

**Guidance for Pet Evacuations (to include cats, dogs and pet birds)  
to the United States due to Hurricane Dorian**

**Effective date: September 5, 2019 - October 4, 2019**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is providing the following guidance to all individuals who are evacuating pets from areas impacted by Hurricane Dorian and wish to enter the continental United States or territories. *This guidance is for the Hurricane Dorian-affected areas of Abaco and Grand Bahama only, all other animal imports must conform to current federal, state, and local regulations.*

We urge interested parties to contact their nearest CBP office for information on specific issues or questions. CBP ports of entry, with their addresses and phone numbers, can be found on their website at [www.cbp.gov/contact/ports](http://www.cbp.gov/contact/ports). For animals arriving at a port that is not staffed by Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the State Veterinarian or State Animal Health Officials in the state of destination must be contacted for further instructions before moving the animals from the port of entry.

Animal owners requiring assistance should contact the USDA APHIS Call Center at 1-844-820-2234, Monday through Friday - 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) prior to departing for the United States. For after hour emergencies, please

## **IMPORT REQUIREMENTS**

### **Travel to the United States**

Travelers arriving with their pets (dogs and cats) from Abaco or Grand Bahama in the Bahamas can enter the United States without pet import documentation (health certificate). Arriving animals will have to be presented to Customs and Border Protection (CBP) at the first port of entry in the United States. We urge interested parties to contact their nearest CBP office for information on specific issues or questions. CBP ports of entry, with their addresses and phone numbers, can be found on our website at <https://www.cbp.gov/contact/ports>.

Hurricane Dorian-affected islands in the Bahamas are considered to be rabies-free by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Therefore, dogs from these islands do not need a valid rabies certificate and CDC does not have a health certificate requirement.

Cats do not require a rabies vaccination or health certificate.

Cats and dogs need to be healthy upon arrival into the United States, and must not pose a public health threat. If a visibly ill dog or cat arrives, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) will notify the CDC for evaluation before being allowed to enter the United States.

After importation, all dogs and cats are subject to state and local vaccination or health certificate requirements. Please remember to contact the state officials upon entry. Contact information for the

state offices is available through the APHIS Call Center at 1-844-820-2234, or online at: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pet-travel/interstate-pet-travel>

### **Transiting through the United States**

Travelers transiting the United States with pets should contact the USDA APHIS Call Center, at 1-844-820-2234, for instructions on how to obtain health certificate for your country of destination.

### **Import of pet birds (non-poultry species)**

[Information about bringing a pet bird to the United States can be found on the APHIS Pet Travel Website](#). Additionally, the APHIS Customer Service Call Center is a resource for customers seeking information about the importation of pet birds. Please be aware that USDA APHIS federal quarantine and U.S. Fish and Wildlife regulations may apply. Call Center program specialists will collect information on customers' specific needs and work with veterinary experts to provide appropriate guidance.

### **Other animals**

*\*\*Animal species normally prohibited from entering the United States will not be allowed entry. If these prohibited species arrive at ports, they will be refused entry. \*\**

For allowed species other than dogs and cats, all normal entry requirements will apply and prior notification of the animal's arrival is required. All animals other than dogs and cats, including poultry, exotic species, livestock, and livestock species kept as pets (e.g. pigs, goats, sheep) regulated by USDA APHIS will be handled on a case by case basis. General information on these animals can be accessed via the USDA APHIS Call Center. Specific issues or questions related to animal entry should be directed to the USDA Veterinary Services Port Office in the state of arrival for information on specific issues or questions: [www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/contacts/field-operations-port-services.pdf](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/contacts/field-operations-port-services.pdf)

Information about other animals regulated by CDC can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/importation>; these importations will also be handled on a case-by-case basis. Please note that CDC does not allow the importation of a pet nonhuman primate.

Information about import of regulated wildlife or CITES protected species can be found on Fish and Wildlife Services Website at <https://www.fws.gov/le/businesses.html>. Animals arriving at ports without providing notification may be held by CBP and the Government Agency with regulatory authority over the animal import will be contacted to determine next steps.

### **Articles accompanying animals**

Pet food, animal feed, bedding, and other articles accompanying animals to the United States may be subject to federal regulations. Information on these articles can be accessed via the USDA APHIS Call Center.

## **What to Expect Upon Arrival**

### **Animals Other than Dog and Cats**

Shipment of animals other than dogs and cats must be pre-arranged as described above. Animals arriving at ports without providing notification may be held by CBP and the Government Agency with regulatory authority over the animal import will be contacted to determine next steps.

Travelers can expect the following procedures at the port of entry.

**Cats or Dogs Traveling as Personal Pets**

Animals arriving as personal pets must be accompanied by their owners and will undergo a visual inspection by CBP.

**Dogs Traveling to the United States for Resale or Adoption**

USDA APHIS Animal Care is waiving the requirement for an import permit for dogs coming into the United States for resale or adoption from Abaco and Grand Bahama. Animals will undergo a visual inspection by CBP upon arrival. This waiver is in effect through October 4, 2019, to facilitate the evacuation, rescue, care, and welfare of the animals affected by the storm. Importers must comply with all other applicable federal, state, and local requirements that are not also waived.

Please remember to contact your state officials upon entry. Contact information for the state offices is available through the APHIS Call Center at 1-844-820-2234, or online at:

[https://www.usaha.org/upload/STATE\\_ANIMAL\\_HEALTH\\_OFFICIALS.pdf](https://www.usaha.org/upload/STATE_ANIMAL_HEALTH_OFFICIALS.pdf)