

PET TRAVEL SCHEME - WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Last update July 2004



This is a Government scheme, brought out as an alternative to quarantine for British dogs and cats which *come back into* this country. It is called the 'Pet Travel Scheme'.

The scheme changed slightly in July 2004. This information leaflet is based on the new scheme.

The scheme has certain restrictions:

- It only applies to dogs, cats and ferrets
- It only applies to animals coming from certain countries - mainly those in the EU, and a long list of Rabies-free islands all over the world. The USA & Canada are also included.
- It only applies to animals which arrive in Britain at certain Ports- these are London Heathrow & Gatwick airport (only some routes), Portsmouth, Plymouth, Poole & Dover Ports and the Channel Tunnel.

For your dog or cat to come back into England, they must have documentation which confirms that they have had the following done:

- Been micro-chipped - this must be done before any testing or Rabies vaccination.
- Had a Rabies vaccination. Current recommendations are that one injection is sufficient for the majority of animals. It is safer not to do this at the same time as other vaccinations. The vaccination needs boosting every two years for dogs and cats.
- A blood test to check the vaccination has worked. This is taken 30 days after the vaccination. A word of warning here - lab testing facilities are very restricted and there may be some delay in receiving results - usually about a month. Also, a small percentage of pets will 'fail' the blood test and need to be re-vaccinated and tested. Some rare individuals may never pass the blood test (although we haven't seen any of these ourselves).
- Once your pet has a positive blood test result, proving that the vaccination has worked, we are allowed to issue you with a Pet Passport to allow your pet back into England. However, there must be at least 6 months between the date the blood test is taken and the date you come back into the UK.
- Following a positive blood test, you do not need to retest in future years, as long as you have the Rabies vaccination repeated within the recommended time limits. These are *less* than 2 years for dogs and cats. Please note that some countries insist on Rabies vaccination every year if you are resident there, although we hope that this will be clarified shortly.
- Between 24 & 48 hrs before you come back to the UK, your pet must be certified that he or she has had a special wormer and some sort of tick treatment. In practice this will mean finding a vet abroad to carry this out. There is a list of contacts in France, and they just complete the relevant page on the Pet Passport. If you go abroad for a day trip, the wormer will need to be given in the UK before you go.

Documentation

The Pet Passport is a little blue book in which all of the above are entered and signed for. **It is only valid in the EU.**

For animals entering the UK from outside the EU, we need to issue a different certificate, called a PETS 1 form.

Quarantine

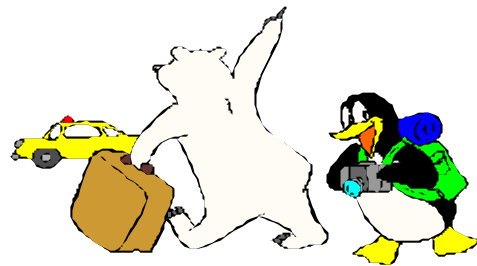
There is still a quarantine period of 6 months for all animals who come into this country, and are not covered by a Pet Passport. Should you not have the correct documentation, your pet will be put into quarantine until the paperwork can be sorted out.

There is also an option to put your pet into quarantine for a few months only, if, for example, the six month period since the blood test has only been partially completed, but all other aspects are OK. You will need an import licence for this, and should contact DEFRA about it.

Export

The new Pet Passports have the advantage that they allow you to move your pet freely within the EU. Therefore, you no longer need an Export Certificate to take your pet out of the UK – as long as it is an EU country you are going to.

Taking your pet out of the UK to a non-EU country will NOT be covered by the Pet Passport. As different countries have different regulations, we advise that you contact DEFRA at Taunton (if you live in Dorset) or Reading (for Hampshire) and find out what type of Export certificate, if any, is required for your destination country. (Phone numbers are at the end of this handout). This may involve an official Health check before you go, and completion of many forms! Try to allow 2 months for this process.



Foreign diseases

There are some diseases on the Continent which we do not have in the UK. Your pet will have no immunity to them and is therefore more vulnerable to protection. Some of these are carried by ticks (eg Babesiosis, Ehrlichiosis) so we would advise that you have your pet treated against ticks BEFORE you go. Anywhere south of mid-France will also have Heartworm endemic in their animal population (spread by mosquito) and also Leishmanniasis (spread by sandfly). We recommend a collar (Scalibor) which protects against ticks and sandflies, but takes 2 weeks to be fully effective. Using Milbemax wormer or Program Plus tablets monthly will protect against heartworm. If your pet is ill while away, we would recommend seeing a local vet rather than leaving it till you get back. Many of these diseases are potentially fatal, but can be cured only if treated immediately. Note that you will still need your pet treated against ticks & worms before you come back to the UK. Many insurance policies cover treatment abroad, but not all, so please check before you go.

Costs

There is no subsidy from the Government for this scheme so unfortunately the full costs are borne by the owner of the pet.

Prices for the vaccinations etc (including VAT) are:

Rabies vaccination – 1st	£32.90
“ “ - 2 nd (if necessary)	£20.00
Rabies booster	£32.90
Micro-chipping	£18.50
Lab test	£71.15
Pet Passport certificate (EU only)	£23.50
Export health certificate (non-EU)	£55.81

Remember to allow for the cost of worming/tick treatment on the way back, and also any Export Health certificates that may be necessary.

For further information, the DEFRA website is full of up-to-date and useful help. You may find the following numbers useful:

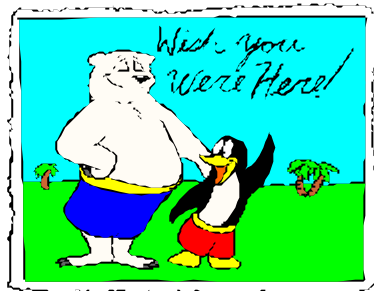
DEFRA Helpline -0870 241 1710

DEFRA Taunton - 01823 337922

DEFRA Reading - 0118 959 6695

DEFRA Website - www.defra.gov.uk - a very useful site.

We would urge you to confirm all details with DEFRA, as we cannot be held responsible for advice in this leaflet becoming out of date. However, we do make every effort to ensure this does not happen.



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