

TAKING YOUR DOG/CAT FROM THAILAND – international pet travel

The most important guideline is to start the preparations early, especially when travelling to Europe. Do some research and contact the officials/ vet in the country of import to make sure you are aware of all the latest regulations (Care for Dogs cannot guarantee that all the information on this site is up-to-date, as we are not officials!). For example when travelling to Europe, after microchipping and Rabies vaccination there is a waiting period before the pet can travel, so start early.

Below there are general guidelines for pet travel preparations for countries that we get most enquiries or where dogs from Care for Dogs have been adopted to. After the guidelines there is general info how to prepare your dog and the dogs' documents for the flight. Also there is info what you need when applying an Export License from Thailand to your dog.

EU-Countries: (additional requirements for UK/Ireland/Malta, Sweden & Norway)

- **Microchipping & Rabies vaccination:** Registered vet should do these and prepare a vaccination booklet for the dog. Microchipping date should be prior/the same date than the rabies vaccination date. Make sure signatures and stamps are all in place and correct.
- **Vaccination booklet** (with signature of registered vet, see above) **& microchip card**
- Do booster rabies vaccination 2 weeks later (not recorded in vaccination booklet – this is recommended especially if the dog hasn't been regularly or lately vaccinated against Rabies). In addition to vaccination, EU requires an antibody titration from blood serum sample to affirm that the pet is free of Rabies and the vaccine has been effective. *(Frank, if your dog has had her regular Rabies vaccinations and the last one is given within a last few months, the booster might not be necessary)*
- **Earliest 30 days after the vaccination:** registered vet should collect blood serum sample and sign the (pre-filled) sample form for the laboratory (you can order/download these from the lab website) (Dog should have no food 12 h before blood test). **Laboratory performing the analysis should be a EU approved lab, preferably in a EU country!** (CfD uses a lab in Germany)

- **Send blood serum to EU approved laboratory (preferably in EU)** where the analyze can be performed. Blood sample can be stored in fridge for some weeks. At the moment blood sample delivery and analyzing cost approx. 80 Euros all together.
- **Assuming blood serum test for Rabies antiviral agent is resulting over 0.5 IU per ml, the dog can travel 3 calendar months from the date the sample was taken** (note: not from the date the blood sample was analyzed).
- **Print and pre-fill EU FORM 998/2003 for EU countries.** You can download it from here: http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/liveanimals/pets/nocomm_third_en.htm. Usually only the first page needs to be filled in (except for Finland also Echinococcosis treatment on 2nd page is required - this should be done min. 7 days before departure by registered vet). **Make sure all the details (Microchip implantation date, microchip number, all details for rabies vaccination (check them from vaccination booklet), and results for Rabies antiviral test (check them from result document you received from the EU lab) are filled in.**
- If the pet is travelling to Switzerland: Apply for import permit from Swiss authorities

USA & Canada

- **For USA** the regulations are fairly simple – microchipping & Rabies vaccination (see links: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/animals/animal_import/animal_imports_pets.shtml <http://www.cdc.gov/animalimportation/dogs.html>).
- **Microchipping & Rabies vaccination at least 30 days prior entering:** Registered vet should do these and prepare a vaccination booklet for the dog. We recommend to do the microchipping prior or on the same day with the vaccination. Make sure signatures and stamps are all in place and correct.
- **Vaccination booklet** (with signature of registered vet, see above) **& microchip card**
- You can download **International health certificate (USDA)** required by many airlines from here: <http://blog.petrelocation.com/blog/pet-travel-expert/the-aphis-vet-health-certificate-form-7001-for-international-pet-transport>. It is recommended to check carefully that everything in

the form is filled out right. As the regulations may change, please contact the officials in the country for import to make sure you have everything in order.

- For **Canada requirements are fairly easy: the dog need to be accompanied with vaccination booklet stating rabies vaccination by registered vet.** We highly recommend getting your pet microchipped too (pet is required to have a tattoo or microchip for identification). There is no waiting period acquired after the vaccination – the animal is ready to go as soon as papers are clarified. (<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/imp/petani/canin4e.shtml>). However Thailand officials usually prefer the Rabies vaccination being made 30 days prior the flight.

Preparing the dog for the flight:

- Buy transport box & water feeder and some puppy/baby pads (for absorbing any liquids, will be placed under the dog in the crate). **Transport box should fulfill IATA requirements** (http://www.iata.org/whatwedo/cargo/live_animals/Pages/pets.aspx). Find the appropriate size for your dog by measuring it by following instruction behind previous link. Crates can be purchased from biggest pet stores – some sizes, especially the bigger ones often have to be preordered so be on time. Note that the crate should have ventilation on all three sides, also on the back. (Note: Most of the transport boxes in Thailand are imported goods and therefore can cost almost the same then in western countries – but they can be used in the future for other travels. Or if you don't need it afterwards, consider to donate your old crate for your local animal welfare organization!)
- Start crate training minimum 2 weeks before departure. Place the crate somewhere where it's comfortably accessible for the dog and place dog's own items (towels, toys etc.) inside with some treats. Start with dog getting to know the crate freely, and continue with the dog spending longer times at the crate in intervals. Remember to praise the dog about successful crate time and when it's feeling comfortable in the crate.

Preparing the final documents/flight reservations for the animal:

- **Minimum 3 working days and maximum 7 days before the flight: Apply for Export Permission (Thailand)** from your local **Thai Department of Livestock Development (Link <http://www.dld.go.th/webenglish/move1.html>)**. They will also certify the health/veterinary certificates required for traveling and entering the destination country.

- Take along:
 - **Completed Application Form for Thai Department of Livestock Development**– they will prepare the export license and Thai health certificate based on the information in this document. You may need a Thai person to help you with fill it as it’s mostly in Thai.
 - **Pre-filled EU FORM 998/2003 (for EU)/ USDA health certificate (if dog going to US)**
 - **Dog on a leash or cat in crate**
 - **Original vaccination card (completed and signed by licensed vet) + photocopy of card**
 - **Copy of traveler’s passport photo page**
 - **Microchip card**
 - **Rabies Test Certificate (for EU import)**
 - **Payment: 50 Baht**

- Take copies of all the papers – the airlines will usually need copies of the most important documents. And it’s good to have copies as these are the identifying documents for your pet!

- Contact the airline to make a flight booking for dog from Bangkok (usually) BKK – destination. Most of the times dogs travel as excess baggage with accompanying person, usually the owner. **For the booking you will need the following info: a) breed of the dog, b) dimensions (length, height & width) of the transportation crate, c) total weight of crate including dog** (you can weight the crate and dog separately and just add the figures together).

- Note: some airlines charge the flight by weight of crate+animal and some airlines per animal regardless the size. Contact your planned airline beforehand for the info of payment method and charges. We recommend to make enquiries and comparisons to find the best and most reliable airline that matches your expectations.

- Note: some airlines/airports especially in US have regulations regarding the weather conditions (very cold or hot environment) during transiting flights which can place some conditions to the states/cities your pet can change it’s flight. If you’re planning flying your destination with connecting flights, contact all the airports where you plan to transit to ensure your pet can fly with you and transit on the same airports. Also many countries have their own regulations for pet transit (f.ex. to Hong Kong a pet can travel only by cargo, not as an excess baggage) – remember to contact the authorities in all the countries you are planning to change the plane.

- For sending your dog via cargo is also possible – contact your local and trusted cargo handler/airline cargo department for details.

- **Important: Check if all documents (incl. the ones from Thai Department of Livestock Development) have the microchip number and microchip date!** You will receive two copies of the export license and Thai vet certificate from the **Thai Department of Livestock Development** – remember to keep them both as other one will be fixed on the crate at the airport!

- **The day before departure, check your documents one more time and prepare the crate and dog for travelling:**
 - Prepare the following documents for easy but safe access where they are all placed together (f.ex. plastic pocket, envelope or folder)
 - **Cash (if ticket not paid yet)**
 - **Original Export Permit**
 - **Original Health Certificate**
 - **Original Vaccination Card**
 - **Original Rabies Test result Certificate (for entering EU)**
 - **Original Microchip Card**
 - **Medical history and copy test results (if your dog has any)**
 - **Place a new collar on the dog/cat**
 - **Any unfinished medication (if your dog has any)**
 - **Leash or cat harness**

 - Check the dogs for ticks/fleas or any other issues. Bath and groom your pet, apply Frontline or other tick prevention product if needed.

 - Place a puppy/baby pad on the bottom of the crate. Place a towel/blanket in the crate for comfort. Remove wheels from the crate if they're fitted.

- Shred some newspaper and push to the back of the crate for extra comfort and absorbment.
- Prepare the water feeder attached to the crate (check your airline for the requirements)
- Cut up an old t-shirt (preferably unwashed) and leave a piece in the crate. Your scent will provide some comfort for the dog.
- You can place a single raw hide chew for the dog (not permitted to cats) in the crate – any additional food inside the crate is permitted!
- Take along copy of flight confirmation BKK – destination + cash for payment of ticket
- The day before departure ensure plenty of exercise for the dog.

- **Departure day**
 - Keep last feeding small.
 - Ensure the crate door is locked properly – attach some plastic electrical cable ties for extra safety. Note: Usually airline personnel are not permitted to be in contact with the animal after check-in in departure and collection by the owner in destination and the crate must NOT be opened. There are some airlines (f.ex. KLM) who have trained pet handlers to look after your dog during transiting flights.
 - If your dog is travelling as cargo and/or the flight is long with multiple transits you can fix a small bag of food to the side of the crate by tying through grills.
 - Check-in with your dog on time, be assured that everything goes well and try not to get sentimental about anything. The more relaxed you are, the more relaxed your pet will

be too. Enjoy your flight and collect your pet (usually somewhere in the baggage area) when you get to your destination.

Additional info:

We know all this above sounds very complicated and hard to pull through, but be assured: there are thousands of pets travelling around the world all the time and it is very rare that some problems or complications occur. If you follow the guidelines above and even contact authorities, airlines etc. on time for the latest, up-to-date information, and check (and double-check!) your documents, everything should go smoothly. Many others before you have relocated with their pet before with great success.

Because there are multiple deadlines and time lines (rabies vaccination, vet checks, crate training etc.) we recommend to collect and mark to your calendar the dates of all the different steps you need to do with your pet to prevent forgetting anything.

For those who are busy or are feeling overwhelmed by the documentation needed, there is many good, professional pet relocation companies that handle everything for your pet in exchange for their charges.

It is indeed very possible to take your loved pet along when leaving Thailand – it's best for your pet to be with it's own pack, aparting from people they know is always traumatic. Dogs and cats are usually very good travellers (most of them sleep during the flight). The best advice we can give you to ease your pets travel experience: behave as relaxed and with ease at the airport and during the preparations and check-in - like it would be something you do with your dog every day! That's why it's important to be on time and well prepared. Your pet senses and monitors your behavior and mood and adjust its own behavior accordingly. Good crate training also makes miracles and your pet feels safe inside the crate it's already familiar with.

Important: it is highly recommended NOT to sedate your pet for the trip – drugs can have unexpected side-effects and it is not possible to monitor the condition of the dog during the trip!!

For the people interested in international adoptions and having one of these great Thai dogs to become a part of their family; we are indeed arranging international adoptions and following the guidelines above. The costs of everything needed will be paid by the adopter.

