- Failure to meet the requirements may result in problems gaining certificate endorsement or difficulties upon arrival in the destination country.
- Health certificates must be legible, accurate, and complete.

Expand All

Dogs, Cats and Ferrets

In the UK, it's against the law to own certain types of dog. Check banned dog breeds .

Important information regarding guide and assistance dogs traveling to the UK.

Expand All

STEP 1: Identification with microchip

- **Dogs, cats, and ferrets** must be individually identified by an ISO compliant (11784 and 11785) microchip.
  - ISO compliant microchips are 15 digits long. The pet's microchip ISO compatibility can be confirmed with the microchip manufacturer.
- If the pet does **not have** an ISO compliant microchip:
  - The pet will need to travel with a microchip reader that can read the microchip OR contact the Veterinary Officials at the intended port of arrival to verify that they have a reader capable of reading the pet's microchip.
    OR
  - If a non-ISO compatible microchip was previously implanted and can still be read, then the Veterinarian can implant an ISO-compatible microchip in addition to the non-ISO one the pet currently has.

- The number and the date of implantation of both microchips must be documented on the UK Health Certificate.

Important Health Certificate Note

When recording the "**Date of implantation and/or reading [dd/mm/yyyy]**" of the microchip/transponder on the health certificate, **IT MUST BE ON OR BEFORE THE DATE OF THE PRIMARY RABIES VACCINATION**.

STEP 2: Rabies Vaccination Requirements

Rabies Vaccine Requirements as per EU 576/2013 Annex III

Pets arriving in the UK that do not meet the UK's requirements may be refused entry or quarantined upon arrival at the owner's expense.

- Anti-rabies vaccines must be administered by an authorized veterinarian.
- **Vaccine Manufacturer Recommended Immunity Period**- All pets must wait at least 21 days, or the time designated by the rabies vaccine manufacturer prior to traveling to the port of entry. Some vaccine manufacturers recommend waiting 30 days for the pet to gain immunity. All owners or pet coordinators must ask the veterinarian to confirm the manufacturer's recommended timeframe and add it to the rabies certification to determine the appropriate rabies vaccine validity period.
    - After a primary rabies vaccination, the pet must wait at least 21 days to be eligible to enter the UK. The day of vaccination is day 0 (zero). The 21-day countdown starts on day 1 and ends on day 21.

Important Health Certificate Note

When entering rabies vaccine validity dates on the health certificate:

For PRIMARY rabies vaccination: On the rabies vaccination table, under the

header "Validity of vaccination" "from" the date entered should be 21 days after the primary vaccination was administered.

Example: Date of vaccination: 01/03/2019
Validity of vaccination From: 22/03/2019 To: 01/03/2020

For valid BOOSTER rabies vaccination: On the rabies vaccination table, under the header "Validity of vaccination" "from" the date entered should be the date the booster was administered.

Example: Date of vaccination: 01/03/2019
Validity of vaccination From: 01/03/2019 To: 01/03/2022

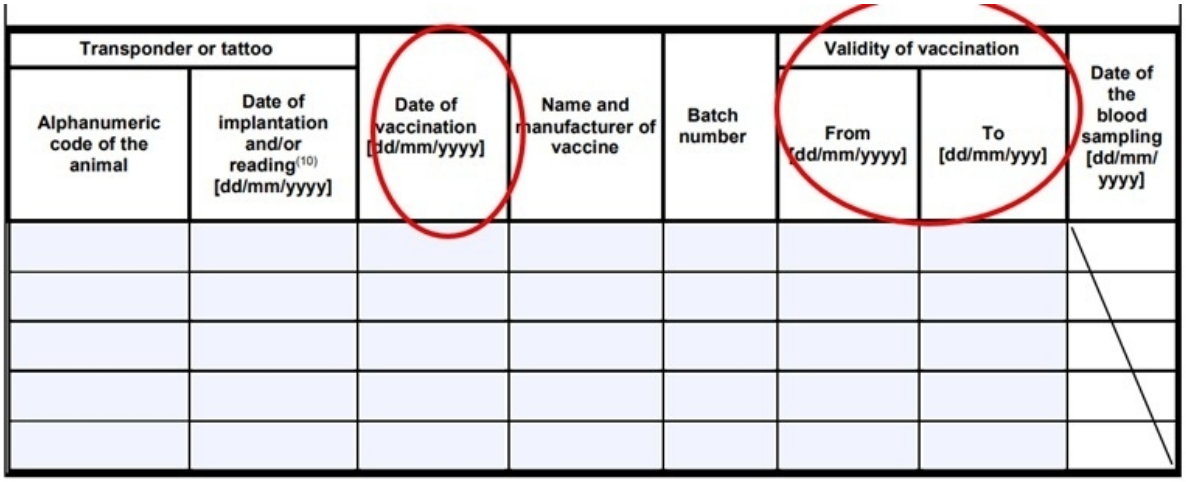
For PRIMARY rabies vaccination: On the rabies vaccination table, under the header "Validity of vaccination" "from" the date entered should be at least 21 days (or applicable immunity period) after the primary vaccination was administered.
Date format: dd/mm/yyyy

- Example for vaccines with a 21-day immunity period
- Date of vaccination: 01/03/2019
  Validity of vaccination; From: 22/03/2019 To: 01/03/2020
- Example for vaccines with a 30-day immunity period
- Date of vaccination: 01/03/2019

Validity of vaccination; From 31/03/2019 To: 01/03/2020

For valid BOOSTER rabies vaccination: On the rabies vaccination table, under the header "Validity of vaccination" "from" the date entered should be the date the booster was administered. Animals receiving boosters are not required to wait for the immunity period if there is no lapse between the primary vaccine and the booster.

- Example: Date of vaccination: 01/03/2019
  Validity of vaccination From: 01/03/2019 To: 01/03/2022



Transponder or tattoo		Date of vaccination [dd/mm/yyyy]	Name and manufacturer of vaccine	Batch number	Validity of vaccination		Date of the blood sampling [dd/mm/yyyy]
Alphanumeric code of the animal	Date of implantation and/or reading[10] [dd/mm/yyyy]				From [dd/mm/yyyy]	To [dd/mm/yyy]	

Age:

- If the pet is **less than 15 weeks old, it must be vaccinated for rabies and complete its immunity period before entry into the UK; otherwise, the pet is NOT eligible to enter the UK**.
- For pets **at least 15 weeks old** and vaccinated for rabies at least **21 days (or as recommended by the manufacturer) before entry into the UK:**

Microchip Implant requirements:

- Rabies vaccination must occur **the same day as or AFTER** microchip implantation. Any rabies vaccination occurring before a microchip is implanted is invalid.
    - If the pet had a non-ISO compatible microchip implanted at the same time as or before the pet's most recent vaccination and the microchip is still readable, the pet will not have to be revaccinated even if it had to be re-microchipped with an ISO compliant microchip to travel to the UK.
    - Remember, the number and implantation dates of both microchips must be documented on the UK's health certificate and at least one of these microchips must have been implanted before the pet's most recent rabies vaccine.
- For the UK, the first rabies vaccination **AFTER** microchip implantation is considered the primary rabies vaccine, and it is **ONLY** valid for 1 year.
- If a pet travels more than 12 months after the first rabies vaccination after microchip implantation, the pet must have written documentation confirming that a rabies vaccine booster was given within 12 months when it travels to the

UK. This is required even if the pet has been vaccinated for rabies appropriately throughout its life.
    - Pets traveling without the above documentation may be subject to revaccination for rabies and will be held in quarantine during the applicable immunity period of the vaccine upon arrival in the UK at the owner's expense.
    - Alternatively, the pet can be revaccinated and wait the immunity period prior to departing the United States for travel to the UK.
- While a booster rabies vaccination must be given within 12 months after the primary vaccination, the booster rabies vaccination and any subsequent rabies vaccinations given may be valid for 1, 2, or 3 years according to the manufacturer's recommendations as long as there is no lapse in time between the primary and booster vaccine.
- If a rabies vaccine given after microchip implantation expires before giving the booster vaccine, the pet must wait the manufacturer's recommended immunity period after the new rabies vaccine before being eligible to enter the UK. The new vaccination is now considered a primary vaccination. If there has not been a lapse in the pet's rabies booster vaccine, the pet does not have to wait the immunity period to travel to the UK after the booster vaccination.

Rabies Vaccine Certificate

- A hard copy of applicable rabies vaccination certificate(s) must accompany the pet to the UK. Regardless of the format the administering veterinarian used to issue the rabies certificate(s) (e.g., handwritten, computer-generated, etc.), the following information MUST be included on every rabies vaccination certificate and **MUST MATCH THE INFORMATION ON THE HEALTH CERTIFICATE**:
    - Correct **Microchip Number**
    - **Manufacturer Name** of the rabies vaccine (different than the name of the vaccine)
    - **Full Name** of the Rabies Vaccine (spelled out completely)
    - We recommend that you also add the **manufacturer's recommended immunity period** to facilitate the validity date calculation in the vaccine table in the health certificate.
- Rabies vaccination certificates that do not contain the information above or contain information that does not match the information on the health

certificate upon arrival in the UK may cause the pet(s) to be held in quarantine at the owner's expense.

STEP 3: Have a USDA Accredited Veterinarian or Military Veterinarian* issues (complete and sign) the UK Health Certificate

The UK has two different health certificates for pets.

The health certificate used will depend on the number of animals traveling, whether or not the pet is traveling within 5 days before or after the owner or designated person**, and whether the pet will change ownership or is intended for resale in the UK.

The "non-commercial" health certificate is:

- For 5 or less pets traveling to the UK within 5 days of the owner or designated person**.
  OR
  For 6 or more privately owned pets that are more than 6 months old and traveling in a group to the UK to participate in competitions, exhibitions, sporting events, or in training for events, within 5 days of the owner or designated person**.
- Valid for 30 days after the USDA Accredited Veterinarian completes and signs it. However, the completed health certificate must be endorsed (counter-signed and embossed/stamped) by APHIS within 10 days of arriving in the UK .
  - APHIS endorsement is not required if the health certificate is issued by a military veterinarian, but the military veterinarian must issue it within 10 days of arrival in the UK*.
- The final page of the UK Health Certificate contains a Declaration which must be completed and signed by the owner or designated person** before the pet travels to the UK. The Declaration must accompany the pet and health certificate to the UK.

- Once the health certificate is endorsed by APHIS, the owner or designated person** must enter the APHIS-assigned certificate number in the “Animal health certificate number” section of the Declaration. See the instructions for completing the non-commercial health certificate on the Health Certificate page.

ALERT: The "non-commercial" certificate is NOT for pets traveling to the UK more than 5 days before or after the owner or designated person**, or changing ownership or are intended for resale in the UK. That type of movement falls under the “commercial” health certificate below.

- **Pre-check of paperwork for “non-commercial” pets entering the UK through London Heathrow Airport (LHR):**
  - Information on Pre-check provided by Heathrow Animal Reception Center (HARC) (194.33 KB)
  - Pre-checks by HARC should be done *prior to USDA endorsement*.
  - Please contact HARC (HARC@cityoflondon.gov.uk) with additional questions regarding this service.

The “commercial” health certificate is:

- For pets (any number) who are traveling more than 5 days before or after the owner or designated person**.
  OR
  For 6 or more privately owned pets traveling at the same time (even if their owner or designated person** is traveling to the UK at the same time or within 5 days before or after the pet).
  OR
  For pet animals changing ownership or intended for resale when arriving in the UK.
- Valid for 48 hours after the USDA Accredited Veterinarian issues (completes and signs) it. The health certificate must be issued by the USDA Accredited Veterinarian and endorsed (counter-signed and embossed/stamped) by APHIS within 48 hours of departing the U.S.
  - APHIS endorsement is not required if the health certificate is issued by a military veterinarian*.

*A Military Veterinarian is defined as a Veterinary Corps Officer or civilian GS-0701 series government veterinarian employed by the U.S. Army Veterinary Service working at military treatment facilities. It does not apply to Army Veterinary Service non-appropriated fund or Department of Defense civilian contract veterinarians.

**Designated person: a family member, friend, or other person authorized by the owner to travel with the pet.

STEP 4: Have APHIS endorse (counter-sign and emboss/seal) the UK Health Certificate

- After the pet's USDA Accredited Veterinarian has completed and signed the EU/UK Health Certificate, have the pet's completed health certificate endorsed by your USDA APHIS Veterinary Services Endorsement Office. For "non-commercial" health certificates, this endorsement must occur within 10 days of your pet's arrival in the UK. For "commercial" health certificates, this endorsement can happen any time after the USDA Accredited Veterinarian signs the certificate.
- Your local USDA APHIS Veterinary Services Endorsement Office will be able to provide specific information about the process and fees associated with endorsement of the UK Health Certificate.
    - You can also find more information about Endorsement Fees here.

*A Military Veterinarian is defined as a Veterinary Corps Officer or civilian GS-0701 series government veterinarian employed by the U.S. Army Veterinary Service working at military treatment facilities. It does not apply to Army Veterinary Service non-appropriated fund or Department of Defense civilian contract veterinarians.

STEP 5: Tapeworm (Echinococcus multilocularis) treatment - DOGS ONLY

- Tapeworm treatment is required for dogs traveling to the United Kingdom (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales).
- Dogs must be treated by a USDA Accredited Veterinarian between 24 and 120 hours (1 and 5 days) before entering these countries.
    - The medication used must be labeled as an effective treatment against tapeworms, specifically *Echinococcus multilocularis*.
        - This treatment must be administered by a USDA Accredited Veterinarian.
        - It is recommended to use a medication that contains praziquantel as the active ingredient.
- The following must be included in the table in section II.4 of the health certificate:
    - The brand name of the tapeworm medication
    - The name of the manufacturer of the medication
    - The date and time of the administration of the tapeworm treatment
    - The signature and printed name of the USDA Accredited Veterinarian administering the medication. **The USDA Accredited Veterinarian cannot sign the table in section II.4 until he/she administers the tapeworm treatment.**

The UK (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales) allows the tapeworm treatment to occur before or after APHIS endorsement of the health certificate.

Health Certificates

The United Kingdom has specific requirements based on the type of pet you are traveling with. To get the appropriate Health Certificate, read requirements 1-6 listed above and choose the Health Certificate option that applies to you.

Get the Health Certificate for travel that INCLUDES DOGS

Get the Health Certificate for travel that DOES NOT INCLUDE DOGS

Guidance for the Commercial Dogs, Cats, and Ferrets GBHC640 Health Certificate (111.46 KB)

Birds

Please make sure you read all requirements for taking pet birds to the United Kingdom (UK).

The following applies to pet birds traveling to the UK in a group of five or less birds. For owners taking more than five pet birds to the UK, different rules may apply.

- Pet birds must have an identification number such as a clip, leg band, microchip (transponder), or tag.
    - For pet birds that leave the U.S. after February 19, 2018**,** as the U.S.' identification requirements may be different than the UK's requirements.
- Pet birds must be moved to a household or another residence within the UK and must not be entered in shows, fairs, exhibitions or other gatherings of birds during the period of 30 days following entry into the UK.
- Pet birds may have to undergo isolation with or without testing for Avian Influenza before traveling to the UK .
- The options for how to prepare a bird for export to the UK are listed below. Select the applicable pre-export option to obtain a health certificate and instructions for completing the health certificate. Once the conditions of the UK health certificate have been met, the pet bird must be examined and an UK health certificate must be issued by a USDA Accredited Veterinarian within **48 hours** of travel or the last working day prior to the date of departure to the UK.
- Call ahead to your local **USDA APHIS Veterinary Services Endorsement Office** to make arrangements for the APHIS veterinarian to endorse (counter-sign and emboss/stamp) the health certificate after it is issued.

Expand All

OPTION 1: Pet bird(s) were confined on a premises under official supervision for at least 30 days prior to the date of

departure with no contact with any other birds.

The pet bird was kept at a location under the USDA Accredited Veterinarian's supervision for at least 30 days prior to leaving the U.S. The pet bird was not in contact with other birds during this time.

Veterinary Health Certificate for Pet Birds- Option 1 (346.6 KB)- April 2024

Instructions for completing the Health Certificate for Option 1 (811.89 KB).

OPTION 2: Pet bird(s) were vaccinated for Avian Invluenza H5 and H7 on one occasion and re-vaccinted within the lat 6 months and no later than 60 days perior to date of departure.

Pet birds in the U.S., including pet birds brought into the U.S., are not vaccinated for Avian Influenza so this choice is not an option. The section in the health certificate for this vaccination option has been pre-lined out in the health certificates for Options 1 (above), 3 (below), and 4 (below).

OPTION 3: Pet bird(s) was/were isolated for at least 10 days prior the date of departure and tested for Avian Influenza H5 and H7 antigens or genomes with a virus isolation or RT-PCR test using both a cloacal and an oropharyngeal swab at least 3 days after start of isolation.

NOTE: Due to current issues at ports around the UK, please use NVSL for the Avian Influenza testing of your pet bird if you choose this option. Or you can use the Option 1 (30-day isolation) above instead.

The pet bird has been isolated (kept away) from other birds for at least 10 days prior to leaving the U.S. AND tested for Avian Influenza H5 and H7 antigens or genomes with a virus isolation or RT-PCR test. Regardless of test type used, both a cloacal swab and an oropharyngeal swab must be taken at least 3 days after the 10 day isolation starts. Testing must occur at NVSL or a National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) approved laboratory for Avian Influenza.

NOTE: the day isolation begins is considered DAY 0.

Veterinary Health Certificate for Pet Birds-Option 3 (295.7 KB) (295.7 KB)- April 2024

Instructions for completing the Health Certificate for Option 3 (812.29 KB)**.**

OPTION 4: The owner/responsible person has made arrangement for a 30 day post-introduction quaratine in an approved quarantine facility or center in the UK.

This requires making arrangements in advance for the pet bird to be quarantined for 30 days in an approved facility in the UK upon arrival in the UK.

Veterinary Health Certificate for Pet Birds-Option 4 (295.36 KB) - April 2024

Instructions for completing the Health Certificate for Option 4 (812.1 KB)**.**

Other Pets

For pet travel requirements not listed, APHIS has not been officially informed by the foreign country about the requirements for your pet’s travel. We recommend that you contact a government official of the country you are traveling to for more information.

Country of Destination Contact Information

World Organisation for Animal Health: Members

Countries Participating in the European Union

Austria
Belgium
Bulgaria
Croatia
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Denmark
Estonia

Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Republic of Ireland
Italy
Latvia

Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta
Netherlands
Northern Ireland*
Norway**
Poland
Portugal

Romania
Slovakia
Slovenia

Spain
Sweden
Switzerland**

* Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom (UK), but will continue to follow European Union (EU) requirements even though the UK is no longer part of the EU.
** Norway and Switzerland are **not** part of the EU but have adopted EU legislation for import of most species of live animals.

Important Travel Considerations

Considerations for airline travel and cruises:



Airlines and shipping lines have their own policies and requirements for transporting pets. Check with your airline or shipping representative to determine what requirements they may have.

Learn how you can improve the safety of dogs and cats during air travel.

View additional information for pet owners, airlines, and others about APHIS endorsement of international health certificates (239.52 KB).

If pets or support animals accompany you on a cruise, you must comply with entry rules for **every** country or port where your pet or support animal exits the ship.

Will you be returning to the United States with your pet?



View APHIS Requirements

ALERT: CDC is the primary authority for dog imports. For requirements or questions about dogs entering or returning to the United States, visit the CDC website.

See More See Less

Need Help?

Guidance for Pet Owners

Read an overview of the process for taking your pet to another country and related resources.

Frequently Asked Questions

View frequently asked questions about traveling with your pet.

Still Have Questions?

USDA-Accredited Veterinarians

Contact a USDA-accredited veterinarian for questions about your destination country's entry requirements for pets (including any needed vaccinations, tests, or treatments); issuance of health certificates; and status updates on certificate endorsement.

Find a USDA-Accredited Veterinarian

APHIS Endorsement Offices

Contact APHIS Veterinary Export Trade Services if you have questions about endorsing an international pet health certificate. For quickest help, see **tips for pet owners and accredited veterinarians.**

Generalist Team

Veterinary Export Trade Services

Email: askvets@usda.gov

Helpful Links:

- Frequently Asked Questions About Pet Travel for Accredited Veterinarians

Helpful Links:

- Frequently Asked Questions About Pet Travel for Accredited Veterinarians

All Contacts

Looking for Another Country?

Find your destination country requirements by using the dropdown menu below. If your country is not listed in the menu, visit Pet Travel: Unknown Requirements.

Select Destination Country Select Destination Cour ▼ Go

Print