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TEXAS ANIMAL HEALTH COMMISSION
1-800-550-8242, Ext. 777 or 512-719-0777

Dogs and Cats Entering the State

The Texas Animal Health Commission/State Veterinarian in Texas does *not* have any specific requirements for bringing pets into the state. However, there are certain requirements that must be met by the Centers for Disease Control and the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS).

Please contact the appropriate agency should you have further questions.

****Traveler Tip**** — Most airlines will require a health certificate issued by a veterinarian within 7-10 days of travel. Check with your airline and local veterinarian for details.

For DOGS entering the US from other countries, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) have additional requirements, including a rabies vaccination within 30 days prior to entry OR quarantine of puppies less than three months of age. The CDC/US Public Health Service Division of Quarantine may be contacted at (404) 639-8107 or 1-800-232-4636.

- [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) — CDC regulates the international importation of dogs, cats, bats, turtles, monkeys, civets, African rodents, and birds from certain countries.

State of Texas rules for bringing dogs and cats into the state. While the TAHC does not regulate movement of pets, the Texas Department of State Health Services does require certain criteria be met:

- Rabies vaccination must be in accordance with the Texas Administrative Code, Rabies Control and Eradication (Sections 169.29, 169.31, and 169.32). For more information call 512-776-7255 or visit the DSHS [website](#).
- By state law, all dogs and cats 12 weeks of age or older (regardless of state/country of origin) must be vaccinated against rabies, and the time elapsed since the most recent vaccination must not have exceeded the recommended interval for booster vaccination as established by the vaccine's manufacturer. If an initial vaccination was administered less than 30 days prior to arrival in Texas, the custodian should (recommended for interstate travel) or must (required for international travel) confine the animal for the balance of the 30 days.
- Dogs and cats entering Texas must be accompanied by a current rabies vaccination certificate from the attending veterinarian. If the dog or cat is less than 12 weeks of age, the custodian should (recommended for interstate travel) or must (required for international travel) confine the animal until 30 days subsequent to its initial vaccination.
- This rule applies even to pets from rabies-free countries. See the DSHS website for more rabies vaccination details.
- The state of Texas does not require a health certificate for companion animals such as dogs and cats entering the state. However, many other states do require a health certificate, so check ahead before leaving Texas destined for another state with any animal.

Helpful tips on International Import/Export of pets

Exporting an animal from the US requires specific documentation and possible testing in advance, and may take weeks or months of preparation. You should start by contacting an accredited private veterinary practitioner to assist you in the process. Most licensed veterinarians are accredited, so start by discussing this with your personal veterinarian. You or your veterinarian should then contact the USDA Veterinary Services (VS) office in Austin as early as possible to receive specific instructions and entry requirements for the country to which you wish to ship animals. Generally, an international health certificate is issued by a local veterinarian and then sent to the USDA Veterinary Services (VS) office. All paperwork is subsequently approved by that office (you do not actually have to take your pet to the Austin office) and returned to the veterinarian.

For moving ALL animals **out of the U.S. through Texas**, contact the USDA APHIS-VS-Texas Area office's **export desk** in Austin at **(512) 383-2411 Monday - Friday 7:30 am - 4:00 pm**.

Useful Export website links:

- [USDA-APHIS National Center for Import and Export](#) or call (301) 734-8364
- [USDA-APHIS Veterinary Services Texas Export](#) or call (512) 383-2411

International Import of Pets

There are many different processes involved with importing species of live animals into the United States. U.S. import procedures are generally regulated by federal rules and agencies, rather than state entities. If you have any questions, or require further information related to imports of live animals, birds or germplasm, please contact National Center for Import and Export at email VS.Live.Animal.Import.Export@aphis.usda.gov or call (301) 851-3300 (option 2).

Useful Import website links:

- [USDA-APHIS National Center for Import and Export](#) or call (301) 851-3300 (option 2)
- [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) – CDC regulates the international importation of dogs, cats, bats, turtles, monkeys, civets, African rodents, and birds from certain countries.
- [AVMA Resources](#)