

CDC requirements for air carriers requesting a waiver for the creation of air waybills for dogs transported as hand-carried or excess baggage

Per 42 CFR § 71.51(dd), effective August 1, 2024, all air carriers (including commercial, charter, and private aircraft) operating flights to the United States are required to create a bill of lading, which includes air waybills (AWB), prior to arrival for all dogs arriving by air into the United States. This includes dogs transported as cargo, checked-baggage, or hand-carried baggage.

As of August 1, 2024, if an air carrier lacks the technical ability to generate an AWB, they must request a waiver from CDC by emailing cdcanimalimports@cdc.gov in order to continue transporting dogs to the United States.

CDC will decide to grant a provisional waiver based on its review of the airline's request for a waiver. All provisional waivers, including those issued in July and August 2024, will remain valid through February 1, 2025. For the waiver to be extended beyond February 1, 2025, the air carrier must submit the following information below before February 1, 2025. If air carriers fail to complete the application, fail to submit all required documentation, and fail to have its application approved, then the waiver will expire on February 1, 2025.


Once the application is complete, CDC will decide whether to extend the waiver. If the waiver is extended, it will be valid until November 1, 2025. If the waiver is not extended, the air carrier must create a bill of lading (AWB) for every dog it transports to the United States.

The carrier must submit to CDC the following by February 1, 2025:

1. Written standard operating procedure (SOP) and step-by-step instructions for air carrier staff to follow should the dog not meet U.S. entry requirements. The SOP and instructions must describe:
 - a. How the air carrier will ensure that importers present the documentation air carriers are required to confirm *prior* to boarding a dog (this could include a checklist or employee training slides).
 - b. If a dog is ill, injured, abandoned, denied entry, or placed on-hold pending an admissibility determination, how the air carrier will ensure the dog is returned to its country of departure or brought into compliance with CDC's entry requirements.
 - c. How the air carrier will ensure care for any ill, injured, or abandoned dog placed on-hold or denied admission and pending return.
 - d. Transportation instructions for air carrier staff and the location of a CDC-registered animal care facility (ACF) (or other suitable alternative, such as a local kennel or veterinary hospital) that will house and provide care for the dog until CDC's entry requirements are met or it is returned to the country of departure.
 - i. Local housing facilities (ACF, kennels, veterinary clinics) must be provided for each port of entry an air carrier will transport dogs into.
 - e. How payment will be made by the air carrier to the facility providing care for the dog until the determination of admissibility is complete or it is returned to its country of departure. Please include instructions for local air carrier employees to follow to submit payment requests to the air carrier's headquarters.

Public reporting burden of this collection of information is estimated to average 120 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB Control Number. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to CDC/ATSDR Reports Clearance Officer, 1600 Clifton Road NE, MS D-74, Atlanta, Georgia 30333; ATTN: PRA 0920-1383



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- i. Air carriers may seek reimbursement from the importer but may be required to pay for veterinary services, boarding, or return of the dog to the country of departure if an importer fails to provide payment or if the importer abandons the dog.
 - ii. If an importer refuses to pay for any services required by CDC, the dog will be considered abandoned per 42 CFR 71.51 and the airline will be required to assume responsibility, including financial responsibility, for the dog.
2. The SOP and instructions must be on company letterhead and contain contact information for regional air carrier management with oversight responsibility over the cargo and passenger process.

Failure to submit these documents and have an application approved by February 1, 2025 will result in the waiver expiring and the air carrier no longer being able to transport dogs into the United States without an AWB.

