



# IWAKUNI VTF

## JAPAN PCS REQUIREMENTS & GUIDELINES

The Iwakuni Veterinary Treatment Facility (VTF) would like to extend a warm welcome to you and your family to MCAS Iwakuni. We at the Iwakuni VTF understand how daunting OCONUS PCS orders can be for you and your family, and we are here to help.

Whenever families with pets receive new PCS orders, it is an essential first step to review requirements for their pets to accompany their family to their new Duty Station. The USDA APHIS website is a great tool with step-by-step instructions for ensuring that your pet can PCS with you and your family wherever your next Duty Station takes you.

The Government of Japan is considered a Rabies free country, and has many requirements that must be completed in the correct order for pets to be imported properly. The steps listed below are the most current and up-to-date guidelines for importing your pet(s) to Japan.

- 1. Advance Notification** – The importer must provide advance notification of the animal to be imported to the Animal Quarantine Services (AQS) with jurisdiction over the intended air or seaport of arrival at least 40 days prior to arrival in Japan by fax or mail.
  - If you and your pet are traveling via AMC/Patriot, the Advance Notification is not required.
- 2. Individual Identification by Microchip** – Dogs and cats must be individually identified by an ISO compliant microchip. If the animal is not fitted with an ISO compliant (11784 and 11785) microchip, the importer must bring a microchip reader with the pet. The pets must be microchipped on the day of or before their first vaccination.
  - **Exception** – Microchip implantation can occur on the day of or before the second vaccination when the export health certificate, endorsed by APHIS, shows that:
    - The first vaccination was administered prior to microchip implantation, **AND**
    - The animal had a rabies antibody titer of at least 0.5 IU/mL on a serum sample collected on the day of administration of the second vaccination.
- 3. Rabies Vaccination** – Dogs and cats 91 days of age and older must be vaccinated at least twice within an approved rabies vaccine.
  - The first vaccination must have been administered according to label recommendations.
  - The second vaccination must be current according to label recommendations and have occurred more than 31 days after the first vaccination and within the effective period of the first vaccination.
- 4. Measurement of Rabies Antibody (FAVN) levels** – Dogs and cats must be evaluated for serum rabies antibody level. The animal must have been vaccinated for rabies in accordance with section 3 above.
  - Animals microchipped before or on the day of the first vaccination, the serum sample may be collected on the date of second vaccination or any day until the end of the effective period of the second vaccination.
  - The rabies titer test must be carried out at a laboratory approved by the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan. The results of the rabies titer test must be great than or equal to 0.5 IU/mL. The result of rabies titer test is valid for two years from the date of sampling. The laboratory results must be originals (no USDA endorsement needed) or copies with USDA endorsement. No report is needed if the animal is a returning pet that has a valid “Export Quarantine Certificate” with lab results listed within the last two years.
    - **Approved Laboratories:**
      1. Kansas State University Rabies Laboratory
      2. DoD Veterinary Food Analysis and Diagnostics Laboratory



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5. **180 days wait** – Dogs and cats are required to undergo a wait of at least 180 days between the date the sample is collected for the rabies titer test and the date the animal arrives in Japan. If 180 days have not passed before the animal's arrival in Japan, the animal will be quarantined in an AQS facility to make up the number of days remaining in the 180-day wait period. Antibody levels are measured in order to confirm whether or not the animal has developed immunity to rabies. The reason for the wait is to make sure that the animal has not contracted rabies prior to developing immunity to it as a result of immunization, 180 days corresponds to the incubation period for the disease.
6. **Health Certificate** – Dogs and cats must be inspected by a USDA Accredited Veterinarian and confirmed free of clinical signs of infectious disease including rabies and leptospirosis (for dogs) prior to departure. The traveler needs an Exporter's Declaration and an Export Health Certificate.
  - **Exporter's Declarations (Form A):** Form A is recommended to be used for this purpose. The traveler needs to prepare the Exporter's Declaration with the assistance of an accredited veterinarian. This form needs to be endorsed by APHIS-VS or can be combined with the health certificate as noted in Option 1 below.

### Health Certificate Options

- **Option 1** – Certificate for dogs and cats to Japan (Form AC): Form AC contains the information required for both the owner declaration and health certificate. This document can be used to fulfill both requirements. The exporter will need to have this form endorsed by APHIS-VS.
- **Option 2** – Export Health Certificate (Form C): Form C is recommended to be used for this purpose. The exporter will need to have this form endorsed by APHIS-VS.
- **Option 3** – International Health Certificate (APHIS Form 7001): Another health certificate option is the APHIS Form 7001 which can be obtained from the issuing accredited veterinarian. This form must contain all the information required per Form C and needs to be endorsed by APHIS-VS.

### Military Personnel Options

- **Active Duty Military** personnel and their families may use a valid health certificate for dogs and cats only issued by a military veterinarian without APHIS endorsement.
  - **Retired Military** personnel and their families – Japan requires APHIS endorsement of a valid health certificate. APHIS-VS may endorse health certificates for pet dogs and cats for military personnel, when they meet the importing requirements of Japan on an APHIS Form 7001, Japan's Export Health Certificate (Form C), MDJ2209 Form or other suitable health certificate format.
7. **Recommended Treatments and Measures** – Japan recommends the following measures for bringing pets to Japan.
    - **Immunization** – Japan recommends that the following immunizations be given to dogs and cats that are 91 days old or older 30 days prior to their arrival in Japan (within the vaccine immunization effectiveness period).
      - **Dogs:** Distemper, contagious Hepatitis (Adenovirus type II acceptable), Parvovirus infection disease trivalent vaccine (Parainfluenza, Leptospirosis, Coronavirus).
      - **Cats:** Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis, Feline Calcivirus, Feline Panleukopenia trivalent vaccine.
    - **Parasite Treatment** – Japan recommend the following parasite treatments before departure (no more than 4 days before boarding):



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- **External Parasites** – Treat with medicines effective against mites and fleas, and at the time of export have a clinical inspection to confirm that the animal is free from these parasites.
- **Internal Parasites** – Administer medicine effective against nematodes and tapeworms.

For further information and blank versions of the above listed forms, please visit the websites listed below.

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pet-travel>

<https://www.mcasiwakuni.marines.mil/PCS-to-Iwakuni/>

<https://www.maff.go.jp/aqs/english/animal/dog/import-other.html>

As always, if you have any questions or concerns regarding the importing process of your pet to MCAS Iwakuni, please contact the Iwakuni VTF directly.

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