



Dog Is My CoPilot

Appendix A: Dog Is My CoPilot (DIMC) Transport Protocol for Source and Destination Partners

Dog Is My CoPilot (DIMC) is an independent organization specializing in animal transport by air. DIMC is not a sheltering agency and does not select animals for transport. DIMC does not take ownership of animals, and they are the responsibility of the destination organization upon boarding the aircraft.

These guidelines are intended to support safe, humane, and efficient transports. DIMC recognizes that circumstances vary and retains discretion to modify transport as needed to ensure safety and mission integrity.

General Expectations

- Partners are expected to follow recognized animal transport best practices. For additional guidance, please visit the resources provided by the Association for Animal Welfare Advancement.
- DIMC collaborates with both source and destination partners to coordinate safe transports.
- All organizations are responsible for complying with applicable local, state, and federal regulations.

Coordination & Communication

- For all transport missions, a designated coordinator is required for both the source organization and each destination partner.
- Source and destination partners should communicate directly and align on medical and behavioral expectations.
- Partnerships should have a positive impact on both communities.

Documentation

To support smooth transports, partners are asked to provide standard animal records which include:

- A printed copy of Health Certificates signed by a veterinarian must accompany the animal aboard the aircraft (also sent electronically prior to transport).
- Intake, vaccination, medical, and behavioral records should be shared with each receiving organization. (*electronic submission is acceptable and printed copies are not required onboard*).
- Both source and destination groups should have a DIMC Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and have a current partnership form on file.



Animal Health and Transport Readiness

- Animals should be visually assessed prior to transport for signs of illness or injury.
- Animals with known contagious disease *are generally* not appropriate for transport. Special circumstance can be discussed.
- Vaccinations should follow accepted animal welfare best practices.
- Animals recovering from surgery must be medically cleared by a veterinarian for transport, with approval from both partnering organizations.
- Sterilization prior to transport is strongly preferred; otherwise, destination partners generally assume responsibility.
- Animals should be transported in secure plastic kennels appropriate for air travel.
- **Partner organizations should discuss, agree upon, and document the heartworm testing protocol prior to transport.** For more information, we recommend visiting the American Heartworm Society and consulting with a local veterinarian.
- **Crate sharing:** based on species, age, size, and feeding requirements.
 - **Non-nursing kittens up to the age of 16 weeks can travel in 4 kittens** per crate. Exceptions may be approved on a case-by-case basis in coordination with DIMC.
 - **Non nursing puppies up to the age of 16 weeks can travel in pairs, sometimes up to 3 in the same crate.** Exceptions may be approved on a case-by-case basis in coordination with DIMC.
 - Note: Dogs and Cats over 16 weeks should travel in single carriers' exceptions need to be approved with the DIMC team.
- **Food/water requirements:**
 - Animals under 16 weeks old should receive a small meal or snack on the day of transport.
 - Animals 16 weeks or older should not be fed after midnight before transport.
- Animals under *eight weeks of age* without a nursing mother must be medically cleared by a veterinarian prior to transport.
- Litter boxes (e.g., small disposable aluminum pans) are recommended (but not required) for flights longer than six hours. *Note: Animals going to the state of Colorado and the flight is more than six hours; this is a requirement.*

Rescue Flight Details

- Partners are expected to review airport and Fixed Base Operator (FBO) details provided by DIMC in advance of transport.
- A designated day-of-transport contact with a cell phone should be identified for real-time updates and this person is expected to be responsive.
- Partners should plan to arrive at the time indicated by flight coordinator



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- Source and destination organizations should provide adequate personnel for crate loading and unloading, as coordinated with DIMC's flight coordinator.
- Proper animal identification on crates is necessary (see crate labeling guidelines below).

Crates

- Animals are expected to arrive at the airport already secured in plastic kennels (wire crates are not permitted).
- **Crates should:** have solid, leak-proof bottoms with absorbent pad and be secured with zip ties (all the way around). They should allow animals to stand, lie down, and turn around comfortably.
- Crates should have a "Live Animals" sticker with arrows to indicate upright position of enclosures.
- Frozen cups of water can be placed in the kennel.
- Destination groups are required to bring replacement kennels that are clean, dry, disassembled and in good working condition in equal quantity to those that are being received.
- **Note:** The crates the animals arrive, stay with the receiving destination group.
- Source shelter coordinator should bring extra, smaller sized crates in the chance of downsizing at the airport if needed at loading.
- Crates that are assembled using clips, must also have holes for fixing the top and bottom together with zip ties on all sides.
- Crates with attached wheels or domed tops are not permitted
- Each crate must have color coded label (based on airport stop) securely attached to the front, including the follow information:
 - Animal name and/or identification number.
 - Destination airport code.
 - Destination group name.
 - NOTE: use color-coded tags as directed by DIMC

Acknowledgment

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have reviewed these transport guidelines and agree to follow them to the best of our ability in support of safe and humane animal transports.

Group Representative:

Date: