



October 7, 2024

To: CDC-registered Animal Care Facility (ACF)

Subject: Memorandum reminding ACFs of their obligations to use SAFE TraQ

We are issuing this memorandum in response to recent compliance concerns noted by CDC staff related to ACFs releasing dogs for entry to the United States. Over the past month, CDC has observed ACFs accepting multiple reservations for dogs from high-risk countries without issuing SAFE TraQ reservations for the dogs prior to their arrival in the United States. There have also been several occurrences of ACFs uploading incomplete documents into SAFE TraQ or otherwise failing to upload proper documentation. In addition, an ACF has released dogs for entry to the United States before receiving written clearance from both CDC and CBP.

We ask that you remind your staff of the following procedures for dogs arriving to the United States that have been in a country with high risk for dog rabies in the previous 6 months. All ACF are required to: (1) upload all required pre-arrival documents and issue reservations for all dogs in SAFE TraQ before the dogs' arrival in the United States; (2) upon completion of veterinary examination, revaccination, and quarantine (if required), enter all required documents in SAFE TraQ before submitting a request to CDC to release an animal for entry to the United States; and (3) not release animals for entry to the United States without written clearance from both CDC and CBP. Requirements 2 and 3 additionally apply to dogs that arrive without a reservation or animals that are referred to ACFs because of illness or potential exposure to a zoonotic disease.

CDC's written clearance to release an animal for entry to the United States will be sent to the ACF as an email. CBP's concurrence with CDC's clearance may be sent through a variety of ways, e.g., by email, through the Automated Commercial Enterprise (ACE) system, or clearance of post-entry or air waybill (AWB). CDC advises ACFs to familiarize themselves with CBP's clearance process at their local port of entry. Questions regarding CBP's clearance process may be directed to the CBP Port Director at your local port.

Under 42 CFR 71.51(k)(4), importers must present documentation to airlines confirming their reservation at an ACF prior to their dogs boarding a flight to the United States. Airlines must deny boarding to dogs if the importer fails to present such documentation. Under 42 CFR 71.51(v)(ix), dogs that arrive without reservations in SAFE TraQ upon their arrival in the United States are inadmissible for entry. In order for importers to demonstrate proof of a reservation with an ACF for their dog to the airline and CBP, we ask that you remind your ACF staff to issue reservations only in SAFE TraQ and only prior to the dogs' arrival in the United States. If CDC is contacted by an airline with questions about a dog's admissibility and cannot verify the existence of a reservation in SAFE TraQ, CDC will advise the airline to deny boarding. An ACF may not grant a reservation to an importer after the dog has arrived in the United States without first consulting and obtaining the written approval of the CDC Veterinary Medical Officer.

Similarly, to avoid delays in releasing dogs for entry to the United States, we ask that you remind your ACF staff to ensure that all required documentation uploaded into SAFE TraQ is complete and that there is no missing information. In order for CDC staff to clear dogs for entry, the ACF must upload all required documentation and any additional information requested by CDC into SAFE TraQ before submitting a request to clear a dog for entry.¹ Please consult the *Technical Instructions for CDC-registered Animal Care Facilities (ACF)* (see enclosed attachment), for a listing of documentation required to be uploaded into SAFE TraQ. This includes all items listed in sections 15, 17, 18, 19, and 22.

We appreciate your cooperation in ensuring the completeness of documents entered into SAFE TraQ and in meeting all requirements for entry of animals into the United States. If you have additional questions, please contact us at cdcanimalimports@cdc.gov.

¹ See 42 CFR 71.51(k)(3)(i)-(v), (k)(7)(i)-(v).