

# Moving With Pets

Because pets have an instinctive fear of new surroundings, pet owners want to help them adjust quickly. This article will provide a checklist of things to do to see that your pets will be happy—courtesy of Hoosier Mover. Pre-planning for the transfer of your pet, as well as for your household goods, should begin as soon as you know you are going to move. This article covers the following topics:

- **Pre-Planning**
- **State & Local Regulations**
- **Health**
- **Identification**
- **Transportation**
- **Birds & Small Caged Pets**
- **Tropical Fish**
- **Horses & Ponies**
- **Unusual Pets**
- **A New Veterinarian**
- **At Home In The New Home**

## Pre-Planning

This is the key to an easier transfer, regardless of the mode of transportation chosen. Travel arrangements should be completed as far in advance of moving day as is practical, keeping departure day tasks to a minimum. One person in the family should assume responsibility for the pet.

### General Checklist

1. Take pet to veterinarian for checkup and health documents apply for entry permit if one is needed; inquire about sedation for pet; obtain pet's health record; schedule second visit to vet if necessary; ask your vet to recommend a colleague in the new city.
2. Obtain travel identification tag.
3. Check destination state's pet entry regulations.

## State & Local Regulations

### State Law:

Nearly every state has laws applicable to the entry of dogs, cats, horses, psittacine birds (birds of the parrot family), and other pets. Tropical fish are the only exception. It is important to comply with the laws of the state to which you are moving; otherwise, you may be subject to

prosecution. Hoosier Mover suggests contacting the State Veterinarian in the capital city of your new home state well in advance of your move for specific laws concerning entry of your pet.

A few states have border inspection of all animals being imported; others have random inspection by department of agriculture officials or the state highway patrol; some check interstate health certificates; many depend on individual compliance with the law; and a number rely on a combination of these methods. Representatives of the state department of agriculture are usually present at airports to inspect any pets arriving by air.

### **Local Regulations:**

The majority of communities in the United States have enacted pet control and licensing ordinances. In many instances these relate only to dogs, but increasing numbers of cities are applying them to cats as well. Local laws may limit the number of dogs or cats permitted in one household.

Most communities prohibit the stabling of horses, ponies and other livestock within city limits. Where permitted, minimum distance from the barn to you and your neighbors' houses may be specified, as well as size of pasture required. You may have to stable your animal(s) outside the city limits.

License fees and the length of time a new resident has in which to obtain a license for a pet vary from place to place. Contact the city clerk at the destination city or town hall for specific information.

## **Health**

The documents pertaining to your pet's health are important. You may be asked to show them at any time, especially when traveling, so it is advisable to keep them handy. Any or all of the following may be required:

- **Health Certificate:**
  - Interstate health certificates must accompany dogs and horses entering nearly all states. About half have the same requirement for cats, birds and other pets. In some cases, advance receipt of the health certificate by the destination state's regulatory agency is a prerequisite to entry of the pet.
  - The health certificate must include a complete description of the pet, list all inoculations it has had, and state that it is free from infectious diseases.
  - Have your pet examined by your veterinarian well in advance of departure date so there will be time for any treatment or inoculations recommended. Another examination just prior to departure may be necessary. If the pet is excitable, or prone to motion sickness when traveling, ask the vet to prescribe medication for it. Also ask if a colleague in your new area can be recommended.
- **Permit:** Some pets must have entry permits issued by the destination state's regulatory agency. Either you or your veterinarian may apply for the permit, for which there may be

a charge. Receipt of an interstate health certificate from the state of origin may be requisite to issuance of the permit.

- **Rabies Tag:** All but four states require dogs to have rabies inoculation, and a number have the same regulation for cats. State and local laws usually stipulate that the rabies tag be securely attached to the pet's collar.

**NOTE:** Validity of health certificates and permits is strictly limited in several states. If moving to one of these, be sure your pet arrives within the valid period.

## Identification

In addition to permanent identity and rabies tags, both dogs and cats should be provided with special travel identification tags. A luggage- type tag with space on both sides for writing is excellent for this particular purpose. The tag should include the pet's name, your name and destination address, and the name and address of an alternate person to contact in case you cannot be located. Other pets are less apt to become lost, but birds are sometimes identified by leg bands; horses and ponies by brands, tattoos, color photos, and/or registration papers. The pet's health certificate may also be used for identification.

## Transportation

Pets cannot be moved on the moving truck. Nor, except for Seeing- Eye dogs accompanying blind persons, are they permitted on trains or buses. So ways of pet transport are limited to two:

1. By Air with the pet either accompanying you, or in an appropriate container traveling as air freight
2. In your personal motor vehicle.

### Transportation by Air

Airlines that accept pets for transportation have specific regulations covering their passage, whether they are accompanied or unaccompanied. When making inquiries, be sure to ask about transportation charges and pet insurance.

### Accompanied Pets

Some airlines permit pets in passenger cabins IF they are of a size to be kept in a carrier no larger than 21" x 18" x 8" high, that can be kept under the seat. Larger pets must travel as air freight (see "Unaccompanied Pets").

Reservations should be made well in advance of departure date as the number of pets permitted on a flight is strictly limited, and pet approval is granted on a first-come-first-served basis. A Seeing-Eye dog, properly harnessed, normally travels free in the cabin at its master's feet. However, the airline must be notified in advance that the dog will be on the flight.

If your pet is to travel in the cabin, take it with you when you check in. If as air freight, it must be delivered to the freight terminal in time to assure inclusion on your flight.

Should your trip require a transfer between airlines, check pet regulations of the second airline in advance to be sure that pets are carried. There is no through-checking of pets between airlines, so it will be your responsibility to see that connections are made at the transfer point.

### **Unaccompanied Pets**

Dogs and cats should be shipped via air freight; birds, tropical fish, and small pets such as hamster or gerbils, by air express, a division of air freight. Make shipping arrangements as far in advance as possible so space can be reserved and any details about the flight settled. Follow all shipping instructions carefully.

You will be responsible for:

- Providing the shipping container, legibly and durably marked with both you and the consignee's (person to whom the pet is being shipped) name, address and phone number
- Advance payment of shipping charges
- Providing required health documents
- Delivery of pet to the air freight terminal on time
- Signing of the Air Waybill (shipping papers)
- Pick up at destination
- Notifying consignee as to airline and flight number the pet will be on, and place, date and time of arrival.

Shipping containers should withstand jostling, bumps, and the possibility of damage caused by other freight falling on them. Ample cross ventilation and a leak proof bottom with an absorbent layer are a must.

For dogs and cats, many airlines recommend the travel kennels obtainable from their own freight departments at very reasonable cost. Suitable shipping and travel kennels and carriers for dogs, cats and small pets may be purchased at many pet shops.

Tropical fish are best "packed" for shipment by pet suppliers specializing in tropical fish. Look in the Yellow Pages under "Tropical Fish" and "Aquariums and Aquarium Supplies."

Pets are generally loaded on the plane last so they will be nearest the door and can be unloaded first. If the pet is not picked up at destination within a reasonable time, it will be boarded at the owner's expense at a kennel or other appropriate place.

Regulations for shipping pets by air were formulated to assure that all pets arrive at destination safely. The weather is a major concern. It is better to ship pets only during moderate weather, and then either on early morning or late evening flights. They should be in appropriate carriers, sedated if the veterinarian so advises, and picked up without delay at destination.

## **Pre-planning for Air Travel**

If pet is being shipped via air freight and your departure precedes that of pet, make boarding and shipping arrangements at point of origin.

Make flight reservations. Follow airline instructions carefully.

Arrange to have tropical fish professionally “packed” by a tropical fish dealer or aquarium supply company.

Obtain shipping container or carrier (for dog or cat) a week or two prior to departure date. Accustom pet to it gradually, a few minutes at first, increasing the time daily. Pet’s nap time is a good time to start, and placing its blanket or a favorite toy in the carrier helps.

Purchase shipping container for bird or small pet from pet supply company.

If pet’s departure precedes yours, make any necessary pick up and boarding arrangements at destination. Be sure consignee has complete flight schedule and name of airport where pet will arrive (some cities have more than one airport), as well as the Air Waybill number.

If you choose air freight, you must also:

Leave your pet with someone for shipment later on when you will be able to pick the pet up at destination yourself; or

- Decide whether to ship the pet before you leave and have it cared for at destination until your arrival; and
- Appoint someone reliable to take charge of the pet at either origin or destination point.

## **Day of Departure**

Deliver pet to air terminal on time if traveling with you, 45 minutes before departure; if via air freight, two hours prior to flight time.

Feed pet no less than five or six hours before flight time; normally, no additional food is required for at least 12 hours. Give pet a drink of water about two hours before take-off.

Be certain that names, addresses and telephone contacts of persons responsible for pet at both destination and origin cities are legibly and durably marked on the container, and on pet’s travel identification tag.

Exercise pet on leash at airport and administer any necessary medication before confining it to shipping container. Attach pet’s leash firmly to outside of container.

Notify consignee that pet is on the way. Pet can usually be picked up within 60 to 90 minutes after arrival of flight. It is advisable for consignee to phone the airline’s cargo office in advance to be sure flight is on time. The Air Waybill number is useful when making inquiries.

## **Air Travel Checklist**

- Transportation charges paid?
- All health and shipping documents in order?
- Identification tag attached to pet's collar?
- Consignee given all information needed?
- Shipping container in order?
- Securely latched?
- Legibly labeled
- Leash attached?

**Caution:** The Animal Welfare Act prohibits air transportation of puppies and kittens less than eight weeks old and prior to weaning, whether accompanied or unaccompanied.

## **Transportation by Motor Vehicle**

This is a practical way of transferring your pet, particularly if the distance you are moving is comparatively short—a day's travel or less. Overnight travel is more involved, and includes making and confirming advance reservations at motels or hotels that permit pets. Of course, Pets Welcome is your one source for pet-friendly lodgings throughout the United States and Canada. If camping, find out whether pets are permitted in the public or private campgrounds at which you expect to stop.

### **Dogs and Cats by Car**

For either a dog or cat, a cat carrier or portable dog crate is one of the most useful items you can have on an overnight or multi-day road trip. It becomes the pet's "home-away-from-home," and you can safely leave the pet in it in your car, motel or hotel room, or at wayside rest stops. Folding kennels, as well as crates designed especially for station wagons, are available (see "Unaccompanied Pets")

Condition your dog or cat to the restraint of a leash. Cat harnesses are available at many pet shops.

Unless your dog or cat is already conditioned to car travel, start taking it on short trips to accustom it to car motion and teach it travel manners.

A dog should be taught to sit or lie quietly in its own place, to keep its head inside the car, not to annoy the driver or passengers, or bark at passing vehicles. A safety harness, kind of like a seatbelt for your dog is also a great idea.

Most cats are frightened of car travel, but usually become accustomed to it quickly. Some persons allow the cat to find its own niche in the car as long as it does not interfere with driver or passengers; others feel that the cat is better off in its own special carrier.

A stake with a long leash attached will be useful in keeping your pet restricted outdoors—an especially good idea for campers, as most campgrounds do not permit pets to run free.

Attach pet's travel identification and rabies tags firmly to its collar.

Have your dog's nails clipped before the trip to prevent scratches and upholstery damage to the car.

For convenience, pack a travel kit for your pet.

### **Pet Travel Kit**

- Supply of pet's regular food
- Can opener
- Pet's food and water dishes
- Blanket
- Favorite toy or two
- A few treats
- Comb and/or brush
- A mop-up towel, paper towels or a few newspapers
- Flea or tick repellent if you will be in rural areas
- A sedative prescribed by your veterinarian
- Scooper and plastic bags to clean up after your pet at motel or campgrounds
- Spray-type room deodorant or air freshener if you will be taking your pet into a motel or hotel room

### **Trip Tips: Some Dos and Don'ts**

Administer a sedative or tranquilizer only if veterinarian has prescribed one.

Do not feed or water the pet just before starting. Feed it only once a day, preferably by evening. Try to keep to established walking and feeding routines. A few treats will do for snacks during the day.

Plan stops at regular intervals to give your pet a drink and a short run. Wayside rest areas make good stopping places.

Take a container of fresh water along; a too sudden change in drinking water may cause a temporary upset in some dogs.

**Never** let your dog or cat loose in a strange place. Exercise it **on leash**.

**Always** attach the leash **before** opening the car door and detach it after the pet is back inside and the door closed. Take care when stopping at filling stations and restaurants. Do not give an excited pet a chance to bolt and become lost it may be gone forever in spite of identification tags.

If you must leave pet in the car on a warm day, park in the shade, open all the windows an inch or two for cross ventilation, leave water, and check on pet every hour or so. If the day is hot, it is best not to leave pet in the car at all. Heat can quickly become excessive in a parked car even if it is in the shade, and animals can suffer from heat prostration.

Keep the car windows rolled up enough to prevent your pet from jumping or falling out.

Do not let your pet hang its head out of the window. Sore eyes can be caused by dust, grit and insects in the air; inflamed ears and throat by too much wind.

**Do not permit your pet** to do things to antagonize people.

Walk it away from manicured lawns, garden and swimming pool areas.

Keep it out of restaurants, and on a short leash in motel or hotel lobbies and other public buildings.

If left alone in a motel or hotel room, it might disturb others, chew on furniture, have an “accident,” or escape when the maid opens the door to clean the room.

Keep strangers, especially children, at a distance if your pet seems to be nervous. Even the most gentle pet can be provoked into growling or snapping. Notify the management if you must leave the pet alone in your room. Expect to pay for any damage it might do. Just before checking out, spray the room with air freshener to eliminate any pet odors that might linger.

### **Last Minute Car Checklist**

- Travel identification and rabies tags attached to pet’s collar?
- Necessary health documents and pet’s veterinary record on hand?
- Pet’s travel kit packed?
- Water container filled for pet? For aquarium?
- Stake and long leash in the car? Scooper?
- Sedative or tranquilizer administered to pet?
- Cage or carrier fixed in place so it won’t tip or slide around?

## **Birds & Small Caged Pets**

Birds and small pets, such as gerbils and hamsters, can generally travel in the cage they use at home.

Travel tends to have an adverse effect on birds. They are very susceptible to drafts and sudden changes in temperature, as well as being easily frightened. To keep the bird calm, its cage should be covered while on the road.

Remove the water container from the cage to avoid spills. Place the cage in the car out of drafts but with plenty of ventilation, and be sure it will not tip over.

Give the pet fresh water at every stop small pets become dehydrated very quickly, particularly during hot weather. Feed at usual time.



# Tropical Fish

Tropical fish are susceptible to an abrupt change in water temperature, and their condition is directly affected by overcrowding. To transport tropical fish by car, it is best to remove them from the aquarium unless it is a small one of five gallons or less that can be moved without too much danger of breakage.

It probably will not be necessary to feed the fish. Many species can go without food for as long as a week with no ill effects.

An unbreakable container of a size easily handled when it is half-full of water (minnow bucket, ridded container with air holes in the lid) makes a convenient carrier. Or, use a leak-proof plastic bag closed with a rubber band, place it in an outer bag of similar size to prevent accidental leakage, then into a sturdy container, such as a Styrofoam picnic cooler.

The plastic bag/Styrofoam cooler method is advantageous in stabilizing the water temperature for up to 48 hours. When transferring them to the container, remember that fish need air, and fill the container or plastic bag only about one-third full of water. Use the water from the aquarium.

Add the fish (don't overcrowd) and close the top. Open the container or plastic bag every four or five hours to freshen the air supply.

Remove the aquarium accessories; empty and dry the aquarium. Pack carefully, or have the mover pack them for you.

If convenient, take along in a separate container(s) as much of the water removed from the aquarium as you have room for.

Plants and snails from the aquarium can be carried along in plastic bags with a small amount of water.

Fish might become bruised while traveling. Liquid healing agents to put into the water are available at pet shops.

At destination, replace water and fish in the aquarium as soon as possible. Add tap water a little at a time to fill the aquarium to the proper level, letting the fish adjust gradually to the new water.

New water may need treatment before use to neutralize any chemicals it might contain. Neutralizers can be purchased at most pet shops.

If the fish must be moved in the aquarium itself, remove about half the water, the aerator, heater, hood, and anything else that might shift and cause the glass to break. Cover the top with plastic film to keep the water from splashing out. To avoid breakage, take care that the bottom of the aquarium is solidly supported while it is being lifted and moved.

It is advisable to place the aquarium into a corrugated carton and pad it with crushed paper. Wedge the carton in the car so it will not slide during the trip. Replace the aerator immediately upon arrival at destination and at various points along the trip as may be needed.

## Horses & Ponies

Your horse or pony can be transported commercially via air freight, or by a horse transporting company. Or you can tow it in a horse trailer behind your motor vehicle. In any case, if yours is an out-of-state move, you will need the health documents required by the destination state.

### **Tow-It-Yourself**

Towing your horse or pony in a trailer behind your motor vehicle is a handy way of transporting it to your new location. In addition to the animal, the trailer will hold a reasonable amount of feed and tack. Rental trailers are available; look in the Yellow Pages under "Trailers- Horse."

**Caution:** Driving with a horse trailer takes skill. It is inadvisable to attempt it unless you are familiar with trailering, or have plenty of time for practice before departure date.

On trips that will take more than a day, it is best to plan overnight stops in advance. Be sure to inquire about local facilities for the care of horses when booking accommodations.

Motel management, particularly in rural communities will sometimes grant permission for a horse and trailer to be kept in the parking area overnight.

If you are camping, make certain that horses are permitted in the campgrounds or somewhere close by.

A horse or pony can generally be boarded overnight at reasonable cost at stables along the way. All well-run stables will ask to see the animal's interstate health certificate and negative Coggins (equine infectious anemia) test before admitting it. The stable management may be able to advise as to where you can obtain stabling for the following night.

When trailering a horse, park occasionally at wayside rest areas to unload and exercise it. On an overnight trip, stop at a reasonable hour so there will be plenty of time for evening chores feeding, watering, and so forth. The horse may be kept in the trailer overnight without harm.

### **Horses By Air**

A cargo airline that accepts your horse or pony for transportation will accommodate it only on a non-stop flight between origin and destination cities. An attendant must accompany the animal. You will be required to provide a shipping stall constructed according to airline specifications, and if necessary, loading and unloading ramps. Any tack shipped must be labeled and weighed separately.

You will be responsible for prepayment of shipping charges and attendant's fare, delivery of animal and tack to the air terminal on time, and pickup at destination.

Some horse transporting companies will, for a fee, make all the necessary arrangements for air shipment of your horse or pony. Transporters are listed in the Yellow Pages under "Horse Transporting."

### **By Horse Transporting Company**

Companies engaged in the interstate transportation of horses are required to have Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) operating authority. Transportation charges are based on a point-to-point mileage system with door-to-door pickup and delivery.

Minimum insurance is usually included in the rate quoted; additional insurance is up to the shipper. Shipping requirements vary from one transporting company to another, but in general:

- Drivers are experienced in the care of horses.
- Shipper might be required to furnish hay for a long trip.
- Some tack may be shipped with the horse at no additional cost.
- During the trip, horses are exercised at regular intervals, or at the driver's discretion.
- An overnight accommodation necessary is included in the transportation charge.
- Charges are payable in cash, certified check, or money order.
- Depending on company policy, transportation charges are either payable in full prior to unloading at destination, or 50 per cent in advance and the balance at destination prior to unloading.

## **Unusual Pets**

Among the more unusual pets are monkeys, boa constrictors and other snakes, lizards, alligators, and skunks. These can be transported via air, adhering closely to airline instructions for crating, or in your motor vehicle.

However, many states have specific regulations covering the entry of "wild" animals. It is wise to get in touch with the regulatory agency of the destination state prior to moving to be sure yours will be admitted.

## **A New Veterinarian**

Once settled in your new home, it is advisable to locate a competent veterinarian. When you have chosen one, give the veterinarian office your pet's veterinary record, or have a new one completed. Having this information on hand will save time and confusion should your pet require emergency or other treatment.

If your former veterinarian recommended a colleague get in touch with that person. Otherwise, your pet-owning neighbors may be able to direct you to a reliable animal hospital. Or, choose one affiliated with the American Animal Hospital Association. There are AAHA hospitals throughout the country; members are required to have especially good training and facilities.

## **At Home In The New Home**

Dogs and cats encounter many of the same problems people have in moving to a new place. They must become used to a new house and neighborhood, unfamiliar sounds strange postal carriers and other service people, water that does not agree with them, and a colder or warmer climate. Once accustomed to the changes, the pet will settle down and be content.

It is advisable to keep the pet confined until it realizes that this is the new home and that the family is going to stay, or it may wander off and try to return to the old home. This is especially true of cats, and they should be confined for several weeks.

To speed that “at home” feeling, use the pet’s familiar food and water dishes, bed, blanket, toys, and so forth. Try to put them in the same sort of location as they were in the old home water dish by the back door, food dish in a particular spot in the kitchen, and so forth.

It is best to keep your bird where it will be undisturbed until it becomes used to its new surroundings. Other small pets usually have few or no adjustment problems other than becoming used to a change in the water supply. This is also true of tropical fish to avoid harming them, test the water for similarity to that in your old home and adjust it to the requirements of the fish.