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What are the requirements to import a dog or cat into New Jersey?

Dogs imported into New Jersey are required to be accompanied by a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI or health certificate) issued by a veterinarian licensed in the country or state of origin within 30 days of travel, pursuant to New Jersey Administrative Code (N.J.A.C.) 8:23-1.1 (full text at the end of this guidance). Dogs with clinical signs of communicable diseases, or those exposed to communicable diseases, shall not be imported into New Jersey until treated, fully recovered, examined and then certified by a licensed veterinarian to be free of such disease(s).

Although rabies vaccination is not specifically required for importation of dogs into the State, New Jersey law requires all dogs 7 months of age or older to be licensed by the municipality where they are housed. Current rabies vaccination is a prerequisite for licensure.

Owners of imported dogs that are licensed in another state and bearing a registration tag for the current year shall immediately apply for a dog license in the municipality where the dog is kept, if they are remaining in New Jersey for 90 days or more.

Owners of imported dogs that are unlicensed shall immediately apply for license in the municipality where the dog is kept, if they are remaining in New Jersey for 10 days or more.

There are no specific requirements for importing cats into New Jersey, but rabies vaccination is strongly recommended for all cats in New Jersey, including cats kept exclusively indoors because they may be exposed to rabies if a bat enters the home or if the cat escapes the house and is bitten by a raccoon or other rabid wildlife. Most NJ municipalities have cat licensing requirements.

Dogs and cats that appear to be ill upon arrival at the port of entry will be referred to a veterinarian, isolated and treated at the owner's expense.

Most airlines require a CVI to accompany any animal on a flight.

What are the requirements to import a dog or cat into the United States?

There are no specific requirements for importation of cats into the U.S.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance for the importation of dogs into the United States (US) is on their website: <http://www.cdc.gov/importation/bringing-an-animal-into-the-united-states/dogs.html>

CDC requires proof of current rabies vaccination administered more than 30 days before travel for entry of dogs into the US from other countries, unless the country is considered a rabies free country (<http://www.cdc.gov/importation/rabies-free-countries.html>) by the World Health Organization. Dogs must be at least 3 months of age to receive a rabies vaccine. Owners of dogs that are not currently rabies vaccinated or are less than 4 months of age should contact the CDC at CDCAnimalImports@cdc.gov as soon as possible in advance of the dogs arrival to approve a confinement agreement allowing the dog entry if



owners agree to vaccinate the dog at 3 months of age and confine it for 30 days from the date of rabies vaccination.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) guidance for the importation of dogs into the US is posted on their website:

https://www.aphis.usda.gov/wps/portal/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/sa_import_into_us

The requirements for the importation of dogs into the US are summarized as follows:

All persons importing dogs imported into US for resale or transfer to another person, rescue organization or pet store shall request a USDA import permit issued prior to the dog's arrival in the US from the USDA, Animal Care (https://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal_welfare/2014/faq_live_dog_imports.pdf). Call the USDA Animal Care office at 301-851-3751 or email (Gerald.L.Rushin@aphis.usda.gov) to request a permit or for additional guidance.

Dogs imported from countries or regions where screw worm is known to exist (https://www.aphis.usda.gov/wps/portal/aphis/ourfocus/importexport/sa_animals/sa_pet_travel/ct_animal_imports_pets) have additional requirements. The dog must be accompanied by a certificate signed by a full-time salaried veterinary official of the region of origin stating that the dog has been inspected for screwworm within 5 days prior to shipment to the United States. The certificate must state that the dog is either free from screwworm or was found to be infested with screwworm and was held in quarantine and treated until free from screwworm prior to leaving the region.

Collies, shepherds, and other dogs that are imported from any part of the world except Canada, Mexico, and regions of Central America and the West Indies and that are to be used in the handling of livestock must be inspected and quarantined at the port of entry for a sufficient time to determine their freedom from tapeworm.

For further information on importing dogs into New Jersey, please call the New Jersey Department of Health at 609-826-4872.

For information on importing livestock and poultry into New Jersey, please contact the New Jersey Department of Agriculture by calling 609-671-6400.

For information on importing wildlife and exotic animals into New Jersey, please contact the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection by calling 908-735-5689.

N.J.A.C. 8:23-1.1 Importation of dogs; certification requirements

Dogs shall not be brought into this state excepting when in transit or for breeding, laboratory, or exhibition purposes unless accompanied by a health certificate issued by a licensed veterinarian of the state or nation of the dog's origin indicating that the dog is free from rabies and other communicable disease and has not recently been exposed to any such disease. This certificate shall also state the breed, sex, age, point of origin, point of destination, the name and post office address of the consignee or owner and the consignor or seller and if the dog has been vaccinated, type and date of vaccination.