



# Guidance for Passengers Traveling with their Dog or Cat in the Cabin

This guidance is only intended to supplement and/or reinforce requirements in Container Requirement 1 (CR1) of the current edition of the IATA Live Animals Regulations (LAR) and the In-Cabin Live Animal Checklist in LAR Section 7.6.2 as it pertains to dogs and cats accompanying passengers in the cabin of aircraft. Unless otherwise permitted (e.g. assistance and emotional support dogs), all live animals transported by air must be placed in a container as described in the current IATA LAR. It is not intended for other species of animals traveling in cabin or any species of animal traveling in other areas of the aircraft. Individual carriers may have additional or more stringent policies to some of this guidance or components of CR1, so the individual carrier(s) being used for the journey should be consulted as part of planning the journey for in cabin carriage of dogs or cats. Travelling has an unsettling effect on animals and they must be disturbed as little as possible. Domesticated animals prefer dim light as this helps to calm them and reduce stress.

## Suitability For Travel

- **Is the dog or cat old enough to travel in cabin?**
  - Unweaned animals and animals under 8 weeks must not travel. Check with the government/country that you are traveling to from or via and the airline regulations for age policies as they may have more stringent requirements.
  - Airlines and destination countries have requirements for proof of age upon entry. Travelers should ensure to be compliant and have the necessary documentation.
- **Is the animal in suitable health for travel?**
  - Sick, injured, or debilitated animals may not be suitable. Be sure to have supporting documents for animals with chronic conditions, those traveling to receive medical treatment or any other exception.
  - A health certificate is required for international travel and may be time sensitive.
- **You must obtain the appropriate import and other travel documents for international travel of your dog or cat.**
  - Allow enough time to obtain the documents and keep copies. Travelers to note that this could take several months.
  - Make sure to check the applicable laws / regulations for those countries your dog / cat is traveling to and connecting through for additional requirements. The airline or the country's embassy can be a source of such information.
- **Some airlines place travel restrictions on certain breeds of dogs or cats.**
  - Consult the airline(s) participating in the journey regarding these restrictions.
- **Airlines may have limitations on the number of dogs or cats permitted in-cabin.**
  - This can be an issue with some smaller aircraft in which the under-seat space is extremely limited. Contact your airline to clarify transport requirements.



- **Sedation / tranquilization is advised against for dogs or cats traveling in cabin.**
  - There is considerable risk in sedating animals transported by air, as tranquilizers reduce the ability of the animals to respond to stress during transportation.
  - If such drugs are administered, they must be under a veterinarian's direction and the airline should be advised of their use.
  - Airlines may refuse to carry an animal that is sedated / tranquilized at their discretion.

## Dog and Cat Containers

IATA does not certify, approve, sell or otherwise endorse any commercial dog or cat travel / shipping container as being compliant with standards in the Live Animals Regulations. It does provide standards for dog and cat travel / shipping containers in Container Requirement 1. Any dog or cat container used for in- cabin carriage of dogs or cats must comply with these standards, or it will be rejected by the airline for travel.

- **A dog or cat, travelling in-cabin must be in an IATA compliant container that fits under the seat in front of the passenger or other place as specified by the airline.**
  - There is very limited space for animal travel containers under the aircraft passenger seats. Only very small dogs or cats and their travelling containers will fit under aircraft seats.
  - Soft-sided containers may compress when inserted under the seat. Compression of the ventilation openings can result in reduced ventilation and heat buildup in the container leading to potential adverse consequences to the dog or cat contained therein.
- **Is the container of suitable size and construction for the size and weight of the dog or cat traveling in-cabin?**
  - Can the dog or cat sit erect, stand erect, turn around and lie down within it in a natural position?
  - Does the container have at least 16% of the area on its 4 vertical sides set up as ventilation openings?
  - Is the container escape-proof?
  - Is the container leak proof?
  - Does the container have a "Live Animals" label affixed to it?
- **Dogs and cats should be introduced to the travel / shipping container to be used for in-cabin carriage well before the journey so that their stress in being confined in it during the journey is minimized.**
- **Dogs or cats must not be removed from their travel containers during the flight. The travel container should not be opened during the flight.**
- **Ideally, the animal should be fed a light meal at least two hours before the flight, with a short drink and exercise immediately before crating.**
- **The traveling container must be able to contain any feces or urine produced by the dog or cat.**
- **The container must be clean and leak-proof and absorbent bedding must be provided.**
- **The passenger is responsible for the actions of their dog or cat while it is traveling in-cabin.**

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For any queries or further information required, please contact the IATA Special Cargo team at [larper@iata.org](mailto:larper@iata.org)