

Timeline for Interstate and International Travel with Animals

There is a lot to juggle when traveling with animals or otherwise transporting them from one place to another. To help you stay organized, below is a brief list of some of your responsibilities. Please keep in mind that there are many variables involved and that your specific timeline and steps may vary.

6+ months in advance

_____ If you are required to have a special permit to own your animal(s) (e.g., captive wildlife), check with the authority overseeing your permit to determine:

- If and how you may transport the animal(s)
- What requirements must be met
- What to do if you cannot transport the animal(s)

_____ Make sure that the species of your animal is allowed at your destination. For example, ferrets are not permitted to enter the states of California or Hawaii, or the cities of Washington, D.C. and New York City.

_____ Review the materials on AVMA's Animal Travel and Certificates of Veterinary Inspection.

_____ Review and comply with the regulatory requirements and restrictions on animal travel into the state, territory, or country of destination.

_____ If traveling by public air, rail, bus, or boat line, check with that line for its animal transport policies.

_____ Determine if the animal(s) can and should travel.

_____ Consider alternatives (boarding, pet sitters, marketing locally, etc.) to transporting animals from one area to another.

_____ Schedule an appointment for your animal(s) to be examined by a veterinarian with the appropriate level of federal accreditation within the timeline required by the destination. Most states, territories, and countries require certificates of veterinary inspection (CVIs) to be completed by federally accredited veterinarians.

_____ Share any animal travel information given to you by the destination authorities with your veterinarian.

_____ Comply with the regulatory timeline established by the authorities at destination.

3-6 months in advance

_____ Ensure that all timeline items listed above have been addressed.

_____ Verify with the authorities at destination that the import requirements have not changed.

_____ Make arrangements for animal care in transit and at arrival.



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1-3 months in advance

- Ensure that all timeline items listed above have been addressed.
- Verify with the authorities at your destination that the import requirements have not changed.
- If transporting internationally, schedule an appointment with the appropriate USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Veterinary Service (VS) office for federal endorsement of the CVI if required. The CVI cannot be endorsed until your veterinarian has issued it.
- Make alternative arrangements in case your animal(s) cannot travel for whatever reason.
- Plan to have all needed supplies for your animal during travel on hand at least a week before the trip.

Days in advance

- Ensure that all timeline items listed above have been addressed.
- Verify with the authorities at your destination that the import requirements have not changed.
- If a CVI is required, take your animal to an appropriately accredited veterinarian again for the final exam and issuance of the CVI and copies of any other documentation required.
- Depending on the requirements of your destination, the CVI may need to be endorsed by USDA-APHIS-VS. Plan ahead because scheduling and fees are associated with federal endorsement.
- Prepare your travel supplies, including any medications and special equipment.

Day of travel

- Ensure that all timeline items listed above have been addressed.
- If flying, check again with the airline the day of the flight. If it is too hot or cold at the departure, connecting, or destination airport, the airline may refuse to transport your animal.
- Keep a copy of your CVI and supporting documents with you at all times.
- Ensure proper restraint or containment of your animal(s) at all times during travel.
- Take all needed supplies (food, water, bedding, medication, halters, leads, leashes, etc.).
- If applicable, cancel any unneeded pet-sitting or boarding services that had been on stand-by.

