

# Animal Health Certificate (AHC)

## Post-Brexit pet travel guide for owners



This guidance applies to people travelling to and from **Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales)** with their pet cats, ferrets or dogs, including assistance dogs. This guidance is only for travel of up to 5 pets and for non-commercial reasons.

You need to follow these guidelines to travel between **Great Britain** and **Northern Ireland**, as well as between **Great Britain** and the **EU**. Travel to other non-EU countries is not covered in these guidelines.

### **Travelling into an EU country or Northern Ireland \* from \* Great Britain**

You can no longer use a pet passport issued in Great Britain (England, Wales and Scotland) for travel to an EU country or Northern Ireland. You can still use a pet passport issued in an EU country or Northern Ireland (for Northern Ireland see additional guidance below).

When travelling to an EU country or Northern Ireland, your pet needs:

- a [microchip](#) placed or read before any rabies vaccination
- a valid [rabies vaccination](#) at least 21 days before certification and when the pet was at least 12 weeks of age
- an [animal health certificate](#) unless you have a pet passport issued in an EU country or Northern Ireland to be obtained no more than 10 days before travel
- [tapeworm treatment](#) for dogs if you're travelling directly to Finland, Ireland, Northern Ireland, or Malta

You will need to go through a [travellers' point of entry](#) when you arrive in an EU country or Northern Ireland. A list of these can be found here: [https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/pet-movement/eu-legislation/non-commercial-non-eu/tpe\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/pet-movement/eu-legislation/non-commercial-non-eu/tpe_en)

Always check the rules of the country you are travelling to or through for any additional restrictions or requirements before you travel – it is your responsibility to check the current rules for travel and arrange the appropriate documents.

### **Repeat trips to an EU country or Northern Ireland**

Your pet will need a new [animal health certificate](#) for each trip to an EU country or Northern Ireland.

Your pet will not need a repeat [rabies vaccination](#) so long as their rabies vaccinations are up to date.

### **Getting an Animal Health Certificate**

You must book an appointment with one of our Official Veterinarians to get an animal health certificate. The certificate will be specific to the country you are entering the EU through but can then be used for onwards travel through other EU countries. You need the certificate no more than 10 days before you travel. Please give us as much notice as possible when booking the appointment.

We cannot guarantee a last minute appointment for an Animal Health Certificate, this is due to the time required, and only Official Veterinarians can do these appointments.

We will request you to send us information about your pet and the travel in advance of your appointment. When booking the appointment, please tell us the country of entry to the EU you will be using.

When you come to your appointment for the Animal Health Certificate, you must bring proof of your pet's:

- [microchipping](#) date
- rabies [vaccination](#) history

Your pet's animal health certificate will be valid after the date of issue for:

- 10 days for entry into the EU or Northern Ireland
- 4 months for onward travel within the EU
- 4 months for re-entry to Great Britain

These certificates can not be re-used and your pet will need a new animal health certificate for each new trip to an EU country or Northern Ireland from Great Britain.

Contact us for estimates of costs for Animal Health Certificates.

## **Travelling \* into \* Great Britain with your pet**

An EU pet passport issued in a member state is still valid to **enter** GB.

Before they enter GB, all pets must be:

- [microchipped](#)
- vaccinated against rabies (must be at least 12 weeks old before vaccinated)

Travellers from the EU need to wait 21 days after the first vaccination before travel into GB (not for boosters as long as done before the due date).

### **Travel from countries not free from tapeworm (*Echinococcus multilocularis*)**

Unless entering GB directly from Finland, Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, Norway, or Malta, you'll need to take your dog to a vet for an approved tapeworm treatment. You must do this no less than 24 hours and no more than 120 hours (5 days) before entering GB.

### **Pet travel documents**

Your pet must have one of the following documents when entering or returning to GB:

- an EU pet passport issued in the EU (or in GB if issued before 1 January 2021), or a pet passport from another Part 1 listed third country
- the animal health certificate (AHC) issued in GB used to travel to the EU – which you can use to re-enter GB for up to 4 months after it was issued
- a GB pet health certificate (for travel into GB only) – this is needed if your AHC is out of date

## Check routes and travel companies

[Check the routes before you travel](#). You must travel using approved routes. Your pet's documents and microchip will be checked when entering GB.

Owners of assistance dogs returning to GB do not have to travel on approved routes. You must notify the point of entry in advance that you're travelling with an assistance dog to ensure the appropriate checks are done.

## EU residents travelling to and from the UK

If your pet has an EU passport and their rabies booster is due close to the period of travel, please have the rabies vaccination done in your EU country of residence before travel. **UK vets are no longer authorised to complete rabies vaccination details in an EU passport.**

## Additional guidance for people travelling to and from Northern Ireland with their pet cats, ferrets or dogs, including assistance dogs.

### Between Northern Ireland and the EU

From 1 January 2021, EU pet travel rules will continue to apply to Northern Ireland. This includes the need to have a pet passport\*\* and a rabies vaccination. There will be no change to the requirements governing pet travel between NI and the EU including the Republic of Ireland (ROI).

### From Great Britain to Northern Ireland

It has been confirmed that from 1 January 2021, Great Britain (GB) will be treated as a Part II listed country. This means that pet travel from GB to NI, including where a traveller is returning to NI from GB, will require:

- an EU pet passport\*\* or an Animal Health Certificate
- rabies vaccination with a 21 day wait from the successful rabies vaccination
- tapeworm treatment
- entry to NI via a Travellers Point of Entry (TPE) at Belfast Port; Larne Port, Belfast International, Belfast City or City of Derry Airports.

\*\*Current EU pet passports issued in NI and GB up to 31 December 2020, will not be valid for travel to the EU (including NI) after the 31 December 2020. Interim measures have been put in place. If you are travelling in early 2021, you should contact your vet in Northern Ireland who will arrange to update your pet passport appropriately to allow travel. A new style UK (NI) branded EU Pet Passport will be available shortly and these will be distributed to veterinary practices in Northern Ireland in due course.

## Help and support

You can contact the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) if you've got questions or need more information.

### Travel to the EU or Northern Ireland

Contact the Pet Travel Scheme helpline if you need more information about pet travel.

#### Pet Travel Scheme helpline

[pettravel@apha.gov.uk](mailto:pettravel@apha.gov.uk)

Telephone: 0370 241 1710

Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5pm (closed on bank holidays)

[Find out about call charges](#)

### Travel to a non-EU country

Contact APHA if you need more information about pet travel to a non-EU country.

#### Animal and Plant Health Agency

[exports@apha.gov.uk](mailto:exports@apha.gov.uk)

Telephone: 03000 200 301

Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5pm

[Find out about call charges](#)

### If you have questions specific to Northern Ireland

Trade Section

Veterinary Service Animal Health Group

1st Floor

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Tel: 028 77 442141

E-mail: [tradeadminpost@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:tradeadminpost@daera-ni.gov.uk)

## **Summary**

Please read our full guidance before arranging travel with your pet. Further guidance is available from <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pet-travel-to-and-from-great-britain>

The main change for pet travel out of GB is that **UK pet passports are no longer valid** for travel into the EU. An **Animal Health Certificate** is now required for each trip to the EU, unless your animal already has a valid **non-UK** EU passport, issued in an EU country.

### **Summary of requirements for travel from GB to the EU or NI:**

- Microchip
- Rabies vaccination (at least 21 days before travel/certification, and when the pet was at least 12 weeks of age)
- AHC (Animal Health Certificate) no more than 10 days before travel
  - Or a valid non-UK EU passport
- Tapeworm treatment if travelling to Finland, Northern Ireland, Ireland or Malta (to be given and certified by a veterinarian 24-120 hours before entry to EU/NI)
- Entry must be through a Traveller's Point of Entry

### **Travelling back to GB**

- Microchip
- Rabies vaccination (at least 21 days before travel/certification, and when the pet was at least 12 weeks of age)
- AHC that was used to exit GB can be used to come back within 4 months
  - Or UK passport supplied before 31/12/2020
  - Or EU passport issued in the EU
- Tapeworm treatment unless travelling from Finland, Northern Ireland, Ireland or Malta (to be given and certified in the original AHC or the valid passport by a veterinarian 24-120 hours before entry to GB)
- You must enter GB via an Approved Route (except for assistance dogs)

**Please remember, it is the responsibility of the owner (or person(s) transporting the pets) to know the requirements of travel for all countries travelled to and through, not your veterinary practice.**

We can provide guidance where appropriate, and complete the appointments for rabies vaccinations, certification, tapeworm treatments and any other necessary health checks you require. You must bring all supporting documents and information we request in order to complete these appointments correctly, otherwise we may not be able to provide you with certification.

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