



FLYING RIGHT with Your PET

On our website, www.pcs-tdy.com, we get numerous requests for information on different PCSing topics. But by far we receive more questions on how to transport your pet from one duty station to the next via the airlines than anything else. And it's no coincidence since shipping a pet requires plenty of knowledge and preparation.

To help our service members ship their furry friends in relative comfort, the following are some insider tips on who you should contact to begin the transportation process, the regulations regarding shipping a pet and other general information on air transport.

First and foremost, shipping a pet is your responsibility. There is minimal reimbursement for pet expenses, including cages, the cost of shipping your pet, quarantine of your pet and/or kenneling. Furthermore, with the tightening of Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) rules regarding U.S. flights, shipping a pet from CONUS onboard a commercial airline may be more costly and cumbersome.

Your first point of contact is your local transportation office. It can help you make the appropriate reservations for air transport, as well as kenneling once you arrive. Or, if you are traveling overseas your sponsor can also help make arrangements for shipment.

Once you receive your orders, you should plan immediately for shipping your pet. Make your pet's flight reservations early. Check that your airline of choice will accept pets on the day and flight that you prefer and verify its regulations regarding shipping a pet in the cabin or as cargo. Keep in mind that some airlines have changed their policies so that pets must be handled by designated known shippers or FAA-registered indirect air carriers.

Most overseas locations require your pet to satisfy certain vaccination or quarantine requirements before they are transported.

For instance, pets arriving into Korea must have a health certificate completed and signed by a veterinarian within 10 days of arrival, two copies of orders assigning the owner to Korea, a Power of Attorney (if applicable) granting your Pet Care Center the authority to pick up your animal at the National Quarantine Station in Korea (you complete this form when you get to Korea), and an original signed bill of lading or certificate of excess baggage.

In addition, your pet must have received a rabies vaccination more than 30 days prior, but less than one year before entering the country. Bring an original and three copies of the health and rabies certificates with you.

If your pet is coming from a rabies free country or location, such as Hawaii, there will be no quarantine and the animal will be released once it has been examined by the quarantine station. If your pet (dog or cat) is coming from a non-rabies free country or location, such as CONUS, the following will apply:

- * If the pet (dog or cat only) is 3 months or older, and has been vaccinated for rabies more than 30 days prior to entry and has a valid and current rabies vaccination certificate, the pet will be released once checked by the quarantine station.
- * If the pet was vaccinated less than 30 days prior to entry into Korea, the pet will be quarantined until the rabies vaccination is 30 days old.
- * If the pet is three months or older and has not been vaccinated or has no proof of vaccination, the pet will be vaccinated and quarantined for 30 days.
- * If the pet is less than three months old upon entry to Korea, the pet will be released once examined by the quarantine station.

Air Force Crossroads (<http://www.afcrossroads.com/dodinstall/index.htm>) or DMDC's SITES (<http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/sites>) are websites both worth checking out when it comes to shipping a pet. Both utilize the same information about installations around the world. To find the information on pet requirements and restrictions that pertains to your next duty station, first enter the site, find the installation you will be relocating to, click on Relocation Services, then click on Pet Transportation, Boarding/Kenneling, Pet Licensing or Quarantines. This will give you specific information on shipping pets to that installation, including quarantine information, vaccinations, health certificates, etc.

One of your options in shipping your pet is to ship them on a military contracted flight. Air Mobility Command (AMC) charters these flights. However, AMC flights are limited to cats and dogs only.

Furthermore, AMC has its own set of regulations regarding pet shipment that must be adhered to. For example, pet and container, with a combined weight of 100 lbs. or more will not be accepted for category B shipment on AMC flights.

For more information on shipping your pet on an AMC flight, visit www.amc.af.mil.

Your other option in pet shipment is a commercial airline. However, there are a few conditions you should be aware of if you decide to ship your pet via a commercial airline.

The first is to book as early as possible if you hope to bring your pet inside the cabin during the flight. Also, a non-stop flight is easier on your pocketbook and your pet's health. Ask the airline for the allowable dimensions of your pet's carrier. If possible, avoid the heavy traffic of weekend or holiday flights. The airlines will most likely charge you a fee for in-cabin travel.

Keep in mind that certain snub nose dogs, such as pugs, boxers, bulldogs and Pekinese, should not travel by air in hot weather. Check with the airlines for special arrangements. Animals who are pregnant or in heat, are less than eight weeks old and have not been weaned for more than five days or are elderly should not be travel by air because of the risk to their health.

Nevertheless, if you must leave your pet in the baggage area, be advised that commercial airlines may refuse to allow your pet to be transported in the baggage area if the temperature is considered "extreme," which is typically above 85°F or below 45°F. As the pet owner, you are responsible to make sure that you take the necessary precautions to ensure the well-being of your pet, such as scheduling morning or evening flights during the summer, or mid-day flights during the winter. Upon boarding, you should ask a flight attendant or other crew if they can check that your pet has safely made it aboard the aircraft and is situated comfortably.

Once you arrive at your duty station, your pet will be placed in a 14-day home quarantine with a vet check to follow. The pet will most likely also need to be kenneled since pets are not authorized in temporary lodging facilities. Your transportation office and sponsor can help you arrange for these eventualities.



Although the airline you choose will provide specifics on shipping pets onboard their flights, below are a few tips on how to prepare your pet for air transport.

TIPS ON TRAVELING WITH YOUR PET IN THE CABIN

- * Only small dogs and cats will be permitted to travel in the cabin.
- * Play with your pet and provide exercise before putting your pet in the carrier.
- * Bring your pet to the airport in advance of the flight, according to the regulations of your particular airline. If you are bringing your pet into the cabin, check in as late as possible.
- * Sedating your pet is not recommended.
- * Make sure the carrier has plenty of room for your pet to stand upright, move around and change positions comfortably. Sky kennels furnished by the airlines meet these requirements. Soft-sided kennels may be permitted for in cabin travel.
- * Line the bottom of the carrier with an absorbent towel to help keep the carrier clean of waste.
- * Attach a slip to the carrier with your name, destination address and phone number where you can be contacted and make sure your pet's tag has the same contact information. Bring along a photo in case your pet is lost.
- * Never muzzle your pet during air travel.
- * Bring plenty of food and water for your pet on long plane rides and don't feed them during mealtimes.
- * According to FAA law, you may not remove your pet from the carrier during the flight.

TIPS ON SHIPPING YOUR PET IN THE CARGO HOLD

- * Ship your pet in a USDA-approved shipping crate that is large enough for your pet to stand upright, move around and change positions comfortably. Sky kennels furnished by the airlines meet these requirements. Usually only one pet is allowed per container, unless you are traveling with puppies or kittens younger than six months and less than 20 lbs. each.
- * Attach a slip to the carrier with your name, destination address and phone number where you can be contacted and make sure your pet's tag has the same contact information. Bring along a photo in case your pet is lost.
- * Inscribe "Live Animal" in at least 1" tall letters on the side and top of the crate. Write "THIS END UP" and include arrows to indicate the top of the carrier.
- * Allow your pet to get accustomed to the crate prior to boarding.
- * Include a separate dish for food and for water that is attached to the inside of the crate and refillable from the outside.
- * Attach a breakaway collar to your pet that includes an identification tag.
- * On flights longer than 12 hours, attach one meal's worth of extra dry food in a strong plastic or cloth bag and feeding instructions to the top of the crate. A copy of the feeding and watering instructions should also be attached to the shipping documents.
- * Line the crate with an absorbent towel to help keep the carrier clean of waste.
- * Sedating your pet is not recommended.
- * Never muzzle your pet during air travel.
- * Bring your pet to the airport in advance of the flight, according to the regulations of the airline they will be flying on.
- * Make sure the door to the crate is closed firmly, but not locked, in case of an emergency.