

Preparing a Pet for Evacuation

Advice for an overseas assignment when an authorized or ordered departure is a possibility



FSI Transition Center
Overseas Briefing Center

Upon arrival to post...

- Ask the Management Office if it maintains a list of all pets at post. If there is no such list, suggest that this type of list be initiated.
- Confirm what, if any, contingency plans have been established to handle pets in the event of a natural disaster or other crisis.

Once you are settled at post...

1. Determine who can look after your pet if you had to leave post on an authorized or ordered departure. (This might be a trusted household staff employee, an embassy colleague, or a local veterinarian or kennel.)
2. Create a budget and/or set aside funds to provide for emergency care of your pet(s).
3. Write a detailed set of instructions for your pet's care, including any medications that should be administered.
4. Establish and maintain a two-week supply of pet food and medication, in case your pet(s) cannot travel with you during an evacuation. Keep a current copy of medical and immunization records with your pet(s) emergency food supply.
5. Create a plan to ship your pet(s) ahead of your departure. This can be an option if a crisis has some advanced warning, e.g., political or social turmoil. Include contact lists for shipping and airline agents, along with name(s) of contacts in the United States who can take possession of your pet(s) until it is safe for them to return to post.
6. Determine if an airline at post could provide shipping for a group of pets. This might be an option to offer to other pet owners in the US mission community to coordinate a departure of domestic all together.

The U.S. Department of State can never guarantee that pets will be able to leave on the same planes used by evacuees from a post. In some cases, a small pet traveling 'in cabin' may be considered a carry-on item and therefore reduce the amount of luggage that could be taken during an authorized or ordered departure. Most airlines limit the number of 'in cabin' pets and total number of animals in cargo on any given flight. As a result, at a post with a large number of pets, it is likely that they would be required to travel on multiple, different aircraft.