

Dog rescue – border crossings into Canada from the US (assumes Buffalo, NY area, into Ontario, CA)

Importing dogs over 8 months of age over the border into Canada is easy and the guidelines are not stringent. The dogs need only have an original rabies certificate. However, the rabies certificate should also state the dog's sex, breed, color, weight, etc, as well as the vaccine used (trade name), vaccine serial number, and duration (is not specified, will assume 1 year). Most dogs travel with rabies certificate AND health certificate, since the latter is normally required in the US for travel through individual states. Only if the dog is under 8 months of age, does the law require a health certificate (issued within 72 hours by a licensed veterinarian). Dogs under 3 months do not need to be vaccinated for rabies. Read more at:

http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/heasan/import/dog_chien_3e.shtml

These guidelines are for PET dogs. Normally this means dogs accompanied by their owners and NOT intended for resale. Legally, if the dogs are not accompanied by their owners, then they also require an EXPORT HEALTH CERTIFICATE, which certifies a number of things. For more info, see provisions in Section 2:

http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/heasan/import/dog_chien_1e.shtml

As for rescue dogs, these are **pet dogs**, all **over 8 months of age** (or indicate if different, subject to relevant regulations), now **owned by the receiving rescue** under whose authority as a volunteer transporter you are operating, and the dogs are **not intended for sale**, but to find new adoptive homes. They are of **no value**, as they are mixed breed dogs slated for euthanasia in US shelters and transferred to the receiving rescue group. Make sure all rabies certificates are in order and correspond to the dogs' appearances and have all required information. Be sure you know the **name and location of the receiving rescue group**. And make sure you can **name the breeds** of the dogs (you can read from your rabies certificates or health certificates). Only the rabies certificates are theoretically required, but you can also have the health certificates available too. Put away all other paperwork separately. Advice: Just show the rabies certificates. If asked, say that you have required health certificates for US interstate transport, and show those as requested.

You may be given a white slip and told to pull over to the building on the side. Go indoors with your slip and your rabies certificates to show an officer at the desk. They MAY also wish to accompany you back to your vehicle to check the animals against your paperwork. Sometimes, you can just drive through and not even show any paperwork, especially when they become familiar with you because you are a frequent transporter.

NOTE (1): Ontario has a provincial breed ban against certain breeds. Pit & AmStaff mix looking dogs are forbidden. Read the provisions of the law at:

http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/about/pubs/dola-pubsfty/dola-pubsfty.asp#TOC_03

NOTE (2): Getting over the Peace Bridge from Buffalo into Fort Erie is the easiest and most expeditious way to cross. The Queenston-Lewiston bridge is always backed up and may have a wait as long or more than 3 hours. And no one wants to go over the Rainbow Bridge, from Niagara Falls, NY to Niagara Falls, ON.

NOTE (3): It isn't a bad idea to carry a printout of the regulations with you. Read about the requirements:

http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/heasan/import/dog_chien_3e.shtml