

# Technical Instructions Document: For USDA-accredited Veterinarians Completing the *Certification of U.S.-issued Rabies Vaccination (For Live Dog Re-Entry into the United States)*

The purpose of this document is to provide instructions for owners of U.S.-vaccinated dogs and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)-accredited veterinarians to complete the *Certification of U.S.-issued Rabies Vaccination (For Live Dog Re-Entry into the United States)* form. This document provides instructions to owners for how to have this form completed by their U.S.-veterinarian prior to traveling outside the United States with their dogs.

## Purpose

The *Certification of U.S.-issued Rabies Vaccination (For Live Dog Re-Entry into the United States)* form is required for the importation (re-entry) of U.S.-vaccinated dogs that have been in countries with high risk of dog-maintained rabies virus variant (DMRVV high-risk countries)<sup>1</sup> within six months of re-entry into the United States. Although owners are required to complete the *Certification of U.S.-issued Rabies Vaccination* form before leaving the United States, CDC realizes that a transition period is needed to allow owners who left the United States without this form to align with these requirements.

During the transition period, the use of this form is not required if the importer has a copy of the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)-endorsed export health certificate that was used to ship the dog from the United States to a DMRVV high-risk country, and that export health certificate documents the microchip number and valid rabies vaccination administered in the United States. The rabies vaccine must be valid (not expired) on the date of return or the form will be invalid.

The *Certification of U.S.-issued Rabies Vaccination* form may also be used by those re-entering the United States with dogs from DMRVV-free and low-risk countries. Please note the use of this form is not required if the importer has a copy of the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)-endorsed export health certificate that was used to ship the dog from the United States to a DMRVV-free or low-risk country, and that export health certificate documents the microchip number. See [www.cdc.gov/dogtravel](http://www.cdc.gov/dogtravel) for other accepted documentation to bring dogs from DMRVV-free and low-risk countries into the United States.

Additionally, during the transition period, owners may contact their U.S. veterinarian to complete and certify the form after the dog has left the United States based on official medical records, when available (see requirements below for a veterinarian to certify the form). Again, during the transition period, a copy of the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)-endorsed export health certificate originally used to ship the dog from the United States to a DMRVV high-risk country can be used in lieu of this form, provided the microchip number and rabies vaccination documented on that export health certificate has not expired.

***Only owners of dogs with a current rabies vaccine administered within the United States<sup>2</sup> may use this form.***



<sup>1</sup> List of DMRVV high-risk countries is available at: [www.cdc.gov/importation/bringing-an-animal-into-the-united-states/high-risk.html](http://www.cdc.gov/importation/bringing-an-animal-into-the-united-states/high-risk.html)

<sup>2</sup> United States means the 50 States, District of Columbia, and the territories (also known as possessions) of the United States, including American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

## Owner Instructions

Owners must have the *Certification of U.S.-issued Rabies Vaccination* form completed by a USDA-accredited veterinarian **prior** to traveling outside the United States with their dog. People who leave the United States with their dogs without first obtaining this form will be required to have their dogs re-enter the United States as if they are foreign-vaccinated dogs. See information above on how owners may complete this form after leaving the United States during the transition period.

The dog must be accompanied by a printed copy of the certified document to re-enter the United States; a copy of the USDA Animal Plant Health Inspection Service Veterinary Service (APHIS VS)-endorsed certificate can be obtained in electronic form from the issuing USDA-accredited veterinarian. Failure to present this document upon arrival could result in the dog being denied entry and returned to the country of departure at the owner's expense.

This form is required for U.S.-vaccinated dogs that have been in a DMRVV high-risk country within the six months before arrival in the U.S. If the owner of a dog that has been in a DMRVV high-risk country within six months before arrival in the U.S. cannot obtain the *Certification of U.S.-issued Rabies Vaccination* form certified by the USDA or if the dog's rabies vaccination lapses while abroad, the owner must follow the requirements for importing a foreign-vaccinated dog from a DMRVV high-risk country available at [www.cdc.gov/dogtravel](http://www.cdc.gov/dogtravel). Owners of dogs from DMRVV-free or low-risk countries may also use this form for reentry into the U.S.

Dogs accompanied by a *Certification of U.S.-issued Rabies Vaccination* form may enter the U.S. at any port of entry. Rabies titer results and quarantine are not required for dogs accompanied by a *Certification of U.S.-issued Rabies Vaccination* form.

Dogs must receive their initial rabies vaccination on or after 12 weeks (84 days) of age or in accordance with manufacturer recommendations if licensed for use in older dogs (i.e., 16 weeks of age or older). The initial rabies vaccine must be administered at least 28 days before travel. **Vaccines administered prior to 12 weeks of age will not be accepted, regardless of manufacturer product licensing.**

Vaccines will be considered valid for a period of 1 or 3 years depending on manufacturer guidelines.

Booster vaccines are considered immediately valid in dogs over 15 months of age provided the dog has received at least 1 previous rabies vaccine administered on or after 12 weeks of age.

Owners of dogs which receive U.S.-issued rabies vaccines and maintain a current, valid U.S. rabies vaccination status will not be required to submit rabies titer results for their dogs or have their dogs quarantined to be eligible for importation. Any lapses in U.S.-issued vaccination coverage while abroad will result in having to have the dog revaccinated and submit a titer or have the dog undergo a 28-day quarantine at a CDC-registered [animal care facility](#) to be eligible for importation. For example, if a dog has a 1-year U.S.-issued rabies vaccine that was administered on 2/1/26, the dog must return to the United States on or before 2/1/27 to use the *Certification of U.S.-issued Rabies Vaccination* form for entry. If the dog's U.S.-issued rabies vaccine expires while the dog is abroad, then the dog must be revaccinated and a titer or quarantine will be required for the dog to be eligible for importation into the United States. This applies even if the vaccine administered abroad is a USDA-licensed vaccine.

## Requirements for Veterinarians Completing the *Certification of U.S.-issued Rabies Vaccination* form

For the form to be considered valid all of the following requirements must be met:

1. The dog must have been vaccinated in the United States.
2. The form must be completed prior to the dog's departure from the United States.
  - During the transition period, the form may be completed and certified retroactively based on official medical records after the dog has departed the United States.
3. The form must be completed at least 28 days after the dog's initial rabies vaccine administration or 28 days after booster vaccine administration if the dog's previous rabies vaccination had expired prior to receiving the booster.
4. The form must be completed by the USDA-accredited veterinarian that vaccinated the dog in the United States.

- In the event the veterinarian that vaccinated the dog is unavailable or is not a USDA-accredited veterinarian, a USDA-accredited veterinarian may certify the form if:
  - A valid, in-person, veterinary-client-patient relationship (VCPR) as defined by the American Veterinary Medical Association<sup>3</sup> exists with at least one veterinarian currently in the practice in which the USDA-accredited veterinarian practices medicine; and
  - The dog's information (breed, sex, age, microchip) and vaccination history can be verified using the practice's existing medical records.

***If the USDA-accredited veterinarian completing the form cannot verify all required information via the clinic's medical records or a VCPR does not exist, the USDA-accredited veterinarian may not issue this form.***

## Requirements for USDA Enforcement of the *Certification of U.S.-issued Rabies Vaccination form*

The USDA-accredited veterinarian must submit this form electronically to USDA Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Veterinary Services (VS) for endorsement via the [Veterinary Export Health Certification System \(VEHCS system\)](#). CDC will only accept digital USDA APHIS VS endorsement through VEHCS.

There will be a [VS User Fee](#) associated with endorsement of the certificate; certificates will not be processed until payment is received.

## Instructions for Veterinarians Completing the *Certification of U.S.-issued Rabies Vaccination form* through VEHCS

### Consignor

List the name, address, phone number and email address of the consignor (shipper) of the dog.

List physical address. P.O. Boxes are not permitted.

### Consignee

List the name, U.S. address, U.S. phone number and email address of the consignee (owner) of the dog. This individual may also be the consignor.

List physical U.S. address where dog will be located upon return to the United States. P.O. Boxes are not permitted.

### Country of Origin

Enter United States or USA

### State of Origin

Enter state of residence where the dog resides in the United States

### Country of Destination

Prefilled (it will show United States or USA)

### Zone of Destination

Leave blank

### Place of Origin

Leave blank

### Port of Embarkation/Border Crossing

List intended port of re-entry when arriving back in the United States.

### Estimated Date of Shipment

Enter estimated date of return.

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<sup>3</sup> [The veterinarian-client-patient relationship \(VCPR\) | American Veterinary Medical Association \(avma.org\)](#)

**The date of return must be before the dog's U.S.-issued rabies vaccination will expire for this certificate to be valid.**

#### **Means of Transport**

Enter air, sea, or land.

#### **CITES Permit Number**

Leave blank

#### **Description of Commodity**

Enter or select "dogs"

Please note: this form is valid for one dog only. Each dog requires a separate form.

#### **Date of Inspection**

Enter date that the USDA-accredited veterinarian examined the dog. If the USDA-accredited veterinarian did not examine the dog, then enter the date the dog was last examined by a veterinarian in the clinic based on the clinic's existing medical records.

#### **Total Quantity**

Enter 1

#### **Additional Information**

List all the countries dog is expected to travel to during its time outside the United States.

#### **Total Number of Packages/Containers**

Enter 1

#### **Identification/Seal Numbers**

Leave blank

#### **Commodities Intended Use**

Leave blank

#### **Type of Admission**

Leave blank

#### **Identification of Commodities**

Enter name of dog, ISO-compatible microchip number\*, microchip implant date<sup>‡</sup>, breed, date of birth, sex and color of dog.

\*Microchip is required for re-entry into the United States. The microchip must be implanted on or before the date of the most recent rabies. Rabies vaccines administered prior to the microchip implantation date are invalid.

<sup>‡</sup>If the implant date is unknown, input the earliest date when the ISO-compliant microchip is documented in the dog's medical or vaccination records.

#### **Certification Statement**

Read and verify all the statements in Section 21 before certifying the form. The form may be completed either based on direct examination of the animal or based on official medical records maintained by the vaccinating clinic in the United States.

During the transition period, if this form is completed retroactively (after the pet has left the United States), the USDA-accredited veterinarian may only complete the form based on official medical records maintained by the vaccinating clinic in the United States where the animal was vaccinated.

#### **Rabies vaccine information**

Include all rabies vaccines the dog has received in the previous 3 years. If the dog has received more than 5 vaccines in the past 3 years, input the 5 most recent rabies vaccines.

Enter product name, vaccine manufacturer, lot number, vaccine product expiration date, date the rabies vaccine was administered, and date the next rabies vaccine is due.

For each row of vaccine data, each column must be completed or the document will be invalid. If the vaccine product expiration date for the most recent vaccination is unknown CDC will not accept the vaccine record and the dog will be required to be revaccinated prior to leaving the United States.