

BIOSECURITY NOTICE ON BRINGING IN CATS AND DOGS INTO FIJI

25 September 2024, BAF Headquarters, Suva

BRINGING IN CATS AND DOGS INTO FIJI

The Biosecurity Authority of Fiji (BAF) allows cats and dogs to be brought into Fiji under certain terms and conditions that must be fulfilled before arriving and while staying in Fiji. The reason for this, in particular cats and dogs, is that they may have come into contact with other animals carrying exotic animal pests and diseases, while in those countries, including zoonotic diseases such as rabies which may pose a biosecurity threat as well as compromise human health.

Fiji is recognized as a rabies-free country, and BAF endeavors to maintain the status of freedom from this fatal zoonotic disease. Cats and dogs are easily susceptible to the rabies disease. Therefore, stringent biosecurity measures have been enforced when importing or bringing pet cats and dogs into Fiji. Compliance with these measures is mandatory for all importers or those bringing cats and dogs into Fiji. Before cats and dogs are allowed into Fiji, they must meet the import or entry requirements set out by BAF, which may vary depending on the country of origin and the animal species since the countries have different animal disease statuses.

Considering the above facts, BAF has reviewed the biosecurity import specifications under the provision of the Biosecurity Act 2008 and set import specifications for cats and dogs to prevent the entry of exotic pests and diseases into Fiji. The following table lists the countries that approved the importation of cats and dogs into Fiji.

List of Approved Countries for Cats and Dogs to Fiji

Group A	Group B
Australia, American Samoa, Christmas Island, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, French Polynesia, Kingdom of Tonga, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Wallis & Futuna.	Antigua & Barbuda, Aruba, Argentina, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belgium, Bermuda, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Cayman Islands, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Falkland Islands (Malvinas), Finland, France, Germany, Gibraltar, Greece, Greenland, Guernsey, Hong Kong, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Isle of Man, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jersey, Kuwait, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macao, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Northern Mariana Islands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Qatar, Reunion, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Trinidad & Tobago, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America (including Guam and Hawaii), Uruguay, Virgin Islands (British), Virgin Islands (United States of America).

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If your country is not an approved country mentioned above, your pet is not eligible for direct import into Fiji. If this is the case,

- a) Move your pet to an approved country or territory where it must complete the six-month residency and other requirements in the veterinary certificate for that country; or
- b) Submit an official request for inclusion of a country or territory in a veterinary certificate for cats and dogs.

I. IMPORTING CATS AND DOGS INTO FIJI (AIR FREIGHT)

A. Importing cats and dogs from "Group A" Country

1. All cats and dogs must have a valid import permit issued by BAF and fulfill its requirements before departing from a Group A country.
2. All cats and dogs must have an ISO-compatible microchip identification.
3. All cats and dogs must undergo a mandatory 7-day minimum quarantine upon arriving in Fiji at the BAF Post Entry Quarantine station. Home quarantine is not allowed.
4. The importer/owner or the agent of the pet (s) must contact the Post Entry Quarantine well ahead of time (at least 6-8 weeks) before departure from the country of origin to book kennel space for the cats and dogs.
5. Upon successful completion of the quarantine, cats and dogs will be granted permission to officially enter the Fiji Islands.

B. Importing cats and dogs from "Group B" Country

1. All cats and dogs must have a valid import permit issued by BAF and fulfill its requirements before departing from a Group B country.
2. All cats and dogs must have an ISO-compatible microchip identification.
3. All cats and dogs must undergo a mandatory 30-day minimum quarantine upon arriving in Fiji at the BAF Post Entry Quarantine station. Home quarantine is not allowed.
4. The importer/owner or the agent of the pet (s) must contact the Post Entry Quarantine well ahead of time (at least 6-8 weeks) before departure from the country of origin to book kennel space for the cats and dogs.
5. All cats and dogs entering Fiji from a Group B country must be vaccinated against rabies according to the manufacturer's recommendations at least 30 days before the date of export and rabies vaccination must be valid at least until the date that the cat or dog is released from the quarantine.
6. All cats and dogs entering Fiji from a Group B country must be tested for rabies antibodies with the Rabies Neutralizing Antibody Titer Test (RNATT) or the Fluorescent Antibody Virus Neutralization (FAVN) test and the test must be done at least **180 days** and not more than 365 days before the date of export. The minimum antibody titre should be 0.5 IU/ml.

7. The RNATT or FAVN test is only valid for 1 year (365 days) from the date of blood collection. If RNATT is not within the time frame, it must be demonstrated the continuation of the test with another RNATT or FAVN test showing the minimum antibody titre of 0.5 IU/ml.
8. Upon successful completion of the quarantine, cats and dogs will be granted the permission to officially enter into the Fiji Islands.

II. BRINGING IN CATS AND DOGS ONBOARD VESSELS

1. All cats and dogs arriving in vessels (via sea) onboard are not eligible to officially import into Fiji and must remain onboard a vessel throughout their stay in Fiji Waters.

As per the Biosecurity Act 2008, "Vessels" includes a ship, hovercraft, boat, ferry, raft, yacht, canoe, or pontoon that is used as a conveyance in or on water, whether or not it is self-propelled.

2. All cats and dogs must have an ISO-compatible microchip identification.
3. All cats and dogs entering Fiji via a vessel must have a valid entry permit issued by BAF to stay or cruise in Fiji Waters and fulfill its requirements, not limited to the conditions stated below, before departing from the current country of residence or stay. It is the responsibility of the pet owner or the master of the vessel to apply for an entry permit at least five (5) working days before departing from the current country of residence or last port of stay and obtain the entry permit.
 - 3.1. All cats and dogs that originate and/or reside for more than six (6) months (outside of quarantine restrictions) in a Group A or B country will be eligible to enter Fiji Waters. Documentary evidence must be provided to claim the residency status of the cats and/or dogs.
 - 3.2. All cats and dogs entering Fiji via vessels must vaccinate against rabies according to the manufacturer's recommendations at least 30 days before departing from the current country of residence or the last port of stay, and rabies vaccination must be valid until the date that the cat or dog departs from Fiji Waters.
 - 3.3. All cats and dogs entering Fiji via vessels must be tested for rabies antibodies with RNATT or FAVN test and the test must be done at least **180 days** and not more than 365 days before the date of export. The minimum antibody titre should be 0.5 IU/ml.
 - 3.4. The RNATT or FAVN test is only valid for 1 year (365 days) from the date of blood collection.
 - 3.5. All cats and dogs that meet the requirements stated in the entry permit will **ONLY** be allowed to cruise around Fiji Waters under bond for a maximum of 3 months with the conditions highlighted in the entry permit.
 - 3.6. All cats and dogs onboard cruise ships will be allowed to cruise around Fiji Waters for a short period (e.g. 7 days) with biosecurity officers onboard the cruise ship. The pet animal must remain onboard all the time. BAF fees and charges will be applied for the services provided by BAF.

III. PET ANIMAL TRANSITTING THROUGH FIJI

1. All cats and dogs transiting through Fiji must have a valid transit permit issued by BAF and fulfill its requirements before departing from the exporting country.
2. Cats and dogs are allowed to transit only through Nadi International Airport with a maximum transit period of 12 hours or as otherwise advised by the BAF.
3. All cats and dogs must have an ISO-compatible microchip identification.
4. If required, cats and dogs will be transferred to the Transit Kennels within the Airport premises and will be kept under strict supervision of the BAF officers with applicable fees and charges.

IV. BRINGING IN SERVICE OR ASSISTANCE ANIMALS

1. Service or Assistance Animals are dogs of any breed (except the breeds prohibited from entering Fiji) or size trained to perform a task directly related to a person's disability.
2. Emotional support or comfort dogs or any other animal are not considered to be a service or assistance animal, because providing emotional support or comfort is not a task related to a person's disability.
3. All service or assistance dogs entering Fiji, must have a valid import permit issued by BAF and fulfill its requirements before departing from the exporting country (Either Group A or B) otherwise advised by the BAF.
4. All service or assistance dogs must have an ISO-compatible microchip identification.
5. The importation of assistance or service dogs is similar to the import process for all dogs, however, service or assistance dogs will ONLY be exempted from the mandatory quarantine requirement.
6. During the application process, the importer should provide evidence that the dog is trained to assist a person with a disability to ease the effects of the disability. The supporting documents, not limited to medical certificates of the handler, to show that the dog is a service or assistance animal must be issued by a recognised and accredited national or international organisation such as institutions that are members of the International Guide Dog Federation or Assistance Dogs International.

V. GENERAL CONDITIONS

1. All cats and dogs entering via sea or air must have an ISO-compatible microchip identification.
2. Cats and dogs can only be entered into Fiji at a designated port of entry (sea or air) otherwise specifically advised by the BAF
3. If it is air freight, importation must be arranged through direct flight routes or with a minimum transit period through the countries (Group A or B) listed above and the cats or dogs must remain under the direct supervision of the veterinary authority of the transiting country(ies).

4. Cats and dogs must be consigned to Fiji by air in a container of no lesser standard than that required by CONTAINER REQUIREMENT 1 of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) Live Animal Regulations.
5. Each animal must be confined in its own cage/box/crate. No two animals or more may travel in one cage.
6. Animals for export to Fiji must have complied with all of the conditions listed above prior to export to Fiji. If any of the above conditions are breached or not fulfilled, the animals will either be reshipped out of Fiji or destroyed, at the importer's expense.
7. Entry may not be granted depending on the animal health status of the country of origin.
8. The Biosecurity Authority will not be liable for any compensation in the event of an applicant not being granted a permit or in the event of a permit being canceled.
9. In case the vessel is anchored off the dock, the master of the vessel or the owner of the pet must provide a means of safe transportation including life jackets to and from the vessel for the purpose of animal monitoring.
10. Animals, in particular dogs, must be restrained appropriately, not limited to having a dog muzzle on, during inspection and monitoring of the pets onboard to ensure the safety of inspecting officers.

All costs associated with inspection, monitoring, treatment, additional testing, and veterinary consultation will be borne by the owner/importer or the agent. Applications for bringing cats and dogs into Fiji will also be subjected to a case-by-case assessment. BAF will not provide veterinary certificates for pet animals under bond when those animals leave Fiji Waters.

If cats and/or dogs show symptoms of having rabies at any point in time, the cats and/or dogs will be euthanized and disposed of at the owner's/importer's cost.

NOTE:

BAF is mandated by the Biosecurity Act 2008 and will issue penalties or prosecute the alleged perpetrator for any breach of conditions or requirements. The conditions stated in this alert are subject to revision, revocation, and repeal at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Biosecurity Authority of Fiji at any time depending on the disease status of the country of origin /exporting country or other unforeseen circumstances. The Biosecurity Authority will not be liable for any compensation in the event of an applicant not being granted a permit or in the event of a permit being canceled or revoked.

This notice is to notify the general public and interested parties on the changes to the import requirements for bringing in cats and dogs into Fiji and the changes will come in to effect the date of this notice issued or as otherwise advised by BAF. For further clarifications do not hesitate to contact Permit Section at BAF Headquarters on 3312512 or alternatively, by email: animalimports@baf.com.fj

