

Preparing for Animal Treatment or Kenneling: 3 Tools for Air Carriers

Air carriers are responsible for the care and management of all animals placed on hold or denied entry by CDC. The following tools will help you meet this obligation.

Tool 1: Make a List of Veterinary Clinics or Kennels in Your Area

Complete this section before importing live animals (dogs and cats).

Facility Name	Address	Phone	POC	24-hour Facility?	Capacity

Tool 2: Choose a Facility

When choosing a facility, consider the following factors.

- Does the facility meet USDA APHIS Animal Care (AC) welfare standards for housing?**
This is required.¹
- Has CBP reviewed or approved your animal care plan?**
Who will transport the animal to the facility? Are the transporters bonded or has CBP approved your transportation plan?
- Does the facility have a licensed veterinarian?**
A licensed veterinarian is required for veterinary facilities providing treatment to sick or injured animals, and for providing age estimates of dogs if needed to determine if a rabies vaccination certificate is valid, but is not required for facilities boarding healthy animals awaiting return to the country of origin.
- Will the facility provide diagnostics and treatment for illnesses that are potentially life-threatening?**
Necessary services include euthanasia and necropsy of animals with suspected rabies in consultation with a CDC Veterinary Medical Officer. The veterinary facility must agree to follow CDC's rabies testing recommendations.
- Is the facility open 24 hours a day?**
This is not a requirement for flights arriving during normal business operating hours (Monday–Friday, 0800–1700), but flights arriving outside business operating hours should have a 24-hour veterinary facility identified.
- Does the animal facility have an isolation area where they can house large shipments of animals?**
Isolation areas are not required unless rabies is suspected, but the facility may want to isolate animals for the safety of other animals in the facility.
- Is the facility willing to bill the importer or airline carrier AFTER providing diagnostics, treatment, or housing for the animal?**
CDC, CBP, and USDA APHIS AC are not responsible for animal care and holding charges incurred as a result of importing a sick or underage animal. Costs incurred are the responsibility of the importer, or the carrier if the importer abandons the animal.

Most facilities require payment before treatment or testing is performed. Have a payment plan in place and a point of contact for carrier staff to contact if an animal needs immediate medical care.



Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention
National Center for Emerging and
Zoonotic Infectious Diseases

Tool 3: Provide Information to the Veterinarian

If the facility you choose is not familiar with CDC-mandated veterinary assessments, give them the information below.

Veterinarian Public Health Evaluation of Animals Imported into the United States

CDC can mandate the evaluation, testing, and treatment of animals entering the United States with suspected illnesses that pose a public health risk. Here are the goals for veterinarians performing a CDC-mandated veterinary assessment:

1. Evaluate the potential public health risk the animal may pose.

Examine the animal to determine the risk of zoonotic disease infection (such as rabies, parasites, leishmaniasis).

2. Test the animal for any suspected diseases that present a public health risk.

- Perform necessary diagnostics tests to determine whether the animal poses a potential public health threat.
- Any animal showing signs of rabies must be immediately reported to the CDC Quarantine Station at [\[enter QS phone number\]](#). CDC will coordinate with the veterinary treatment facility to determine the best course of action. This may include quarantine, monitoring, additional diagnostics, euthanasia, or rabies testing.
- If rabies is suspected, state and local health departments should be notified in addition to the CDC Quarantine Station.

3. Any animal that dies while at a veterinary facility must be reported to the CDC Quarantine Station at [\[enter QS phone number\]](#).

4. Email a copy of the animal's medical record to CDC at cdcanimalimports@cdc.gov.

- CDC Veterinary Medical Officers or Quarantine Station staff may contact your clinic directly for updates on the health status of the animal.
- A copy of the complete medical record, including diagnostic tests and results, should be emailed to cdcanimalimports@cdc.gov upon discharge, transfer, or death of the animal.

5. Do not release animals to the owner/importer without CDC approval.

Animals undergoing CDC-mandated veterinary assessments have not been cleared by US Customs and Border Protection for entry into the United States. While the animal's owner/importer is responsible for all costs associated with diagnostics and treatment, they may not remove the animal from the veterinary clinic without CDC approval.

See [Air Carrier Responsibilities for Transporting Animals to the United States for information on carrier responsibilities before, during and after transport of dogs and cats.](#)

Notes:

1. See http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare/downloads/bluebook-ac-awa.pdf (Part 3, Subpart A)

- Veterinary facility: Veterinary clinic, animal shelter, or veterinary hospital where an animal can receive care from a veterinarian.

- Kennel: Holding facility for animals where a veterinarian may not be present. Kennels can only be used for healthy animals.