



USDA APHIS Veterinary Services Monitoring for Imported CEM Waiver Equines Standard Operating Procedures

In accordance to Title 9 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 93.301(f) all horses imported from Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM) affected countries under the CEM competition exemption must be monitored during their stay in the United States. This protocol further outlines the requirements as listed in the CFR for facility approval, housing, and monitoring of CEM waiver horses during special events.

Facility Approval

The facility where CEM horses will be housed while in the U.S. must be approved according to the requirements outlined in this document prior to the issuance of an import permit. All facilities must meet the following requirements:

1. Facility must be inspected for compliance and approved prior to the horse's arrival. User fees will be charged to the importer or importer's agent for all inspections by APHIS Veterinary Services(VS) personnel regardless of whether or not the facility is approved.
2. Facility must be on the event site where the competition will take place.
3. Off-site CEM isolation facilities may be considered on a case by case basis. Off-site housing must meet the following requirements for consideration:
 - a. Event manager or organizer must provide APHIS/VS documentation which shows that the event site does not meet space requirements to house CEM horses. APHIS/VS personnel will also complete an on- site inspection to verify information provided.
 - b. Maximum of 5 horses requiring CEM monitoring.
 - c. Off-site facility must be in reasonable proximity to the event grounds not to exceed 1 hour driving time under normal circumstances.
 - d. CEM monitored horses must all be housed in the same location.
 - e. Adequate availability of APHIS/VS personnel and/or accredited veterinarian to monitor horses at the off-site facility and event grounds. Amount of personnel required is based on the number of CEM horses, scheduled events per horse and logistical flow of competition or event.

4. Facility must maintain a security perimeter that can be secured and encompasses the entire isolation facility. The perimeter must be of sufficient height and design, as determined by APHIS/VS to prevent the unauthorized entry of people and animals from outside the facility, in addition to preventing the escape and/or unauthorized removal of equines still under CEM restrictions. The security perimeter must be kept locked and secure at all times, except when bonded security is posted at the pre-approved entry/exit point(s). If a distinct security perimeter is not possible, equines will be sealed by APHIS/VS into individually approved stalls. In the event that the security perimeter or individual stalls are breeched, or otherwise found to be inadequate, the facility operator must provide corrective actions, including proposed modifications to ensure adherence to APHIS/VS requirements.
5. Facility must not be a breeding premises.
6. Facility must provide stalls that can be cleaned and disinfected and are of structurally sound and sturdy design to safely contain equines.
7. Facility must ensure all floors and walls that have contact with equines and their excrement, or discharges, are resistant to moisture, and able to withstand repeated cleaning and disinfecting without deteriorating. Floor and wall surfaces must be free of sharp edges that could injure equines. Flooring must be skid resistant and provide adequate drainage. Alternative flooring surfaces that prove to be absorptive and disposable may be considered.
8. Facility drainage from the imported horse(s) must be away from other horses or contain absorptive materials to prevent drainage leaving the designated area.
9. Facility must provide stalls of sufficient size to allow each animal to make normal postural adjustments and provide adequate freedom of movement.
10. Facility must maintain aisles for moving horses, which are wide enough to prevent horses in facing stalls from physically contacting horses in access aisles, and allow safe movement, including adequate space for horses to turn around.
11. Facility must provide adequate lighting throughout the facility to visually inspect horses.
12. Facility must provide adequate storage within the facility for supplies and equipment needed for the isolation, with separate secure storage for pesticides, medical, and/or other biological supplies if they are held on-site.
13. Facility equipment such as buckets, sponges, cleaning equipment may not be used for other horses. Buckets, brushes and all other cleaning and grooming tools used for washing horses in wash stalls must be designated to each specific CEM waiver horse and must not be shared between horses.

14. The horse(s) must be in a stall separated from other horses by either an empty stall, an open area across which horses cannot touch each other, or a solid wall which is at least 8 feet (2.4 m) high. If a turnout area is desired, it must be designated for the CEM waived horse(s) only. This turnout area must be situated in such a way that the waived horse(s) have no physical contact with other horses.
15. Facility must be clearly identified as isolation area by posted signs at all entrances, which clearly identifies the prohibited entry of unauthorized personnel.
16. Facility must provide and use a separate isolation area, with stalls available for equines exhibiting signs of illness.
17. Facility must contain and use designated work areas for repairing and/or cleaning and disinfecting equipment within the isolation area.
18. Facility must be completely cleaned and disinfected after each use, and prior to each new approval for a different lot of equines. If the facility is temporary in construction, it must be cleaned and disinfected prior to disassembly, with additional cleaning and disinfection conducted post-disassembly as necessary. Any non-reusable items or temporary flooring must not be reused but instead sent to landfill. Cleaning and disinfection will be completed under direct APHIS oversight.

Transportation

1. As per 9 CFR Part 93, CEM waiver horse(s) must be transported in a cleaned and disinfected vehicle. The vehicle must be sealed during transport or must be escorted by APHIS/VS personnel or delegated personnel approved by APHIS/VS.
2. The vehicle must be cleaned and disinfected under the supervision of APHIS/VS personnel after unloading the horse(s) in a APHIS/VS approved location or facility. Drainage from the vehicle must be away from horse holding areas.
3. Stallions and mares from CEM affected countries may be transported in the same trailer with geldings. If shipments of stallions, mares, colts or fillies from CEM affected countries are combined with stallions, mares, colts or fillies from non-CEM affected countries, the horse van must have solid partitions or the CEM waived horses must be separated by an empty stall from the non-CEM waived horses.

4. If a CEM waiver horse gets sick or injured, in the event of an emergency, or death/euthanasia of horses while in isolation, the horse(s) may be moved under seal or escorted by authorized personnel to an approved facility. Approval for restricted movement must be obtained from APHIS/VS officials prior to the horse(s) being transported. Transportation vehicles must follow cleaning and disinfection guidelines provided. The facility operator, importer, and/or importer agent must make provisions for the requested movement and will be responsible for all associated costs to include hourly user fees and subsequent monitoring.
 - a. Approved facility must be identified prior to the event to ensure smooth transition and safety of the horse(s)
5. In the event a horse dies or must be euthanized while in isolation, the importer or importer's agent must make arrangements for the proper disposal of the carcass (incineration, auto-digestion, burial, etc.). The importer or importer's agent may elect to have the equine sent to a state or National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHL) for the necropsy. For off-site necropsy arrangements, the importer or importer's agent is responsible for the costs, monitoring, and logistical arrangements, associated with the bio-secure movement of the carcass, after obtaining permission from the designated APHIS/VS representative(s). The importer or importer's agent is also responsible for the costs, and logistical arrangements, associated with APHIS/VS oversight of the necropsy, and eventual disposal, at the destination facility.
6. Safety of humans and horse comes first, and extraordinary measures may be taken prior to contacting APHIS/VS in case of severe emergencies, like fire or other natural disasters.

General Monitoring Requirements

All USDA accredited veterinarians designated to complete CEM monitoring must acknowledge and agree to follow CEM monitoring guidelines as listed in this document.

Horses imported under a CEM waiver must be kept in sealed or guarded facilities when not competing, performing, being exercised or exhibited. When the horse(s) is required to be out of the approved stall for any reason (eg. training, *competition, bathing) it must be monitored by APHIS/VS personnel or a USDA accredited veterinarian. In large consignments, APHIS/VS or the accredited veterinarian may designate an individual or individuals to help with monitoring, so long as the accredited veterinarian or APHIS/VS personnel is also present and monitoring the consignment. Below are specific provisions monitoring each CEM waiver horse while in its assigned stall:

1. A stall chart should be in place with appropriate designation for easy visual reference that the horse is a CEM waiver horse.
2. All horses requiring CEM monitoring must have visible identification, such as colored halter stickers/tags, to facilitate application or appropriate monitoring movement restrictions while inside and/or outside of the isolation facility. The accredited veterinarian or facility operator may implement their own tracking protocol, which must be approved by APHIS/VS.
3. Whenever the horse is not being monitored by APHIS/VS personnel or an accredited veterinarian, the horse must either be sealed in its stall, sealed into the barn, or a paid security guard must be placed at the entrance of the facility to prevent unauthorized access to the horse. If a security guard is used, a visitors log must be kept and every visitor to the waived horse(s) must be logged at every visit. All other access points to the facility must remain sealed to prevent unauthorized access to the waived horse(s). Seals may only be broken in the presence of APHIS personnel, or by the accredited veterinarian.
4. If the horse is removed for any reason, the groom, veterinarian, owner, competitor will sign the log book, affirming the following: *“I have read and understand the guidelines posted in the ‘Contagious Equine Metritis Waiver Notification for Horses’ instructional document.”*
5. The log book will provide information as to where the horse is being taken, for what purpose and whose custody the horse will be in while out of its assigned stall or assigned barn.
6. Upon leaving the stall or barn, the waived horse(s) must stay within eyesight of APHIS/VS personnel, or the accredited veterinarian. APHIS/VS personnel or the accredited veterinarian may designate an individual(s) to help oversee large consignments so long as APHIS/VS or the accredited veterinarian remains present and has full confidence in the abilities of the authorized individuals to properly monitor the horses.
 - a. Designated individuals must have some professional knowledge of horses and understanding of monitoring responsibilities. Use of individuals may include: veterinary technicians, veterinary assistants, veterinary students and/or stewards associated with the event.

- b. Designated individuals will report only to APHIS/VS personnel or the accredited veterinarian for CEM monitoring responsibilities.
7. If waived horses are housed with non-waived horses on the same permit, they must be monitored by APHIS/VS personnel or the accredited veterinarian while in the wash stalls to ensure overspray or exposure to wash water between CEM waiver horses and other horses is prevented.
8. If waived horses are to be walked around the stable or grazed outside, the accredited veterinarian, APHIS/VS or authorized personnel must be present and watch the horses at all times. If the accredited veterinarian is needed to treat a horse or perform any duty that will remove waived horses from their line of site, the accredited veterinarian must either delay treatment until the other horses have been sufficiently exercised or grazed and placed back into their stalls, appoint designated help to monitor the remaining waived horses while the treatment is conducted, or call APHIS/VS personnel for monitoring help while the treatment is conducted. The accredited veterinarian can at no time leave waived horses unattended in order to perform diagnostics or treatments on other animals.
 - a. APHIS/VS must be notified and provide oversight for any CEM waiver horse requiring treatment.
9. CEM monitoring completed by an accredited veterinarian is subject to spontaneous daily oversight checks by USDA APHIS personnel to ensure proper monitoring of CEM horses.
 - a. Oversight checks may include but are not limited to: review of log sheets and verification of horse location.
 - b. User fees for required checks will be charged to the importer or the importer's agent pursuant to CFR 93.301 (f)(11-13)
10. If APHIS/VS finds that CEM monitoring requirements are not being met, APHIS/VS may require that all remaining monitoring be conducted by APHIS/VS personnel to ensure compliance.

Monitoring During Exercise and Competition

1. Horses competing under a CEM waiver will be monitored directly at all times by the accredited veterinarian or APHIS personnel during competition. For large consignments and/or events APHIS or accredited veterinarians may authorize an individual or individuals to assist in monitoring to ensure waiver horses can be monitored at all times. All authorized personnel must be under the supervision of APHIS personnel or an accredited veterinarian on site.
2. A schedule of all exercise and competition times for each CEM waiver horse must be provided to APHIS and the accredited veterinarian prior to the event. Any revisions to the schedule must also be provided as soon as possible.
3. For any occasion in which the CEM waiver horse is not in the assigned stall, the horse must be within the line of sight of APHIS personnel, an accredited veterinarian, or authorized personnel and have no contact with other horses.
4. At all times, the assigned number/sticker/tag designating CEM waiver status must be attached and visible on the halter/bridle whenever the horse(s) are taken out of their stall(s).
5. CEM waiver horses removed from their stall for training, exercise, or competition purposes must be escorted by APHIS personnel, an accredited veterinarian or authorized personnel. Communication between all authorized personnel must occur when rotation of monitoring is required so that CEM waiver horses remain in the line of sight at all times.
6. Movement of the horse(s) to premises not listed on the import permit is prohibited, unless approved by APHIS. If the owner or importer wishes to change the horse(s) itinerary or methods of transport as specified on the import permit, the owner or importer must make the request for change in writing to APHIS VS no less than 15 days before the proposed date of the change. Requests will only be approved if the request will not endanger other horses in the U.S. and if sufficient APHIS personnel or accredited veterinarians are available to provide the services required.
7. CEM monitoring will continue until the waived horse(s) are exported out of the United States.

8. CEM competition waiver horses are not permitted to stay in the U.S. for more than 90 days. Alternatively horses may complete CEM testing and quarantine at an approved State CEM quarantine facility to be eligible for permanent entry.
9. CEM non competition-exhibition waiver horses imported for entertainment purposes only may remain in the U.S. indefinitely, so long as the horse is regularly used in performances or exhibitions and the importer applies for, and obtains, an import permit each year prior to the anniversary date of the horse's arrival in the U.S. A horse that is no longer performing or being exhibited must be exported or made eligible for permanent entry by completing CEM testing and quarantine at an approved state CEM quarantine facility.

Additional Requirements

1. CEM waiver horses may not be used for breeding purposes, including artificial insemination or semen collection and may not have any other sexual contact with other horses.
2. CEM waiver horses are not permitted to undergo any genital examinations. With prior APHIS/VS approval, noncompetitive exhibition CEM waiver horses may undergo genital examinations for the diagnosis and treatment of medical conditions.
3. All APHIS/VS inspections and oversight will incur user fee expense.
4. All User Fees for inspection and monitoring of the horse(s) and cleaning and disinfection will be charged to the importer or the importer's agent pursuant to CFR 93.301 (f)(11-13).
5. If there are continuous violations to this control plan or if violations are extreme and put the health of other horses in danger, USDA APHIS/VS will assume the monitoring of horses. In this case, all oversight will incur user fee expense.