



The  
**GEORGE**  
Veterinary Hospital

# ANIMAL HEALTH CERTIFICATE TRAVELLING ABROAD WITH YOUR PET

An animal health certificate must be issued before your dog, cat or ferret can travel to the EU or NI - We can provide this for you.

## Why is an animal health certificate necessary?

Since January 2021, an Animal Health Certificate is now a legal requirement in order to bring your pet into the UK or take it to a European Union country without quarantine. The primary purpose is to keep the UK free from rabies, and other foreign diseases such as those transmitted by parasites that do not exist in the UK.



**The AHC must be issued within 10 days of your pet's intended travel to the EU.**

*The AHC is a lengthy document that needs plenty of time to complete, so we ask for at least 3 working days to do this. Please factor in all of these deadlines when planning your travel.*

## How do I obtain an animal health certificate for my pet?

An animal health certificate (AHC) can only be issued by an Official Veterinarian (OV). An OV is a vet who has been authorised by the government - we have a number of OVs here at the George.

Before applying for an animal health certificate, your dog, cat or ferret **must be microchipped** and needs to have been **vaccinated against rabies**. You will need to **wait 21 days after vaccination before commencing travel**.

*Currently there are no requirements for rabies bloods.*

## How long is the AHC valid for?

Once issued, Animal health certificates can be used for travel to and onward between EU countries **for up to four months** from the date your animal enters the EU.

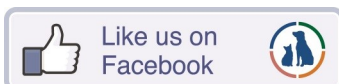
**NOTE: On return to the UK, each new trip from the UK requires a new AHC to be issued - even when it has been less than 4 months since one was last issued for your pet.**

*If you are taking your pet further afield and need to export them outside of the EU then an Export Health Certificate (EHC) is required. This is a complicated and lengthy process and the easiest solution is to use a pet travel company that can arrange everything for you. They are informed with the most up to date information for the country that you are travelling to, as procedures and advice can differ from country to country. Some information can also be found on the government website.*

See [www.gov.uk/take-pet-abroad](http://www.gov.uk/take-pet-abroad) for further government advice.

## Who can apply for an animal health certificate?

The owner, as named on the animal health certificate must be aged over 16. At the time of the appointment, all pets must be accompanied either by their owner or by a person authorised in writing by the owner.





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**How old does my pet have to be to get their animal health certificate?**

EU Regulation requires pets to be at least 12 weeks old when vaccinated. This means no pet can travel abroad unless they are 15 weeks old (12 weeks and the 21-day wait).

**For how many pets can one person make AHC applications?**

The owner or authorised person can only be accompanied by a maximum of five pets. You cannot take more than five pets to an EU country or NI unless you're attending or training for a competition, show or sporting event. You'll need written evidence of registration for the event when you travel.



## And finally, before your appointment at The George ...

So that the correct documentation can be prepared in advance, we'll need the following:

- **Please advise us where you will initially land on entry to the EU** - this may be different to your final destination but the paperwork needs to be in the language of the EU country which you first enter. So, for instance if you are travelling to Spain by car but taking the ferry via France, the documents will need to be in French as that is the landing country. We will need to print this off before your appointment.
- **We will need a copy of the rabies vaccinations** (either a vaccination certificate or your pet's old passport, if they already have one) - we need to make a copy of it to accompany the AHC.
- Any paperwork regarding microchipping - while not essential, it makes the process a lot easier!

### Remember

It must be the owner, or the person who has written permission from the owner to travel with their pet, who accompanies the pet to the appointment to sign the AHC.

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**We strongly recommend double checking this advice with the relevant government authorities as it is a fluid process that is constantly changing and it is important that you have the most up to date information. Failure to do this could have stressful and expensive consequences at the border.**