



## Information about pet importation and humane relocation programs for pets

### STATEMENTS BY GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, PUBLIC HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AND OVERSIGHT ENTITIES ON INTERNATIONAL PET RESCUE AND ADOPTION

CDC <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2018/conveyance-transportation-issues/taking-animals-animal-products-across-international-borders>

*Excerpt* “Although done with the best of intentions, rescuing and importing stray animals from foreign countries can create human health risks. Travelers are at an increased risk for possible bites and scratches from fearful and stressed animals, which may result in injury or exposure to infectious disease. Animals that are infected with zoonotic diseases might not show any outward signs of being ill. Therefore, all rescued animals should be examined by a licensed veterinarian both before departure and after arrival in the United States. If the intent of travel is to rescue animals, participants should discuss rabies pre-exposure prophylaxis with their health care providers.”

### National Association of State and Public Health Veterinarians: Rabies

Compendium <http://www.nasphv.org/Documents/NASPHVRabiesCompendium.pdf>

*Excerpt* “Importation and interstate movement of animals. a) Areas with dog-to-dog rabies transmission. Canine rabies virus variants have been eliminated from the United States<sup>3,7</sup>; however, rabid dogs and a rabid cat have been introduced into the continental United States from areas with dog-to-dog rabies transmission.<sup>4–6,48,49</sup> The movement of dogs for the purposes of

*adoption or sale from areas with dog-to-dog rabies transmission increases the risk of introducing canine-transmitted rabies to areas where it does not currently exist, and this practice should be prohibited. b) International importation. Current federal regulations are insufficient to prevent the introduction of rabid animals into the United States and must be strengthened and appropriately enforced.”*

### **Centers for Disease Control**

CDC Importation into the US – **Rabies** (199,000 dogs from across Mexican border alone) <http://www.naiaonline.org/uploads/WhitePapers/ImportationCDCRabies.pdf> scroll to page 3 to chart showing origin of import dogs.

### **One Health: What is One Health?**

### **AVMA Press Release**

<https://www.avma.org/KB/Resources/Reference/Pages/One-Health94.aspx>

- Excerpt: “It is estimated that at least 75% of emerging and re-emerging diseases are either zoonotic (spread between humans and animals) or [vector-borne](#) (carried from infected animals to others through insects).”

### **Imported dogs carry vector-borne diseases**

Report from 6<sup>th</sup> Vector Borne World Forum: Researchers Fear Spread of Canine Vector-Borne Diseases <http://www.dogwoodjrtc.com/new-page/>

Vector borne diseases reported in Germany:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20377872>

## Pathogens and parasites found in imported dogs, mostly rescue dogs

### Federal Select Agent Program:

<https://www.selectagents.gov/SelectAgentsandToxins.html>

- Excerpt: “The Federal Select Agent Program oversees the possession, use and transfer of biological select agents and toxins, which have the potential to pose a severe threat to public, animal or plant health or to animal or plant products.”

**A special agent** pathogen, *Burkholderia pseudomallei*, was diagnosed in a rescue dog imported from Thailand in 2016. The federal special agent list includes anthrax, Ebola, etc.: Public Health Response to an Imported Case of Canine Melioidosis caused by:

<https://cste.confex.com/cste/2017/webprogram/Paper8413.html>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melioidosis>

*B. pseudomallei* infection in humans is called [melioidosis](#); its mortality is 20 to 50% even with treatment.<sup>[22]</sup>

**Rabies** was diagnosed in a street dog imported from the streets of Cairo, Egypt by a US Rescue. <http://www.naiaonline.org/uploads/WhitePapers/CDCRabidDogImported.pdf>  
Scroll to page 1359 to read report.

**TB** was diagnosed in a rescue dog from Turkey in 2015:

<http://www.naiaonline.org/uploads/WhitePapers/TBInRescueDogFromTurkey.pdf>

<https://equimanagement.com/news/foreign-animal-disease-happen-53687>

**Rabies** in rescue dog: Vermont state veterinarian cautions adopters to learn about their dog's background before adopting.

<http://www.naiaonline.org/uploads/WhitePapers/PetAdoptionPressReleaseNov2013.pdf>

**Rabid** dog imported from Iraq into US

<http://www.naiaonline.org/uploads/WhitePapers/rabiesInDogImportedFromIraqJune2008.pdf>

### Dogs from Asia bring flu (H3N2 virus) epidemic to US

**Important:** Cornell scientists have documented a direct cause and effect relationship between rescue dog shipments from Korea and several outbreaks of the H3N2 canine influenza in the United States.

The introduction of this virus

- Caused the American public to spend \$ millions for veterinary care
- forced the temporary closure of some veterinary clinics
- added additional costs to animal shelters whose dogs fell ill with this disease
- required pharmaceutical companies to make huge expenditures to develop new vaccines
- forced pet owners to make additional expenditures to vaccinate their dogs

- hurt dog clubs through lost entries
- lost tourism dollars in communities where dog events were impacted by virus

These shipments were facilitated and advertised by the Humane Society International, which is an affiliate of the Humane Society of the United States that raises funds on this issue.

[http://www.hsi.org/issues/dog\\_meat/facts/stop-dog-meat-trade.html](http://www.hsi.org/issues/dog_meat/facts/stop-dog-meat-trade.html) scroll to Animal Rescue: South Korea.

<https://www.avma.org/News/JAVMANews/Pages/150815g.aspx>

<https://www.avma.org/KB/Resources/Reference/Pages/Canine-Influenza-Backgrounder.aspx>

<http://mediarelations.cornell.edu/2015/04/12/midwest-canine-influenza-outbreak-caused-by-new-strain-of-virus/>

[http://www.weny.com/story/35775357/experts-at-cornell-university-explain-dog-influenza-how-to-protect-your-pups?utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=facebook](http://www.weny.com/story/35775357/experts-at-cornell-university-explain-dog-influenza-how-to-protect-your-pups?utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook) WENY TV News

<http://www.clickorlando.com/pets/dog-flu-causes-orlando-pet-alliance-to-suspend-dog-adoptions>

<http://www.citywatchla.com/index.php/los-angeles/13395-rescued-dogs-imported-from-asia-infected-with-deadly-influenza-was-la-properly-warned>

<http://iheartdogs.com/outbreak-of-asian-dog-flu-hits-los-angeles-county/>

**[Example of inhumane treatment and tragic results in unregulated import](#)** Puerto Rican Tragedy, street dogs imported for rescue adoptathon in New York. At least 107 dogs die.

<http://www.naiaonline.org/uploads/WhitePapers/PuertoRicanImportTragedy.pdf>

**Example of typical Southern California rescue website, openly talking about importing rescue dogs**

<http://thebarkinglot.net/available-dogs> There are currently 132 dogs listed on their website as available for adoption today, June 27, 2017. Many are puppies. The Barking Lot finds its recruits in several places and ways. We rescue them from high kill shelters and humane societies – from Los Angeles all the way down and into Mexico. More often than not, the dogs we rescue were already scheduled to be euthanized. The Barking Lot is their last chance at finding a forever home.

## HOW ARE THESE DOGS GETTING INTO THE US

Out-of-date pet import laws make the US the destination country for stray dogs worldwide. The main thing required for admittance into the US is a certificate showing that the dog was vaccinated for rabies at least 30 days before.

Unlike livestock import requirements, pet import laws have not been updated significantly since 1956. Since then the Internet has made worldwide communication simple and international travel has become affordable for the middle class.

The practice that systematically moves hundreds of thousands of dogs into the US each year is called **HUMANE RELOCATION**

**Definitions: Humane Relocation** - Humane relocation refers to the practice of transporting un-owned pets in need of adoption (primarily dogs and cats) from areas with a surplus of homeless pets to areas with a higher demand for pets and more shelter and rescue space. ([link](#)) When done responsibly, it is a cooperative, common-sense method of finding homes for pets that might otherwise be euthanized. When done without care, it does nothing to solve the problem of pet overpopulation at its source, and in some cases even encourages it. Worse, it can turn participating rescues and shelters into unregulated pet stores that deal in animals of unknown backgrounds – animals that may have serious behavioral problems or may be infected with parasites and diseases not endemic to a particular region (e.g. whip worm, heart worm, or rabies). ([link](#))

### Legislative Options

**Federal Level: We need to modernize the laws** regulating the import of pets into the US.

**State Level:** We need laws that hold animal shelters and rescues accountable just like other pet sellers. In many states, animal shelters and rescues place more animals with the public than all other sources combined, and in many states they are totally unregulated or minimally regulated. Adoption policies need to include reasonable disclosure practices about such things as known bite histories and illnesses

**Model law to provide animal shelters and rescues with minimal oversight:**

<http://www.naiaonline.org/uploads/Main Upload Directory/naiaShelterReportingAct2014.pdf>

**Model lemon law that requires shelters and rescues to disclose known bite histories and illnesses, Dog Purchaser Protection Act.**

<http://www.naiaonline.org/uploads/Main Upload Directory/DogPurchaserProtectionModelLaw.pdf>