

For anyone traveling outside the United States with pets:

* Call the appropriate embassy in Washington to confirm the entry requirements. Some embassies will provide forms printed in English and in the host language for your veterinarian to complete. Some countries do not permit importation or have long quarantine requirements .

* Check the requirements to see how close to departure the required veterinarian examination, shots, and tests must be scheduled.

* Arrange with your veterinarian for required shots and certificates within the specified time period.(Even though not always required, it is recommended that you include shots for distemper and hepatitis).

Certification requirements vary from country to country. Some countries simply require the veterinarian who examines your pet to be licensed in the state of origin, and no USDA endorsement of the veterinarian's examination statement is required. Some countries will accept a standard letterhead health certificate and rabies certificate issued by a licensed veterinarian and endorsed by the USDA. However, other countries may require that your pet be checked by a federally accredited veterinarian and that a United States Interstate and International Certificate for Health Examination for Small Animals (AHPIS Form 7001) be issued by that veterinarian and endorsed by the USDA.(Since August 1994 only a federally accredited veterinarian can sign this form.) Carefully check the OBC country briefing box or call the embassy to determine the exact requirements before making an appointment with a veterinarian. Also check the airline you will be using for your pet. There have been cases where a country does not require a certification, but a particular airline does. There is a USDA endorsement fee of \$16.50 per certificate for cats and dogs. (More than one dog or cat may be on a certificate.) For other animals, call the USDA at the numbers below.

The timetable for obtaining examination statements and certifications can be very tight. Plan well in advance to be sure all paperwork is complete in time for your shipping date. You may send your paperwork by mail or courier along with a rabies certificate, the appropriate fee for service, and a self-addressed stamped envelope or a pre-paid Federal Express envelope (if you are short of time) for return to you. Be sure that the veterinarian's name is legible, and include a contact person with a daytime telephone number. Pets examined by veterinarians in other U.S. areas should have the papers certified by the USDA-APHIS veterinary office in that state. The offices closest to the Washington, D.C., area are:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS)
Veterinary Services
1598 Whitehall Road Suite #A
Annapolis, MD 21401
Tel: (410) 349-9643 or (301) 261-8072