

Importation and Interstate Movement of Animals

International Importation

CDC regulates the importation of dogs and cats into the United States. Importers of dogs must comply with rabies vaccination requirements (42 CFR, Part 71.51 [c] [<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dq/animal.html>]) and complete CDC Form 75.37 (http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dq/pdf/animal/dog_quarantine_notice_08-04-06-cdc7537.pdf). In Alabama, the State Veterinarian at the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries should be notified within 72 hours of the arrival of any imported dog required to be placed in confinement under the CDC regulation. Failure of the owner to comply with these confinement requirements should be promptly reported to the Division of Global Migration and Quarantine, CDC (telephone: 404-639-3441).

Federal regulations alone are insufficient to prevent the introduction of rabid animals into the United States. All imported dogs and cats are subject to state and local laws governing rabies and should be currently vaccinated against rabies in accordance with Section 3-7A-2 of the Code of Alabama 1975. Failure of the owner to comply with State or local requirements should be referred to the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries.

Interstate Transportation

Before interstate movement (including commonwealths and territories), dogs, cats, and ferrets, should be currently vaccinated against rabies in accordance with Section 3-7A-2 of the Code of Alabama 1975. Animals in transit should be accompanied by a currently valid Alabama Rabies Vaccination Certificate. (A copy of the form is found in the Forms section of this Manual, page 39.) When an interstate health certificate or certificate of veterinary inspection is required, it should contain the same rabies vaccination information as the Alabama Rabies Vaccination Certificate.

Importation of Non-Domesticated Animals into Alabama

According to the Prohibited Animal Regulation of Alabama (§220-3-.26 AL Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources Administrative Code) no one:

“shall possess, sell, offer for sale, import, bring, or cause to be brought or imported in the State of Alabama...any member of the family Cervidae (to include but not be limited to deer, elk, moose, caribou), species of coyote, species of fox, species of raccoon, species of skunk, wild rodent or strain of wild turkey, black bear (*Ursus Americanus*), mountain lion (*Felis concolor*), bobcat (*Felis rufus*), Pronghorn Antelope (*Antilocapridae*), any non-domestic member of the families *Suidae* (pigs), *Tayassuidae* (peccaries), or *Bovidae* (bison, mountain goat, mountain sheep).”

Areas with Dog-to-Dog Rabies Transmission

Canine rabies virus variants have been eliminated in the US. Rabid dogs have been introduced into the continental United States from areas with dog-to-dog rabies transmission. ADPH Zoonotic, Rabies Control and Bite Manual, July 2015

This practice poses the risk of introducing canine-transmitted rabies to areas where it does not currently exist. The movement of dogs for the purposes of adoption or sales from areas with dog-to-dog rabies transmission should be prohibited.

Rabies Control during a Disaster Response

Animals might be displaced during and after man-made or natural disasters and require emergency sheltering. Animal rabies vaccination and exposure histories often are not available for displaced animals. Disaster response creates situations where animal caretakers might lack appropriate training and pre-exposure vaccination. In such situations, it is critical to implement and coordinate rabies-prevention and –control measures to reduce the risk of rabies transmission and the need for human post-exposure prophylaxis. Such measures include:

1. Coordinate relief efforts of individuals and organizations with the local emergency operations center before deployment.
2. Adopt minimum standards for animal caretakers that include personal protective equipment, previous rabies vaccination, and appropriate training in animal handling.
3. Examine each animal at a triage site for signs of rabies.
4. Isolate animals exhibiting signs of rabies, pending evaluation by a veterinarian.
5. Ensure that all animals have a unique identifier.
6. Administer a rabies vaccination to all dogs, cats, and ferrets unless reliable proof of vaccination exists. This is especially important for dogs and cats housed in group settings. Personnel should be aware that rabies vaccines may take as long as 28 days to become effective.
7. Maintain documentation of animal disposition and location (i.e., returned to owner, died or euthanized, adopted, relocated to another shelter and address of new location).
8. Provide facilities to confine and observe animals involved in exposures.
9. Report human exposures to appropriate public health authorities

For more information on information on animal shelters in times of disaster, consult the CDC's Interim Guidelines for Animal Health and Control of Disease Transmission in Pet Shelters (<http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/animalhealthguidelines.asp>).

Alabama's primary agency in times of disaster for animal health is the Department of Agriculture and Industry, lead by the State Veterinarian and the Alabama State Agriculture Response Team (SART). For more information about Alabama's animal health disaster plans and protocols, consult Alabama's SART's website (<http://www.alsart.org>).