



Please note, a further update regarding Animal Health Certificates was published on 29 October 2019 – please refer to [Briefing Note 28/19](#).

APHA Briefing Note 24/19

An update on the order and distribution process for Animal Health Certificates which Official Veterinarians will need to issue for pet travel to the European Union after Brexit

1. Purpose

To inform all Official Veterinarians (OVs) of Animal Health Certificate (AHC) changes from 1 November due to a regulation change. This is an update on the order and distribution process for AHCs which you will need to issue for pet travel to the European Union (EU) after Brexit.

OVs who received AHCs before will receive a recall, and a new process for ordering and distributing AHCs will be shared soon.

2. Background

If the UK leaves the EU on 31 October with no agreement in place, it is likely to become an unlisted third country under EU Pet Travel Regulations. This will mean that the health and documentation requirements for travel between the UK and the EU will change. The details can be found in the guidance published on GOV.UK: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pet-travel-to-europe-after-brexit>

Animal Health Certificates (AHCs)

In a no-deal Brexit, EU pet passports issued by UK Official Veterinarians (OVs) will no longer be valid. Instead, a pet travelling from the UK to the EU will need an AHC. You will need to issue AHCs, instead of EU pet passports, to owners travelling to the EU with their pet animal after 31 October 2019. Please note, this would affect any travellers with pets arriving in an EU Member State after 23.00 GMT on 31 October.

An AHC is valid for:

- A single trip for entry to the EU
- 10 days after the date of issue for entry into the EU

- 4 months of onward travel within the EU after the date of entry to the EU
- Re-entry to the UK for 4 months after the date of issue.

Some OV's will already have copies of AHCs. However, the AHC has been updated to reflect EU Pet Travel regulation changes coming into effect on 1 November 2019. OV's should not issue the previous version of AHCs. A new version of the AHC, reflecting these regulation changes is available via the Vet Gateway. This version can be issued by OV's from 23 October 2019 (10 days prior to travel to the EU after Brexit).

OV's who have been issued with AHCs in the past are asked not to issue these versions and will be contacted with instructions on what to do with previous versions.

The process for ordering and distributing AHCs has changed

AHCs are available as dual-language certificates written in both English and the official language of each EU Member State. OV's should issue an AHC which is written in an official language of the planned EU Member State of entry to the EU.

These certificates are available, free of charge, for OV's to download via the Vet Gateway. You now have the opportunity to update the AHC electronically. It can also be printed and updated by hand.

To validate the AHC, you will need to add a unique certificate number (UCN). UCNs are available from APHA in batches of 50 and will be emailed to you upon completion of the AHC order form (PETS10).

Guidance on how to complete AHCs, along with information on the new order and distribution process, is available on the Vet Gateway:

http://apha.defra.gov.uk/External_OV_Instructions/Export_Instructions/Certification_Procedures/Small_Animal_Exports/Animal_Health_Certificates.html

Actions for OV's:

- Get ready to start issuing the latest version of AHCs instead of EU pet passports from 23 October
- Place an order for unique certificate numbers using the PETS10 form (available from 17 October)
- Familiarise yourself with the guidance for completing an AHC available on the Vet Gateway:
http://apha.defra.gov.uk/External_OV_Instructions/Export_Instructions/Certification_Procedures/Small_Animal_Exports/Animal_Health_Certificates.html

Pet owners travelling with more than 5 pets, and not attending or training for a competition, show or sporting event, must follow the commercial rules for importing animals. Guidance is available on GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/guidance-on-importing-and-exporting-live-animals-or-animal-products>. AHCs will not be valid for commercial movements of dogs, cats or ferrets.

If you have any questions about the AHC order process, please email the PetPassports.Carlisle@apha.gov.uk mailbox or telephone 03000 200 301.

Further Information

For more information on rabies testing please see the guidance on the Vet Gateway: http://apha.defra.gov.uk/vet-gateway/EU_Exit.htm

We will continue to keep you up to date if there are any changes to this guidance.

Issued: 15 October 2019 – update added 29 October 2019.