

# What Your Dog Will Need To Enter Canada



## Proof of Rabies Vaccination

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency oversees the entry of pets into Canada and takes into consideration the rabies status of the country of origin in determining what documents are needed. The US is not a country that Canada recognizes as being rabies-free, so visitors from the US will need proof that their dog has a current rabies vaccination. Here is the official take on what the rabies certificate must include:

*Domestic or pet dogs may enter Canada if accompanied by a valid rabies vaccination certificate, which is issued by a licensed veterinarian in English or French, and which clearly identifies the dogs and states that they are currently vaccinated against rabies.*

*This certificate should identify the animal's breed, color, weight, etc., and indicate the name of the licensed rabies vaccine used (trade name), including serial number and duration of validity (up to three years). Please note that if the duration of validity is not indicated on the certificate, the vaccine will be considered to be valid for one year.*

Canada does not impose a quarantine on a pet arriving from any country, and there is no waiting period between the time your dog is vaccinated for rabies and the time he is welcome to enter Canada.

A rabies vaccination or certification is **not** required for pups less than three months of age crossing into Canada, but you'll need to be pre-approved to cross the border back into the US with an unvaccinated puppy. (See "Returning to the US" below.)

If you get to the border and you do not have a proper rabies vaccination for your dog, you will be required (at your expense) to have your dog vaccinated against rabies within a specified period of time (usually two weeks), and provide the vaccination record to a Canadian Food Inspection Agency office. Also, you will be charged administrative fees of \$55.00 + tax for the first animal, and \$30.00 + tax for each additional animal.

## **Health Certificate**

While the Canada Border Services Agency may refer any animal presented at the border for secondary inspection by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, as long as your dog is healthy, it's unlikely this will happen to you. Healthy dogs do not need a health certificate to cross the border into Canada. But, if your dog appears to be ill, the border agents may request a health certificate from a veterinarian indicating that the dog's condition is not contagious. If you think there could be a question about your dog's health, it's a good idea to visit your vet and obtain the health certificate before your trip so that you're not held up at the border. Of course, dogs flying to Canada must meet the requirements of the airline on which they'll be traveling, and most of those require a current health certificate.

## **Food and Treats**

Travelers may bring pet food and treats for their personal use into Canada, if they meet all of the following requirements:

- No more than 20 kg (44 pounds) may be transported.
- The pet food or treats must be of US origin, commercially packaged, and unopened.
- The pet food or treats must be in the possession of the traveler at the time of entry from the US.
- The animal that will eat the imported products must accompany the traveler at the time of entry.
- The imported product must be fed only to the animal that accompanied the traveler into Canada.

## **What Your Dog Will Need to Return to the US**



In the past, pet owners were allowed to cross the border into the United States from Canada without a proper rabies certificate if they entered into an

agreement to vaccinate their dog and isolate him until the inoculation took effect. Due to an increase in requests for these agreements, an investigation was performed that revealed that many people were not complying with the requirements. So, on August 11, 2014, the United States enacted new requirements for dog entering the country without proper rabies vaccination records.

### **Proof of Rabies Vaccination**

Now the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which oversee the entry of pets into the United States, require that all dogs be properly vaccinated prior to entering the United States. Further, dogs that have never been vaccinated against rabies previously must be vaccinated at least 30 days prior to arrival. That means that a puppy (or dog for whom there is no record of previous vaccinations, like rescue dogs) were vaccinated for rabies on January 1, he could travel to Canada immediately – because they impose no waiting period – but he would have to wait until January 31st to cross the border back into the US.

Dogs 15 months and older who have been previously vaccinated for rabies, but for whom the vaccination has expired, may cross into the US immediately upon receiving a booster vaccination, as long as they received their first rabies vaccination after they were 3 months old.

To be acceptable, the rabies vaccination certificate must include the following information:

- Name and address of owner
- Breed, sex, age, color, markings, and other identifying information for the dog
- Date of rabies vaccination and vaccine product information
- Date the vaccination expires
- Name, license number, address, and signature of veterinarian who administered the vaccination

Since puppies must not be vaccinated against rabies until they are 3 months old, the youngest dog that can travel into the US is 4 months of age.

These requirements apply to all dogs, including service animals such as guide dogs for the blind.

If you'd like to request an exemption from these requirements, requests for confinement agreements will be individually reviewed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and must be pre-approved before crossing the border into the United States. If you're planning to travel with an unvaccinated dog, learn the steps you need to take to make sure your travel plans are not derailed.

**Health Certificates**

Like crossing into Canada, if your dog is healthy, you won't need a health certificate for him to cross into the US. If there might be any question about his health, we recommend getting a health certificate from a veterinarian that states that his condition is not contagious.

**Pet Food and Treats**

Food products from Canada, including pet food containing beef, veal, bison, and cervi (e.g. deer, elk, moose, caribou etc.) are now permitted in passenger baggage. Products containing sheep, lamb, or goat will not be allowed entry. Food products should be commercially packaged and sealed with ingredients listed in English.