

Technical Instructions for air carriers that are unable to create air waybills

All air carrier (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 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. Requests for a waiver must be submitted on an annual basis.

Before requesting a waiver, airlines should determine whether the supervisor in sales at their local offices or those of partner airlines can create an AWB (may be possible for some airlines).

The waiver request must include:

1. An explanation of why the air carrier cannot create an AWB. Please note: commercial air carriers are expected to work with local offices or with partner airlines as needed to generate AWB. Airline policy prohibiting transport of animals as cargo is not grounds for failure to generate an AWB for dogs flying in-cabin or as checked baggage.
2. Written standard operating procedure (SOP) which describe:
 - a. How the air carrier will ensure that importers present the documentation airlines are required to confirm prior to boarding a dog.
 - b. If a dog is ill, injured, abandoned, denied entry, or placed on-hold pending an admissibility determination, how the airline will ensure the dog is returned to its country of departure or brought into compliance with requirements, and how the airline will ensure care for any ill, injured, or abandoned dog placed on-hold or denied admission. This must include transportation instructions the airline provides to their staff and the location of a CDC-registered Animal Care Facility (or other suitable alternative, such as a kennel or veterinary hospital, approved by CDC) that will house and provide care for the dog until requirements are met or it is returned to the country of departure.
 - c. How payment will be made by the airline to the facility providing care for the dog until the determination of admissibility is complete. Airlines 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. If an importer refuses to pay for any services required by CDC, the dog will be considered abandoned per 42 CFR 71.51 and will revert to the custody of the airline.
3. Step-by-step instructions for airline staff to follow should CDC place a dog on hold or deny admission. The instruction should be on company letterhead and contain contact information for airline management and payment instructions for the airline employee if they have questions regarding the airline's policies for dogs placed on hold or denied admission.
 - a. As a condition of granting a waiver, CDC may require:

- i. The airline utilize a U.S.-licensed customs broker who will be responsible for coordinating entry and clearance of dogs, including compliance with CDC requirements.
- ii. The airline provide a timetable and identify steps to develop the ability to create an AWB or suitable alternative.

Additional instructions may be posted on CDC's website.