

Certificates of Veterinary Inspection help keep Minnesota's Cat and Dog Populations Healthy
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The recent evacuation of dogs and cats to Minnesota from the southern United States, and the growing number of companion animals imported by Minnesota rescue organizations on an ongoing basis, places Minnesota's domestic animal population at risk for disease outbreaks. Federal and state animal health agencies rely heavily upon accredited veterinarians to mitigate this risk by completing Certificates of Veterinary Inspection (CVIs) for animals moved interstate.

Minnesota import rules require that all dogs and cats entering the state of Minnesota have a valid CVI issued by an accredited veterinarian from the animal's point of origin, within the last 30 days. A CVI verifies the animal has been examined, is not showing clinical signs of infectious, contagious or communicable disease, and verifies dogs and cats 3 months of age and older are currently vaccinated against the rabies virus.

The Minnesota Board of Animal Health (BAH) received CVIs for more than 25,000 dogs and cats imported into our state in fiscal year 2017 (July 01, 2016 to June 30, 2017) from 45 states. Minnesota veterinarians and kennel and rescue managers are unofficially reporting a correlational increase in the number of companion animals diagnosed with diseases typically endemic to the southern United States. The Minnesota Department of Health noted an increase in the number of rescue dogs identified with canine brucellosis in 2015, and is currently working on a study to determine if dogs originating from the southern United States have a higher prevalence of infection than dogs originating in the Midwest.

Minnesota statutes require that animals sold or distributed by a licensed Commercial Dog or Cat Breeder be accompanied by a veterinary health certificate indicating that the animal is healthy and has been vaccinated in accordance with the facility's veterinary protocol. Adult breeding dogs (28 weeks of age or older) that are not spayed or neutered, must also be tested for canine brucellosis and found to be negative before leaving the premises. For any animal being exported from Minnesota to another state, accredited veterinarians must utilize the Minnesota specific Certificate of Veterinary Inspection, available at no cost from the BAH. This certificate is available in paper-based and electronic formats (for PC or Apple devices). To order certificates or request access to electronic certificates, contact the BAH at 651-296-2942.

Accredited veterinarians truly are the first line of defense in preventing the introduction and spread of disease. CVIs are an invaluable tool to help ensure that Minnesota's animal and human populations remain healthy. The BAH is proud to partner with Minnesota veterinarians to educate groups and individuals engaging in interstate animal movement about the priority to import healthy animals. Feedback related to Minnesota's import requirements or CVIs is welcome.

