

Dear Mr. Novak:

Thank you for contacting the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention regarding CDC's dog importation regulations.

As you noted, the factors that CDC considers when deciding whether to approve the importation of inadequately immunized dogs were listed in CDC's Issuance and Enforcement Guidance for Dog Confinement Agreements. I appreciate you pointing out Canada's diligence in seeking to control rabies. This is definitely taken into consideration when evaluating requests to import inadequately immunized dogs. While we welcome any documentation of veterinary examination that prospective importers might wish to provide, such documentation is not a requirement for reviewing requests for dog confinement agreements.

However, I want to ensure that you and the CKC membership are aware of the strict requirements to which importers of inadequately immunized dogs must agree before being permitted to import their dogs into the United States. The confinement agreement requires the restriction of the animal to a building or other enclosure in isolation from other animals and from persons except for contact necessary for its care, or, if it is allowed out of such enclosure, muzzling the animal and keeping it on a leash. *Please note that CDC considers "contact necessary for [the dog's] care" to be limited to feeding, watering, a short leashed and muzzled walk for the purpose of eliminating, and any medical care that the dog requires.* Allowing contact between the dog and other animals, or other persons not directly involved in its care as defined above, during the period of confinement is a violation of the agreement.

As a veterinarian and a dog owner myself, I know that these confinement requirements are far from ideal for raising a young puppy. Nonetheless, prospective importers of inadequately immunized dogs who are willing to comply with the confinement requirements are welcome to request approval of a confinement agreement by contacting CDC at [CDCAAnimalImports@cdc.gov](mailto:CDCAAnimalImports@cdc.gov). Each request is reviewed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the factors listed in CDC's Federal Register notice.

I would be personally grateful to you and the CKC for any assistance that you can provide in helping to communicate to your members and the public the importance of rabies vaccination in protecting public health and the health of the dogs themselves. I would also appreciate any steps that your membership can take to assist potential importers of dogs into the United States in complying with the U.S. dog importation regulations, and particularly in educating potential importers about the confinement requirements for inadequately immunized dogs. We are frequently contacted by potential importers citing the importance of socializing young puppies as the justification for importing puppies before they are adequately immunized against rabies. In many cases, these importers are not aware of the inherent conflict between proper socialization techniques and the confinement requirements. In light of the confinement requirements, your membership might consider whether it makes more sense for importation into the United States to be delayed until the puppies are adequately immunized against rabies, which can occur as early as 4 months of age. Such a delay would allow for proper socialization before the puppies are imported into the United States and immediate integration of the imported puppies into their new families upon arrival at their final destinations.

Thank you again for contacting me, and I look forward to a continued dialogue with your organization.

Sincerely,



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