



Pet passports are part of the European Union (EU) Regulation on the movement of pet animals. This passport will replace the existing Pet Travel Scheme (PETS) 1 certificate and will be accepted for entry to the UK from other member states and from other qualifying countries. It will also replace the PETS 5 and other documents currently required to enter EU countries. PETS certificates can still be used to enter or re-enter the UK until their expiration date. Certain non-EU listed countries may also issue a passport. Pets travelling on Pet Passports must still be treated against ticks and tapeworms before entering the UK. The treatment will be recorded in the passport. For dogs and cats with PETS certificates, an official tick and tapeworm certificate from a vet in the country in which the pet is treated is required. This certificate will only be available in certain countries.

What regulations affect pet travel?

There is an EU Regulation that sets out the requirements for the movement of pet animals (dogs, cats and ferrets) travelling within the European Community, and into the Community from non-EU countries. It also refers to importation requirements applying to rodents, domestic rabbits, birds (except certain poultry), ornamental tropical fish, invertebrates (except bees and crustaceans), amphibians and reptiles. The Regulation can be downloaded from the European Union (EU) website - please click here.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) is still waiting for more information from Brussels about requirements relating to some of these species. For dogs and cats, the Regulation will allow the rules of PETS to continue largely unchanged for 5 years. The main changes relate to the introduction of a pet passport for dogs, cats and ferrets, the list of qualifying countries and the requirements for other species. DEFRA has produced some questions and answers about the Regulation which will be updated as necessary - please click here.

What does the passport contain?

The Passport can be viewed and printed from the EU website - see http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/pri/en/oj/dat/2003/l_312/l_31220031127en00010013.pdf. There are some special arrangements for pet owners whose animals have a PETS certificate valid after 3 July 2004 (see transitional arrangements below).

The Passport will contain your details (as the owner) and your pet's details, including its microchip number, rabies vaccination and blood test details. There are also sections to record the tick and tapeworm treatment required for entry to the UK. Only pets entering or re-entering the UK need to comply with all these requirements. If the animal is going to an EU country and not returning to the UK, all that will be required are the microchip and vaccination details recorded in the Passport. The blood test required for UK entry can be carried out, if necessary, after the animal has travelled to another qualifying country. The Passport does not have a section for a "valid from" date to be recorded, this is the date from which the Passport can be used to enter or re-enter the UK. It is calculated as being 6 calendar months from the date the blood sample was taken, which gave a satisfactory blood test result (this is the date shown in the first paragraph of section V of the Passport).

How do I get a passport?

Passports may only be issued by specially qualified vets (LVIs) - so if there is no-one at your local practice who can sign the passport they should provide you with the details of a local LVI. If you are exchanging your PETS certificate for a Pet Passport, you must take your pet's vaccination record and the date it was microchipped to the vet. Your vet may already have these details, but it is better to take them along.

You must continue to have your pet vaccinated against rabies on time.

Which countries qualify?

Dogs, cats and ferrets will be able to enter the UK from qualifying countries provided they meet the relevant requirements. The EU has published the list of qualifying countries - see



http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/pri/en/oj/dat/2004/l_094/l_09420040331en00070009.pdf. All PETS-qualifying countries are in the list, except Northern (Turkish) Cyprus.

There will still be free movement within the British Isles, including between the UK and the Republic of Ireland, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands. However, owners with PETS documents are advised to take these with them when travelling with their animal.

What if I have a PETS certificate?

Special arrangements have been agreed with the EU for pet owners whose animals have PETS certificates issued before 1 October 2004 which have a 'valid until date' beyond 30 September 2004. The decision establishing transitional arrangements has been published - see http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/pri/en/oj/dat/2004/l_098/l_09820040402en00550056.pdf. The decision permits dogs and cats to enter EU countries, except Sweden and the Republic of Ireland which have their own rules, using a valid PETS certificate from 3 July 2004. However, DEFRA strongly recommends that to avoid confusion or delay you use an EU Pet Passport or an official veterinary certificate where possible.

Please note that while you can now use a PETS certificate to enter most EU countries, you will not be able to use the certificate to return direct to the UK from some of them. Question and answer No. 25 on the DEFRA website gives more details - see http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/quarantine/regulation/eu_reg_qa.htm.

EU and non-EU listed countries

If you travel with your dog or cat from the UK to another EU country, it can enter that country using a valid PETS certificate. Your pet will be able to return to the UK using its PETS certificate.

If your pet is resident in an EU country other than the UK, or a non-EU listed country, and has a PETS certificate issued before 1 October 2004 you will be able to use the certificate to enter the UK until its 'valid until' date.

Animals entering the UK with a PETS certificate must also be accompanied by an official tick and tapeworm treatment certificate. You are advised to check in advance that a vet will be able to issue this.

Can rabbits and rodents travel abroad?

When imported into the UK from another EU country or from Andorra, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Norway, San Marino, Switzerland or the Vatican, there will be no rabies requirements. The EU may impose conditions on the movement of these animals at a later date.

Animals from these countries will be able to enter the UK on any route at any point of entry.

Animals in quarantine in the UK which came from any of these countries will become eligible for early release.

When imported into the UK from any other country, animals must be licensed into quarantine for 6 months as at present. The EU may revise this requirement at a later date.

What else do I need to know?

DEFRA has now issued new factsheets on the EU Regulation and the rules for travelling with dogs and cats. Further factsheets on ferrets and other species will be available shortly. DEFRA will continue to update their website with more information as it becomes available. If you need further information contact the PETS helpline.

Commercially traded animals

The Regulation also makes some amendments to the Balai directive on commercially traded animals (Council Directive 92/65/EEC of 13 July 1992) which now applies. For more details on commercially traded animals contact DEFRA's International Animal Health Division on 020 7904 6415 or email: iah-imports@defra.gsi.gov.uk.



If you want any other information on health issues concerning your cat please contact Orwell Veterinary Group on 01473 333677 and we will be happy to advise you.