

transiting pets through the uae

Welcome to Dubai Kennels & Cattery's (DKC) "Transiting Pets through the UAE". Like our other fascinating document, "Relocating Pets into the UAE", we promise this will be the most exhilarating, entertaining, insightful and inspiring reading you will have ever done in your bureaucratically burdened life! And who knows(?!), it might even answer a few questions you have about moving your pet(s) through any of the airports in the United Arab Emirates. <smile>

We have tried to cover herein absolutely everything you *need* to know, and hopefully(!) some things you might *want* to know. However, if you're really, really, really pressed for time, there's a very brief and helpful **Checklist of Requirements** at the end of this document.

the OK-to-Transit

If you're choosing to route your pet's journey through the UAE, and if your pet will need to change airlines upon arrival in the UAE in order to ultimately reach his or her final destination, your pet will need permission (an "OK-to-Transit") issued by the UAE's Ministry of Climate Change & Environment (MOCCAE) (previously known as Ministry of Environment & Water (MOEW)), and this will need to be gained *prior* to your pet's arrival in the UAE.

On your behalf, we can gain the OK-to-Transit, provide all assistance on arrival, and prepare your pet for the onward flight to the final destination. **However, you must ensure that prior to your pet's departure from the country of origin, all the original and very necessary documentation is completed and that these documents accompany your pet;** we will not be able to clear your pet on arrival and forward to the onward flight without the original documentation.

timing:

From the start of the process, we'll require at least 2 weeks' notice to get everything organised because of the requirements for your pet's onward journey. Although in most cases it takes only 1-2 working days to obtain the OK-to-Transit from the Ministry, we strongly recommend that the application for this be made at least one week prior to your intended arrival date or, alternately, as soon as you have the health certificate and air waybill copy from the country of origin. Please also note, very importantly, that there will need to be an absolute minimum of 8 hours between your pet's flight arrival time in the UAE and his/her onward flight's departure time.

what happens after arrival in dubai?

Upon arrival in the UAE, your pet is taken from the aircraft in a climate-controlled vehicle to one of the animal handling facilities at the airport, sometime between 30 and 60 minutes after disembarking. However, before the actual Customs clearance process can begin, the air waybill (AWB) and all other travel documents that have travelled with your pet have to be processed by airport officials ~ this usually takes between 90 and 120 minutes, but can sometimes take even longer. So... "patience" is the word of the day!

Your pet will have to be cleared through Customs and checked by a UAE Ministry Veterinarian. We will then provide transit care ~ your pet will be fed, watered and, if you have a dog, walked; if you have a cat, he/she will be taken out of their travel box and transferred to an enclosure, equipped with a litter tray and some food and water, of course. All this whilst the arrangements are finalised for their flight to their final destination. We will also clean the travel box and, if necessary, your pet!

It's important to remember that during the transit period, your pet is not permitted to leave the airport and will be kept in the so-called Live Animals ("AVI") facility, which is air-conditioned and dimly lit. Although your pet will spend the majority of the transit time in their own enclosure in the AVI facility so that they do not spend all that time still inside their travel box, some of the time will be spent in their travel box as well... just after arrival until clearance is finished, and then again an hour or so before departure on the onward flight.



documentation that must be arranged in advance

air waybill (AWB):

An air waybill is issued for your pet's flight from origin to Dubai. **Pets can only enter or transit through the UAE as manifest cargo.** (For a description of "manifest cargo" and other modes of transporting your pet, see our document "Pet Flight Options" at http://www.dkc.ae/docs/Pet_Flight_Options.pdf.) Please ensure that your pet's shipment is consigned as follows:

Your (the Pet Owner's) Name
c/o Dubai Kennels & Cattery (DKC)
Street 34, Umm Ramool
Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Tel: +971-4-211-4800

international health certificate:

You will need an international health certificate issued or attested by the ministry/government veterinarian in your country of origin. This must still be valid at the time of arrival at the final destination (i.e. not just at the time of arrival in the UAE for transit). If the destination requires any additional health certificates, blood tests, import permits, etc., these must be gained at origin as well, before departure.

Government/Ministry regulations in your locale will determine how the international health certificate can be procured, but usually it is one of two possibilities:

- Directly from a government veterinary office, or;
- A certificate issued by a private veterinarian and then attested by a government veterinary related office.

vaccinations:

Dogs and cats are required by the UAE to have a valid/current rabies vaccination which is at least 21 days old at the time of travel. However, your pet's destination country may require the rabies vaccination to be at least 30 days old. Please do check all the entry requirements carefully, and feel free to ask us for guidance.

travel box

Since DKC is not directly involved in producing or choosing your pet's travel box, thereby being able to directly ensure that it is fit for travel in design, size and quality *before* his/her journey begins, we may find ourselves in a situation during transit of having to change his or her travel box in order to meet both DKC's and the connecting airline's standards requirements. We never do this unless absolutely necessary, but if care is not taken from the outset before initial departure, there is indeed an increased possibility of this change needing to be done.

To try to avoid this from happening, your DKC Account Manager may request measurements of both your pet and the travel box you intend to use (and perhaps even pictures) so that we're better positioned to avoid travel box issues upon arrival in the UAE. Although these measurements can never guarantee there will be no issues at all, they can go a long way towards eliminating problems.

The required measurements of the travel box are length x width x height in centimetres, and we need both the internal and external dimensions (i.e. we need to account for the thickness of the wood or plastic of the travel box so that we know how much space your pet actually has to move around in, but also how large in size your box actually is for the airline's purposes).

Take a look at our document "Illustration of Measuring Your Dog" here: http://www.dkc.ae/docs/Illustration_of_Measuring_Your_Dog.pdf; it will help you greatly in understanding exactly what needs to be accounted for in choosing the size of your travel box and in providing us with measurement information if we need it. And if you have a cat, this document will also in fact help you ~ we'll need his/her height, length and width.

All this said, please do be aware that if your pet's travel box needs to be changed to a larger size, this will increase the airfreight charged by the airlines, and will also incur cost from us for the provision of the new box.

Travel box issues are the single most significant and frequent factor in issues arising when shipping animals of all kinds. Please take care.

a different kind of transit

Just as they are for human travellers, transit stops for animals are usually relatively short in duration ~ anywhere from about 6 hours to 12 or so; sometimes even a bit longer. During this time, your pet remains inside the airport's animal facility and is provided the care he or she needs to be comfortable and safe until the time comes for the onward flight.



Occasionally, however, the duration of your pet's transit stop in the UAE is very much longer ~ this can be either because of factors outside your control (e.g. flight schedules) or because you wish your pet to get an extended rest between flights, or indeed any number of other reasons. And in these cases, you are faced with a choice: to have your pet stay within the airport for that entire period, however long it may be, or to have him or her taken out of the airport and brought to our boarding facility where the environment, care and facilities are just that much more full-bodied than they are at the airport.

But this choice comes with a price tag, unfortunately: you see, to take your pet out of the airport means that instead of having to meet the regulations for a simpler OK-to-Transit, you and your pet will now have to do a full import and a full export ~ in other words, the government and airlines would view this as if your pet were actually coming into the country and then leaving it sometime later, rather than just transiting quickly through. Specifically, your pet would need an import permit to enter the UAE and then a UAE Ministry Health Certificate to exit.

To obtain the UAE Import Permit, your pet would need to be microchipped (if not already) and have valid vaccinations and rabies blood test results (depending on the country of origin). For all the detail you could possibly ever want on how to import a pet into the UAE, see our document "Relocating Pets into the UAE", here: http://www.dkc.ae/docs/Relocating_Pets_into_the_UAE.pdf.

On the export side of things, the UAE Health Certificate can be gained very quickly and upon your pet's arrival in the UAE, and is valid for 30 days. If the final destination country requires more than an international health certificate, you will need to ensure that all the requirements are met and the necessary documentation is arranged in the country of origin, prior to your pet's arrival in the UAE. Again, all your pet's original documents will need to travel with him/her.

The great majority of pet owners choose the simpler and less expensive OK-to-Transit ~ we care for your pet at the airport very well indeed and there truly is nothing to worry about. This said, there are some who choose the more complicated and expensive option for any number of legitimate reasons, so if you want to know more about this, just let us know and we can talk it through with you.

checklist of requirements

- Completed copy of DKC's Transit Form: http://www.dkc.ae/docs/DKC_Transit_Form.pdf
- A copy of your pet's vaccination records.
- A copy of your pet's international health certificate.
- A copy of the air waybill into the UAE.
- A copy of your passport.
- Copies of all other documents that are required for entry into your final destination country (e.g. import permit, blood tests, etc.).
- Consignment details in the destination country (i.e. name, address, contact number, etc.).
- Full payment in advance.