



Australian Government

Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service

INFORMATION SHEET 4 DISABILITY ASSISTANCE DOGS

QUARANTINE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE IMPORTATION OF DISABILITY ASSISTANCE DOGS FROM AQIS APPROVED COUNTRIES IN WHICH RABIES IS WELL CONTROLLED

30 DAYS QUARANTINE SURVEILLANCE IN AUSTRALIA

Disability Assistance dogs are not eligible for import into Australia until 6 months have elapsed from the day blood was collected for the RNATT.

Further advice can be found at www.aqis.gov.au or by email at animalimp@aqis.gov.au or by ph +612 6272 4454 or by fax +612 6272 3110.

SUMMARY

These guidelines are for the importation into Australia of disability assistance dogs accompanying a disabled person. The conditions are designed to allow the performance of quarantine as quarantine surveillance outside a government quarantine station so that the disabled person may have the use of their assistance dog during that period.

All animals entering Australia require an Import Permit, issued by AQIS. To obtain an Import Permit, an application to import your pet must be completed. Your application must include your pet's microchip number. An Import Permit will be returned to you. The Import Permit contains Veterinary Certificate A and B which must be completed and endorsed by an Official Veterinarian in the country of export prior to the arrival of your pet in Australia. The steps below provide information for completing the entire import process.

The owner/importer must pay all [quarantine fees](#) associated with the import and quarantine accommodation of your dog or cat in Australia.

Updated May 2004

*check once
completed*

STEP 1: GENERAL ELIGIBILITY

Time Frame: Confirm eligibility before proceeding.

Proof of disability assistance status: Documents supporting the person's disability, specialised training of the disability assistance dog and the person's requirement of the disability assistance dog will be required.

Residency: Your dog must have been continuously living in the country of export for a minimum of 6 months immediately prior to shipment, or since direct importation from Australia (please see last page before proceeding), or since birth.

The dog must not have been under quarantine restrictions in the 30 days prior to export.

AQIS will allow the importation of dogs from the European Union that have not completed 6 months residency in the country of export. The animal(s) must however have been continuously resident for the 6 months prior to export in AQIS approved European Union countries. Documentation to support residency status must be provided to the Official Veterinarian endorsing Veterinary Certificates A and B.

Pregnancy: Female dogs must not be more than 6 weeks pregnant nor be suckling young at time of export.

Age: The dog must be more than 6 months old at export.

STEP 2: MICROCHIP DOG

Time Frame: Before applying for a permit to import

Dogs must be identified by a microchip that can be read by an Avid®, Trovan®, Destron® or other ISO compatible reader.

STEP 3: RABIES VACCINATION

Time Frame: Within 1 year of export.

Arrange for your dog to be vaccinated/ revaccinated with an approved inactivated rabies vaccine according to **a** or **b**.

a) Primovaccination The animal must be at least 3 months old at the time of the first vaccination. The vaccination must be given between 12 months and 90 days prior to export.

b) Subsequent Vaccinations Where the primovaccination or subsequent vaccinations were given more than 12 months prior to the date of export a booster vaccination must be given. This booster must be given within 12 months prior to export.

The primovaccination certificate, or the most current rabies vaccination booster certificate must be presented to the Official Veterinarian when completing Section 7 of the application form for an AQIS Import Permit.

STEP 4: FIND A GOVERNMENT APPROVED VETERINARIAN, AN OFFICIAL VETERINARIAN AND A GOVERNMENT APPROVED LABORATORY.

Time Frame: As soon as possible

An Official Veterinarian: is a government officer usually employed by the government veterinarian administration (e.g. in the USA – United States Department of Agriculture / Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service) in the exporting country. Official Veterinarians generally do not work in private practice. Official Veterinarians are able to sign certificates on behalf of the government’s veterinary administration. Official Vets endorse Veterinary Certificate A and complete Veterinary Certificate B that are provided with your AQIS Import Permit. The Official Veterinarian will also help you find a “government approved vet” and a “government approved laboratory”.

A government approved vet: You should call the Official Vet, or quarantine administration or veterinary administration in your country to determine which vets you can use to prepare your pet for export. This government approved veterinarian will prepare your pet for export to Australia and fill in the details of this preparation on Veterinary Certificate A provided with your AQIS Import Permit.

Government approved laboratories: are approved by the government veterinary service for testing samples from animals destined for export. AQIS allows the use of Government approved laboratories in countries other than the country of export. If you wish the [Australian Animal Health Laboratory](#) (AAHL) can do all testing for you.

To locate appropriate veterinarians and laboratories, contact the government quarantine, agriculture or food departments in the country of export. Alternatively, contact AQIS.

STEP 5: RABIES NEUTRALISING ANTIBODY TITRE TEST (RNATT)

Time frame: IMPORTANT Disability Assistance dogs are not eligible for import into Australia until SIX MONTHS have elapsed from the day blood was collected for the RNATT.

Note: As this test measures your pet's antibody response to the rabies vaccination it should be done at least 4 weeks after the rabies vaccination. This enables your pet to produce sufficient antibodies to record a positive result.

Arrange for a government-approved veterinarian to scan your dog's microchip and draw a blood sample for the RNATT. Your dog's microchip number must be written on the blood tube and on laboratory submission form

A government-approved laboratory must carry out testing. The laboratory report must include your pet's microchip number and a result of at least 0.5 IU/ml. If a result of less than 0.5 IU/ml is obtained you must re-vaccinate your pet and repeat the process.

The RNATT report must be presented to an Official Veterinarian when completing Section 7 of the AQIS application form for an Import Permit and be forwarded with your application to Australia.

The RNATT is only valid for 1 year from the date of blood collection. If you need to repeat your pet's RNATT you must re-test within a year of the initial RNATT to demonstrate continuous protection against rabies and to avoid another lengthy wait before being eligible for entry into Australia.

STEP 6: APPLY FOR A PERMIT TO IMPORT

Note: The AQIS Import Permits are only valid for 6 months from the day that AQIS receives your application.

Please fill out the application form and send it to:

AQIS - Live Animal Imports GPO Box 858 Canberra 2601 Australia	Fax +61 2 6272 3110 Phone +61 2 6272 4454
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An Official veterinarian will have to complete sign and stamp Section 7 (rabies) of the application form. A copy of the RNATT report should be sent to AQIS with your application.

Your pet will not be allowed to enter Australia without a valid AQIS permit to import.

STEP 7: AQIS PERMIT TO IMPORT



Time Frame: An AQIS Import Permit will be sent to you immediately following approval by AQIS of your application. You may request the Import Permit to be faxed; a copy of the Import Permit may be used to facilitate import.

A permit will be sent to the person/company that you nominate as the “exporter” on your application form.

The permit includes **Veterinary Certificates A and B**. This information sheet will take you through the steps required to complete these Veterinary Certificates. You may continue to prepare your pet/s for export before the AQIS Import Permit and veterinary certificates arrive.

STEP 8: COMMENCE TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS



Time frame: As soon as you have received the Import Permit from AQIS.

Your dog can enter Australia at any international port/airport and will have to be presented to AQIS at this first port of arrival. Once cleared through AQIS your dog may be taken on any domestic flight within Australia. You should allow at least 2 hours for AQIS to clear your dog. Connecting domestic flights should be not be booked within 4 hours of the dogs arrival in Australia.

Disability assistance dogs generally travel with a passenger in the cabin. You must supply a collar, leash, food and water containers.

During transport to Australia pets may transit (stay on the same plane) or trans-ship (change planes) in all countries (AQIS approved or not). Trans-shipment may also require approval from the quarantine authority in the country of trans-shipment. AQIS strongly advises booking direct flights due to health and welfare concerns, eg pets missing connecting flights and remaining in airports for extended periods.

The dog’s user must accompany the disability assistance dog into Australia.

All transport costs are at the expense of the importer

STEP 9 ADDITIONAL TESTING REQUIREMENTS FOR DOGS FROM MALAYSIA ONLY

Time frame: Within 45 days prior to export.



All dogs from Malaysia must be tested for Nipah virus by the Serum Neutralisation test at Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL), Victoria, Fax: 613 5227 5555 Ph: 613 5227 5329, on a blood sample collected within 45 days prior to export, with negative results.

Please retain this laboratory report.

STEP 10: BRUCELLOSIS, EHRLICHIOSIS LEPTOSPIROSIS and EXTERNAL PARASITES

Time frame: Within 30 days of export.

Blood tests: Arrange for a government-approved veterinarian to scan your dog's microchip and draw blood samples for brucella and ehrlichia (tropical canine pancytopenia) and leptospira. Your dog's microchip number must be recorded on the blood tube. Send blood to a government-approved laboratory for testing. The laboratory report must link your pets' microchip number to the result.

These results must be recorded on Veterinary Certificate A. All laboratory test results must be endorsed by an Official Veterinarian and accompany your pet to Australia. Contact AQIS if your dog does not meet the requirements of these tests.

Brucellosis: Your dog/s must be tested for *Brucella canis* infection by a serum agglutination test. The test must produce a negative result (less than 50% agglutination at serum dilution of 1:100). Once blood is collected for this test your dog must not be mated or inseminated prior to export to Australia.

Leptospirosis: Dogs must be tested for *Leptospira canicola* by a microscopic agglutination test within 30 days of export.

Dogs that record a negative result (less than 50% agglutination at a serum dilution of 1:100) are eligible for import.

Dogs that record a positive result of not more than 1:400 must be **re-tested** 14 days or more after the first test. The second test must not show an increase in titre above the first test.

Dogs that record a result of over 1:400 are ineligible for import.

Ehrlichiosis: Your dog/s must be tested for *Ehrlichia canis* infection by the indirect fluorescent antibody test. The test must produce a negative result at a dilution at 1:40. Your pet must be treated for external parasites within 24 hours of blood being taken for this test.

Treatment for external parasites

Note: You will have to commence treating your pet/s for external parasites at the same time as taking blood for ehrlichia as this disease is spread by ticks.

A government approved veterinarian must treat your dog with a long lasting acaricide that is registered for the control of ticks and mites e.g. Frontline® or Permethrin®. Oral products and medicated collars are not satisfactory, neither are products that kill ticks only after biting your animal. Washes and rinses that prevent ticks and tick bites are acceptable. The treatment must be **repeated** according to the manufacturer's instructions in order to prevent infestation with ticks and mites from the first application until export.

Dates of treatment will need to be recorded on Veterinary Certificate A.

*Dogs which
have lived in
Africa*

STEP 11: DOGS THAT HAVE LIVED IN AFRICA, BABESIOSIS

Time frame: within 28 days of export.

Note: This treatment should not be given within 48 hours of treatment for external parasites as side effects may be increased.

Option 1: A government-approved veterinarian must treat your dog **once** with imidocarb dipropionate (Forray-65®, Hoechst or Imizol® by Coopers) at a rate of 7.5 mg per Kg body weight by subcutaneous injection.

Option 2: A government-approved veterinarian must treat your dog **twice** with imidocarb dipropionate (Forray-65®, Hoechst or Imizol® by Coopers) at a rate of 6.6 mg per Kg body weight by subcutaneous injection administered two weeks apart.

Details of treatment(s) must be recorded on Veterinary Certificate A.

STEP 12: NOTIFY AQIS OF THE ARRIVAL OF YOUR DOG

Time Frame: Within 2 weeks of the export of your dog to Australia (and at least 5 days prior to export) the following must be faxed to AQIS in the state that your dog will arrive. Arrangements will be made for an AQIS officer to meet your dog on arrival.

- A copy of the AQIS Permit to Import
- Name of the disabled passenger accompanying the dog.
- A copy of the rabies vaccination certificate
- Copies of the laboratory reports for brucellosis, ehrlichiosis, leptospirosis and rabies
- Copies of veterinary certificate A for the repeated treatment of ticks.
- Address where animal will be residing during quarantine surveillance.

Flight details, including airline details, flight number, port of departure, port of arrival time and date of arrival. Please also record whether your dog will arrive as manifest cargo or in the cabin.

STEP 13: INTERNAL PARASITE TREATMENT

Time frame: Within 4 days of export. This can be done at the same time as the completion of Veterinary Certificate A.

Dogs must be treated with a product approved for the treatment of nematodes and cestodes eg Drontal ®.

The active ingredient, dose rate and treatment date must be recorded on Veterinary Certificate A.

**STEP 14: COMPLETION OF VETERINARY CERTIFICATE A,
INCLUDING PRE-EXPORT INSPECTION**



Time frame: Within 4 days of export.

Please read over Veterinary Certificate A prior to the appointment. You will have to bring your dog and all documentation to this inspection. Your dog will be required to be free from clinical signs of infectious or contagious diseases, external parasites and be fit to travel.

Veterinary Certificate A is to be completed by a government approved or an Official Veterinarian.

Corrections to Veterinary Certificate A will only be accepted if the original entry has been struck through and remains legible – white out must not be used. An Official Veterinarian must sign each correction.

STEP 15: COMPLETION OF VETERINARY CERTIFICATE B,



Time frame: After the completion of Veterinary Certificate A, usually on the day of departure.

The following documents must be presented to the Official Veterinarian at this time for signature and stamp (endorsing) and then travel with your pet/s to Australia.

- Original or copy of the AQIS Import Permit
- Completed Veterinary Certificate A for endorsement by Official Veterinarian.
- Veterinary Certificate B for completion and endorsement by the Official Veterinarian.
- Rabies vaccination certificate for endorsement by the Official Veterinarian.
- RNATT for endorsement by the Official Veterinarian.
- Brucellosis, Ehrlichiosis, and Leptospirosis laboratory reports (and Nipah report if importing a dog from Malaysia) for endorsement by the Official Veterinarian

Copies may be used but the paperwork arriving in Australia with your pet must bear original signatures and stamps.

Corrections to Veterinary Certificate B will only be accepted if the original entry has been struck through and remains legible – white out must not be used. The Official Veterinarian must sign each correction.

STEP 16: CHECK PET IN WITH THE AIRLINE



Time frame: Please check with your airline.

The AQIS Import Permit, Veterinary Certificates A and B, blood test results and rabies vaccination records must travel to Australia with your pet/s. These documents may be originals or copies but must bear the original signature and stamp of the Official Veterinarian.

ON ARRIVAL IN AUSTRALIA

Neither the disability assist dog nor the user may leave the international airport before being cleared by an AQIS officer. An AQIS officer will meet you on arrival and crosscheck all documentation. You will also have to:

- Sign the Disabled Persons Declaration
- Make your dog available for examination

The AQIS officer may require that the dog is re-treated, or ordered into quarantine at an Animal Quarantine Station, or re-exported, if the documentation is incomplete or unsatisfactory, or if the dog is showing signs of disease or infestation with external parasites.

If the documentation is satisfactory and the dog passes the examination, the AQIS officer will endorse the Disabled Persons Declaration and release the dog under quarantine surveillance. The AQIS officer shall retain the signed Disabled Persons Declaration and will provide a copy to the handler.

The dog must then serve thirty (30) days quarantine under quarantine surveillance. AQIS may visit the nominated address at any point during quarantine surveillance.

During quarantine or while under quarantine surveillance (the details of which are set out in the Disabled Persons Declaration) the dog may be subject to any additional testing or treatments as specified by AQIS, at the importers expense.

At the end of the quarantine period your dog must be taken to a veterinarian for examination. After examination, the veterinarian must complete the " Report to AQIS on the health of a disability assistance completing post arrival quarantine surveillance" and return it to AQIS by fax for consideration for release from quarantine surveillance.

HEARTWORM - Dogs

Please note that heartworm disease of dogs is endemic in Australia. Heartworm is caused by the microorganism *Dirofilaria immitis* and is spread by mosquitoes. No testing or treatment is required for importation into Australia, however drugs are available on arrival to prevent heartworm.

DOGS AND CATS RETURNING TO AUSTRALIA AFTER LESS THAN 6 MONTHS RESIDENCY IN COUNTRY OF EXPORT

Australian dogs may be eligible to return to Australia with less than 6 months residency in the country of export, provided the animal has resided continuously in the country since being imported directly from Australia. This concession allows the animals to undergo the minimum period of post-entry quarantine (30 days) on return to Australia. To be eligible the following conditions must be met prior to leaving Australia.

- Your pet must be microchipped with an ISO approved chip, and
- An AQIS accredited veterinarian must vaccinate your pet/s against rabies and 4 weeks later,
- An AQIS accredited veterinarian must collect and send a blood sample to the Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL) for a rabies neutralising antibody titre test (RNATT).

The RNATT report from AAHL must record your pet's microchip number and a result of greater than 0.5 IU/ml. This laboratory report should be signed and stamped by AQIS prior to the export of your pet/s.

AQIS APPROVED COUNTRIES

APPROVED RABIES-FREE COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES REQUIRING NO QUARANTINE

Cocos (Keeling) Islands, New Zealand, Norfolk Island.

APPROVED RABIES-FREE COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES - MINIMUM OF 30 DAYS QUARANTINE (Information sheet 2)

Bahrain, Barbados, Cyprus, Falkland Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, Hawaii, the Republic of Ireland, Japan, Malta, Mauritius, New Caledonia, Norway, Singapore, Sweden, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, Vanuatu.

APPROVED RABIES-FREE ISLAND COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES - MINIMUM OF 60 DAYS QUARANTINE (Information sheet 3)

American Samoa, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Wallis and Futuna, Western Samoa.

APPROVED RABIES-FREE ISLAND COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES WHICH MAY NOT HAVE AN OFFICIAL VETERINARY SERVICE - MINIMUM OF 60 DAYS QUARANTINE (Information sheet 3)

Christmas Island, Kingdom of Tonga, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Tuvalu.

APPROVED COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES RECOGNISED BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT AS COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES IN WHICH DOG-MEDIATED RABIES IS ABSENT OR WELL CONTROLLED - MINIMUM OF 30 DAYS QUARANTINE & RABIES VACCINATION (Information sheet 4)

Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Brunei, Bulgaria, Canada, Cayman islands, Chile, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Finland, Germany, Greece, Greenland, Hong Kong, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Macau, Peninsular Malaysia, Monaco, Montenegro and Serbia, Netherlands, Netherlands-Antilles and Aruba, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Qatar, Reunion, Sabah, Saipan, Sarawak, Seychelles, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent Grenadin, Switzerland (including Liechtenstein), Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Emirates, United States of America, US Virgin Islands, Uruguay.

APPROVED COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES RECOGNISED BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT AS COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES IN WHICH DOG-MEDIATED RABIES IS ENDEMIC (Information sheet 5)

Republic of South Africa

Importation of dogs from non-approved countries can only occur indirectly via an approved country where the animal must be continuously resident for at least the six months immediately prior to export to Australia. The animal is then eligible for import under the conditions that apply to that approved country.



Australian Government

Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service

APPLICATION FORM FOR A PERMIT TO IMPORT DISABILITY DOGS INTO AUSTRALIA

The most current information including [approved country lists](#) can be obtained via the Internet at www.aqis.gov.au or by email at animalimp@aqis.gov.au.

- Please complete this application. Note: This application is not an Import Permit.
- Documents supporting the person's disability, the handler's requirement of the disability assistance dog and the specialised training of the disability assistance dog must be supplied.
- A sum of AUD **\$260** must be sent with the application/s. This fee is payable only once per owner when multiple pets arrive in Australia at the same time. If sending a cheque, your application should be posted. If paying by credit card you may post or fax your application. Cheques are payable to the "Collector of Public Monies-AQIS" - Amex, Visa, MasterCard and Bankcard are accepted.
- The completed application should be posted or faxed to AQIS - Live Animal Imports in Canberra.

AQIS - Live Animal Imports GPO Box 858 Canberra 2601 Australia	Fax +61 2 6272 3110 Phone +61 2 6272 4454
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- AQIS will post Import Permit/s (including veterinary certificates A and B) to the exporter, within two weeks of receiving your application/s. Please allow time for international mail delivery. Import Permits can be also be sent by fax or to an alternative address when specified at the time of application.
- Dogs are only eligible to travel to Australia with a valid AQIS Import Permit and when all conditions provided on the AQIS Import Permit have been met.
- The owner/importer must pay all quarantine fees associated with the import of the dog.

SECTIONS 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 must be completed by all applicants. [Section 6 is not applicable to disability assistance dogs, and does not appear on this application.]

SECTION 7 must be completed if importing a dog from a category 4 country (where dog-mediated rabies is absent or well controlled) or South Africa. An **OFFICIAL VETERINARIAN** of the country of export must complete this section. Do not fill out section 7 if you are importing a dog from a category 1,2 or 3 country i.e. a rabies free country.