

Information for Importers of Pigeons and Doves to the United States

This information is designed to help importers understand the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Veterinary Services requirements for importation of pigeons and doves. Full requirements are in title 9, Code of Federal Regulations, part 93, subpart B.

Vaccination Prior to Shipment

Pigeon Paramyxovirus Type 1 (PPMV1) virus commonly occurs in unvaccinated pigeons and doves. The United States does not require vaccination against this virus for import. However, APHIS recommends vaccinating pigeons and doves in shipments containing birds exposed to wild/feral pigeons or similar type birds. The vaccine should be administered at least 21 days before arrival in the United States, to ensure optimal immune response to the vaccine prior to U.S. arrival and import testing during quarantine.

How the USDA categorizes pigeon and doves for import

The bird's intended use defines its **import type**:

- Commercial poultry—pigeons and doves owned as pets or imported for resale, breeding, public display, or any other commercial purpose.
- U.S. returning performing poultry—pigeons and doves originating from and returning to the United States, used in shows, theatrical acts, or performances.

Apply for an import permit

All pigeons and doves must have an import permit unless entering via a U.S.-Canada land border port.

- Apply for an import permit through [APHIS eFile](#) at least 7-10 days before the shipment date.
- Specify the import type to ensure that APHIS issues the correct permit type.
- For U.S. returning performing poultry, the import permit application must include:
 - A copy of the U.S.-origin health certificate issued before departing the United States.
 - The travel itinerary for 90 days after the first use of the import permit.
- The import permit will detail the specific import health requirements for the imported birds.

Obtain an import health certificate (if needed)

- Commercial poultry—APHIS requires a health certificate issued by the exporting country as described at [USDA APHIS | Live Poultry](#). The health certificate must list the individual identification, which can be a wing band, leg band, or microchip, of each pigeon or dove in the shipment.
- U.S. returning performing poultry—APHIS does not require an import health certificate issued by the exporting country. The import permit will include the specific U.S. entry requirements.

Know the quarantine requirements

- All pigeons and doves must quarantine for a minimum of 30 days at a federal or APHIS-approved private quarantine facility. The importer is responsible for obtaining a reservation at the quarantine facility. **Note:** Birds originating from or transiting through regions that APHIS considers affected by highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) must travel directly to and quarantine at a Federal Animal Import Center in either Miami, FL or New York, NY. A list of HPAI-affected regions is available at [USDA APHIS | Animal Health Status of Regions](#).

Know the quarantine requirements (continued)

- APHIS will test birds in quarantine to determine whether they are free of certain communicable diseases. All test results must be negative for the birds to be eligible for release. If test results are positive for HPAI, Newcastle disease, or other communicable diseases, APHIS will refuse entry. In this case, the importer must either remove all birds in the shipment from the United States within 10 days or pay additional fees for APHIS to euthanize the birds.

Know the import fees

The importer is responsible for the following fees associated with the importation of pigeons and doves:

- Quarantine fee—APHIS requires birds to undergo a 30-day minimum quarantine. Importers are responsible for quarantine expenses, including those incurred if a shipment arrives late and the reservation must be extended, or if birds must remain in quarantine longer than 30 days.
- Disease testing fees—USDA’s National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) conduct the laboratory tests required during quarantine and charge a fee for each test. The cost of these tests is separate from the quarantine fee.
- Private veterinarian oversight fees—all imported birds should arrive healthy and without parasites. The quarantine facility is not a clinic and does not provide therapeutic care for birds. Birds that appear sick will be tested for poultry-related diseases at the importer’s expense.
 - If treatment is an option, the importer may employ the services of a private veterinarian. APHIS will charge an hourly fee to escort the veterinarian while in the quarantine facility.
 - If the importer declines treatment, APHIS will refuse shipment entry. The importer may remove all birds in the shipment from the United States within 5 days or pay additional fees for APHIS to euthanize the birds.
- Overtime fees—any service performed outside duty hours will incur overtime user fees.

Additional resources

- Columbiform health certificate requirements: [USDA APHIS | Live Poultry](#)
- Testing during quarantine: [VSG 13410.1 - Live bird testing during quarantine](#)
- Contact APHIS Live Animal Imports and Exports: LAIE@usda.gov