

# Post-Brexit pet travel guide to the EU and Northern Ireland for clients

**Date revised: Monday 25 January 2021**

This guidance applies to people travelling between **Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales)** and the **EU** as well as between **Great Britain (GB)** and **Northern Ireland (NI)** with their pet cats, ferrets or dogs, including assistance dogs. This guidance is only for travel for non-commercial reasons. Travel to other non-EU countries is not covered in these guidelines.

CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AND WE ADVISE THAT THIS GUIDE IS READ IN ADDITION TO CHECKING THE [GOVERNMENT WEBSITE](#) PRIOR TO TRAVEL.

## General Summary

UK pet passports are no longer valid for travel to and from the EU. For the purposes of pet travel, Northern Ireland is now treated in a similar fashion to the EU. An **Animal Health Certificate** is required for each trip to the EU/NI, unless your pet already has a valid EU passport, issued in an EU country (or in Northern Ireland after 31 December 2020).

## Travel from Great Britain to the EU or Northern Ireland

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

- a microchip placed and read before any rabies vaccination
- a valid rabies vaccination at least 21 days before travel/certification, and when the pet was at least 12 weeks of age
- Either:
  - Animal Health Certificate (AHC) issued no more than 10 days before travel
  - or
  - a valid EU pet passport issued in the EU (or in Northern Ireland after 31 December 2020)
- tapeworm treatment if travelling directly to Finland, Northern Ireland, Ireland or Malta, to be given and certified by a veterinarian 24 – 120 hours (5 days) before entry to EU/NI

You will need to go through a [travellers' point of entry](#) when you arrive in an EU country or Northern Ireland, for example specific airports, sea ports or railway stations.

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.

## Returning to Great Britain from the EU or Northern Ireland

**NB** For residents of EU and Northern Ireland, a valid EU pet passport can be used to **enter** GB.

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

- 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, provided your pet's rabies vaccination is kept up to date
- a valid EU pet passport issued in the EU (or in Northern Ireland after 31 December 2020)
- a GB pet passport supplied before 1 January 2021 (this is **not** valid to enter the EU or NI)
- a GB pet health certificate (for travel **into** GB only e.g. when returning from a trip lasting longer than 4 months)

Your pet will also need:

- Tapeworm treatment, unless entering directly from Finland, Northern Ireland, Ireland or Malta, to be given and certified in the original AHC, pet passport or pet health certificate by a veterinarian 24 – 120 hours (5 days) before entry to GB

You must enter GB via an [approved route](#) (except for assistance dogs – see below)

## Appointments to obtain an Animal Health Certificate

Only Official Veterinarians with the relevant government qualification can issue an Animal Health Certificate; this, along with the time required to complete the certification process, means you should book your appointment as far ahead as possible to ensure we can accommodate you. When booking, please bear in mind the certificate must be issued no more than 10 days before you travel.

Before your appointment, we will request information about your pet(s) and travel plans. The AHC is specific to the country via which you are entering the EU but can then be used for onwards travel through other EU countries; hence, when booking the appointment, please tell us your planned country of entry to the EU.

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

- date of microchipping, if available
- rabies vaccination history

If you are planning a trip which extends beyond the expiry date of validity of your pet's current rabies vaccination, we recommend a booster vaccination prior to completing the AHC. We also advise taking evidence of your pet's full rabies vaccination history with you on the trip.

## Additional important advice

### Approved Routes to enter GB and assistance dogs

You must enter GB using approved routes. Check the approved routes before you travel – they can change or may only operate at certain times of the year. 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 GB – rabies vaccination boosters**

If your pet has an EU passport and their rabies booster is due close to the period of travel we advise the rabies vaccination is done in your EU country of residence before travel, as vets in GB are no longer allowed to update the rabies vaccination section of EU pet passports.

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

If using an Animal Health Certificate to travel, your pet will need a new AHC for each trip to an EU country or Northern Ireland and their rabies vaccination must thus be up to date.

## **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 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)

**\*\*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.

## **Be prepared**

Please help us give you the best service possible by bringing all supporting documents and requested information to the appointment.

Please also 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 are happy to provide guidance and complete the appointments for rabies vaccinations, certification, tapeworm treatments and any other necessary health checks you require.

## Useful websites

### Travelling to and from Great Britain:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pet-travel-to-and-from-great-britain>

### Travellers' points of entry to the EU:

[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)

### Approved routes to enter GB:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pet-travel-to-and-from-great-britain>

## Additional help and support

### Travel to and from GB:

Pet Travel Scheme helpline

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

Telephone: 0370 241 1710

### Questions specific to Northern Ireland:

Trade Section

Veterinary Service Animal Health Group

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