

Certificates of Veterinary Inspection for Mainers

What is a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI)?

A Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI), sometimes called a “health certificate,” is an official document completed by an accredited veterinarian after examining animals and determining that they meet the movement requirements for the destination state, tribe, or country.

A CVI helps support animal disease traceability and helps prevent the spread of contagious and infectious diseases. A CVI is a movement document; it functions as an animal’s passport to allow them to move across state or country borders. This is why the terms “health certificate or health papers” are misleading and inaccurate.

When is a CVI required?

A CVI is commonly required when animals are:

- Moving across state lines (interstate movement)
- Traveling internationally
- Being sold or changing ownership, which involves or has involved interstate or international travel
- Traveling across state lines or country borders to exhibitions, fairs, shows, rodeos, or competitions
- Entering breeding facilities or certain livestock markets

Some intrastate movements may also require a CVI depending on state regulations. In Maine, a CVI is not required for intrastate (within-state) movement for any domestic livestock or companion animals.

Are CVI requirements the same in every state or Country?

No. Each state or country may have different import requirements based on species, disease concerns, testing requirements, vaccination requirements, and animal purpose.

Before animals move interstate or internationally, the accredited veterinarian and animal owner should verify the current requirements of the destination state or country by contacting the destination state or country’s Department of Agriculture.

Does every animal moving across state lines require a CVI?

No. Some exemptions exist under federal and state regulations. Dogs and cats traveling to Maine for vacation and staying less than 2 weeks are not required to have a CVI.

In Maine, livestock animals moving from out of state directly to a Maine slaughter facility for slaughter within 72 hours can travel on an official Owner-Shipper Statement (OSS). The farm/hauler must fill out the form legibly and completely in permanent ink, including listing all the official ID’s of each animal. The farm/hauler must keep a copy of the OSS for 5 years. It is important to understand that not all states will accept an OSS for animals moving directly to slaughter.

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What information must be included on a CVI?

A CVI should be complete, accurate, and legible. Depending on species and destination requirements, a CVI may include:

- Name and address of the consignor (you)
- Name and address of the consignee (may be you or someone who the animal is moving to)
- Origin and destination locations (the physical addresses of where the animals are moving to and from; these cannot be places like intersections or rest areas)
- Date of veterinary examination
- Species, breed, sex, age, number of animals
- Official identification numbers of the animals traveling
- Test results and test dates, as required by the destination
- Vaccination information, if required
- Permit numbers, if required
- Purpose of movement
- Veterinarian signature and accreditation information

Incomplete or inaccurate information may invalidate the CVI.

How long is a CVI valid?

Validity periods vary depending on the species, destination state, and purpose of movement. Many interstate CVIs are valid for 30 days from the date of inspection, but some states or specific animal industries may require shorter validity periods. Always verify destination requirements before movement.

What laws and resources are helpful to learn more about CVIs and animal movement requirements?

Federal law, CFR title 9, part 86 of the Code of Federal Regulations, outlines animal ID and movement requirements. Maine Rule, Chapter 206, includes the rules for bringing animals into Maine. If you are unsure of Maine animal ID requirements, download the Maine Compliant Livestock ID guide from the Maine Animal Health Program website.

**Title 9, Part 86 of the Code of
Federal Regulations**



**Maine
Animal Disease Traceability**



**Maine Chapter 206 Animal
Importation Requirements**



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What is the difference between a CVI and an Owner-Shipper(hauler) Statement?

A CVI is an official veterinary document completed by an accredited veterinarian.

An owner statement or owner-shipper statement is a separate document that may be allowed for certain exempt movements under specific federal or state regulations. An owner statement does not replace a CVI unless specifically allowed by regulation.

What can make a CVI invalid?

A CVI may be considered invalid if:

- The veterinarian did not personally examine the animals
- The certificate is incomplete or illegible
- Required animal identification is missing or incorrect
- Required testing or vaccinations are missing, expired, or incorrect
- The movement occurs after the certificate expires
- Information on the certificate does not match the animals being transported
- Animals show signs of contagious or infectious disease at the time of movement
- Required entry permits were not obtained
- Alterations were made after issuance without proper authorization
- False or misleading information was entered on the certificate
- The document was signed by a non-accredited veterinarian when accreditation was required

Invalid CVIs may result in animals being refused entry, quarantined, returned to origin, or subject to enforcement action.

Can a CVI be altered after it is issued?

No unauthorized alterations can be made after issuance. If corrections are needed, they should be handled according to state and USDA requirements by the issuing veterinarian.

Can photocopies or digital copies of paper CVIs be used?

Many states now accept electronic CVIs (eCVIs), but acceptance of paper CVIs varies by state and by species. Animal owners and veterinarians should verify whether paper CVI documents are accepted by the destination state. Photocopies of paper CVIs may not be used to transport animals.

Does a CVI guarantee entry into another state or country?

No. A CVI documents the health status and movement requirements at the time of issuance, but animals must still meet all destination requirements upon arrival. Animals may still be denied entry if requirements are not met or if disease concerns arise.

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What should animal owners do before moving animals interstate?

Animal owners should:

1. Contact an accredited veterinarian early to make a CVI appointment
2. Verify destination state import requirements
3. Schedule required testing well before travel
4. Ensure official identification requirements are met
5. Confirm whether state entry permits are required
6. Send your veterinarian all of the information above that you collected, including your animal's information, ahead of the appointment to ensure good communication and make your appointment go as smoothly as possible.
7. Keep copies of all movement documents during transport

What happens if animals move without a required CVI, or the CVI is invalid?

Animals moved without required documentation may:

- Be denied entry
- Be quarantined
- Be returned to the state of origin
- Be subject to movement restrictions
- Result in regulatory enforcement actions or penalties