



Dogs and Cats to the United States of America (Guidance)

USPET9

Effective from 20 July 2020

1 Purpose

- (1) This guidance document has been issued to provide information on the importation of dogs and cats from New Zealand to the United States of America.

2 Specific guidance for the export of dogs and cats to the United States of America.

- (1) Due to the United States of America not requiring an official assurance (MPI government veterinarian certified export certificate), there are no Overseas Market Access Requirements (OMAR) for dogs and cats to the United States of America.

- (2) The state of Hawaii does require an official assurance. The OMAR for dogs and cats to Hawaii can be found here: [Dogs and cats to Hawaii \(OMAR\)](#)

- (3) Notwithstanding the United States of America not requiring an official assurance for dogs and cats being imported to the United States of America, most airlines require that the animal is accompanied by a veterinary certificate of health signed by a registered veterinarian stating that the animal is fit to travel. Such fitness to travel certificates are to be written on headed veterinary practice note paper. Veterinarians signing these fitness to travel airline certificates are to ensure that their name and qualifications are typed or printed beneath their signatures.

The issued Animal Welfare Export certificate (AWEC) is not to be used for this purpose, however the supporting declaration form for the purpose of an AWEC, is permissible to be used as a fitness to travel certificate if the airline accepts it.

- (4) An Animal Welfare Export Certificate (AWEC) is required for all dogs and cats exported from New Zealand to the United States of America.

The owner and the registered veterinarian have to complete and sign the supporting declaration for the AWEC form, which is then presented to the MPI Official Veterinarian at the AWEC examination appointment.

Link to the supporting declaration for the AWEC can be found here: [Supporting Declaration Form for MPI Animal Welfare Export Certificate \(AWEC\)](#)

- (5) The crate for airline travel has to be constructed and sized in accordance with current approved standard for the International Air Transport Association (IATA) for each individual pet. The MPI Official Veterinarian will only be able to sign the AWEC if the crate fully complies with the IATA requirements.

IATA information regarding the transportation of pets and the standards for individual animals can be found in the following link: <https://www.iata.org/en/programs/cargo/live-animals/pets/>

- (6) Additional information

Further information taken from the requirements for the importation of dogs and cats to the United States of America suggests:

- (1) The importation of **dogs** into the United States of America is regulated mainly by Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the destination state: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pet-travel/bring-pet-into-the-united-states/pet-travel-dogs-into-us>
- (2) **Dogs** imported for commercial (resale or adoption) purposes have additional requirements from USDA: https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalwelfare/ct_awa_import_live_dogs_regulation
- (3) The importation of **cats** into the United States of America is regulated mainly by Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the destination state. Pet cats are subject to inspection at ports of entry and may be denied entry into the United States of America 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: <https://www.cdc.gov/importation/bringing-an-animal-into-the-united-states/cats.html>
- (4) New Zealand is considered to be rabies free for the purposes of CDC's importation regulations. Accordingly, dogs and cats that are imported from New Zealand are not required to be rabies vaccinated as long as they have spent six (6) months prior to arrival in the United States (or since birth if less than six (6) months of age) in New Zealand; However, individual states in the United States of America require vaccination of dogs and cats for rabies and health certificate requirements. Therefore, check with state and local health authorities at your final destination before you plan your dog or cats export to the United State of America.

Disclaimer

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