



Guidance for Completing the Model Health Certificate for the Export of Qualifying Equines to the United States of America

This document provides guidance on certification of equines for export using the *Model Health Certificate for the Export of Qualifying Equines to the United States of America from Countries Other than Canada and Mexico*. The model health certificate (MHC) contains the attestations necessary for export of equines to the United States. The Competent Authority (CA) of the exporting country may use the MHC directly or adapt it to another format, including any necessary templates or letterhead, but the resulting export health certificate must contain the equivalent content.

The CA of the exporting country that issues and/or endorses the MHC (or its equivalent) is responsible for attesting that the equine meets all requirements outlined in the MHC. The CA must collect official information/documentation from each country in which the equine has been for the 60 days immediately preceding export or up to 90 days if eligible to return to or import into the United States under title 9, *Code of Federal Regulations*, part 93.301(g) (hereinafter 9 CFR 93.301(g) equines) and must verify the supporting information for each attestation within the applicable timeframe specified in the MHC. Verification may be based on entry health certificates, supplemental health documentation, or other internationally accepted certification standards. A sample health document that includes example attestations for this purpose is available on the APHIS website: [USDA APHIS | Equine Import Documents](#). The CA endorsing the export health certificate is responsible for retaining this supporting health documentation, to be made available upon APHIS request, for 3 years after the date of export to the United States.

Note: The MHC **does not apply** to equines from Canada, as per 9 CFR 93.315–93.318; equines from Mexico as per 9 CFR 93.321–93.326; equines temporarily importing for noncompetitive public exhibition and entertainment purposes, as per 9 CFR 93.301(f); racing Thoroughbred horses from France, Germany, Republic of Ireland, and the United Kingdom (Great Britain, Northern Ireland), as per 9 CFR 93.301(d); Spanish Purebred horses from Spain, as per 9 CFR 93.301(d); or zebras and other non-domesticated/wild equines. For more information on import requirements for these horses, visit [USDA APHIS | Importing Live Equines and Equine Germplasm into the United States](#).

General Information and Requirements

- The CA of the exporting country must assign a unique health certificate number to each MHC or equivalent certificate issued. The certificate number must be listed on all pages. If Parts IX through XII of the health certificate are issued by a different CA, then each may have a different health certificate number.
- Page numbers must be accurately notated on each page of the health certificate, including any additional pages attached.
- The APHIS-recognized animal health status of a region/country is available online at [USDA APHIS | Animal Health Status of Regions](#).

- Equines arriving to the United States should have an import permit issued by APHIS prior to departure from the port of embarkation. The permit must accompany each equine at the port of entry. Further information about import permits is available online at [USDA APHIS | Animal Health Permits](#) and [USDA APHIS | Notice Regarding APHIS Live Animal Import and Third-Country Import Transit Permits](#).
- Attestations on the export health certificate may not be lined out, except as noted in the MHC and this guidance document. Each line-out must be endorsed in the margin of the certificate by the certifying authorized or government veterinarian.

Definitions

- **Competent Authority (CA):** Governmental authority responsible for establishing and ensuring or overseeing implementation of national standards of animal and veterinary health, international veterinary certification, and approval or accreditation of certifying veterinarians. The latter includes providing relevant instruction and training and monitoring activities to verify competence, integrity, and impartiality.
- **Government Veterinarian:** A full-time salaried official veterinarian employed by the CA
- **Authorized Veterinarian:** A licensed veterinarian approved or accredited by the CA to perform certain official tasks associated with animal health on their behalf, such as inspection of commodities and certification for international movement.
- **Exporting country:** The country issuing and endorsing the export health certificate for equines being exported to the United States.
- **9 CFR 93.301(g) equines:** Equines eligible to return to or import into the United States in accordance with 9 CFR 93.301(g) are U.S.-origin equines temporarily exported to an APHIS recognized CEM-affected country or countries for up to 90 days, or equines originating from an APHIS-recognized CEM-free country temporarily exported to a CEM-affected country or countries for up to 90 days during the 12 months immediately preceding export to the United States, and that also meet all conditions for CEMs specified in Part III.1.e of the MHC.

Part I. Consignment Information

I.1: Enter the requested information.

I.2: Indicate the unique identification number assigned to the certificate by the CA

I.3: Specify the CA of the country issuing Parts I-VIII.

I.4–I.9: Enter the requested information.

I.10: Select the purpose of the import. If other, specify the alternate purpose.

I.11: Select the intended type of admission into the United States.

I.12 & I.13: Enter the requested information.

I.14: Enter the physical premises address where the equine resided in the exporting country prior to movement for export.

I.15: Enter the physical premises address where the equine was examined if it is different than the residence address in I.14. This may be a temporary holding facility. Line out if not applicable.

I.16: Enter the physical premises address of the destination in the United States after the equine is released from quarantine.

I.17 & I.18.a–b: Applicable only for an equine that is offloaded and held for 36 or more consecutive hours in one or more countries, other than the exporting country, during transit from the premises of residency in I.14 or the premises of examination in I.15 to the port of embarkation. Enter the physical premises address of each CA-approved temporary holding facility. Line out if not applicable. **Additional certification is required for an equine to which I.17 / I.18 applies—see Part IX**

I.19: Select the means of transportation.

I.20: The equine must be clearly and comprehensively identified, including name, breed, color, sex, and age. Other permanent identification information, such as a registration number (Unique Equine Life Number, Breed Registry Number, etc.), tattoo, microchip, ear tag, and/or brand, must be provided if issued/present. If not issued/present, enter “NONE.” Copy and complete this section for each equine on the health certificate.

I.21: The silhouette must be fully completed and show all permanent white markings, brands, tattoos, scars, and whorls, as well as the microchip location (if applicable), with additional description in I.21.a–I.21.f. Copy and complete this section for each equine on the health certificate.

Note: Photographs or a color copy of the relevant passport pages may be used in place of the silhouette if they clearly show all distinctive and permanent markings of the face, muzzle, left and right sides of the equine, and front and back of the front and hind legs. Microchip location, if present, must also be demonstrated. The photograph(s) must be attached as numbered pages to the issued health certificate, and each page must include the certificate number.

Part II. General Health Attestations

Part II must be completed by the authorized or government veterinarian who examines the equine, and wet ink endorsed by a government veterinarian of the respective CA. Specify the date of examination.

II.1–II.3: The equine must comply with these attestations. Do not line out.

II.4: Applicable only for geldings. Line out if not applicable.

II.5: The equine must comply with this attestation. Do not line out.

II.6: The CA of the exporting country must verify the residency status of the equine during the 60 days preceding export to the United States or the entire period of temporary export for 9 CFR 93.301(g) equines if more than 60 days.

II.6.a: Select this statement if the equine has only been in the exporting country during the applicable timeframe. Line out this statement if II.6.b is applicable.

II.6.b: Select this statement if the equine has been in one or more countries other than the exporting country during the applicable timeframe. Enter the dates of residency and the name

and full address of the premises of residency in each country in the table provided. The table may be copied and continued on a separate page. Line out this statement if II.6.a is applicable.

Note: The authorized or government veterinarian issuing the health certificate is responsible for collecting official information/documentation verifying that the health conditions being attested to in the export health certificate were met in the other countries an equine has been in for the 60 days immediately preceding export, or the entire period of temporary export of 9 CFR 93.301(g) equines if more than 60 days, before endorsing the export health certificate. Verification may be based on entry health certificates, supplemental health documentation, or other internationally accepted certification standards. A sample health document that includes example attestations for this purpose is available on the APHIS website: [USDA APHIS | Equine Import Documents](#).

II.7: Confirm that the planned travel arrangements for the equine comply with II.7.a and II.7.b.

Part III. Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM) Requirements

III.1: An equine that fully complies with one or more of the options in this section does not require pre-export testing for CEM. Select the most applicable option and line out the others. If none of the options fully apply, the equine must be tested for CEM prior to export. Line out all of III.1 and proceed to III.2.

III.1.a & III.1.b: Select if applicable. Line out if not applicable.

III.1.c: Select this option for an equine that has had no potential exposure to CEM in the 12 months preceding export to the United States. It has not been in a country that APHIS considers CEM affected, on a CEM-affected premises, been bred by or to a CEM-infected equine or an equine from a CEM-affected premises, or had direct or indirect contact with CEM-infected equines or equines of a lesser health status for CEM. **Additional certification is required if the equine will be transiting through one or more countries that APHIS considers CEM affected by land or air when enroute to the port of embarkation, to maintain CEM-free status—see Parts [X.1.a](#), [X.1.b](#), and [X.2](#).**

Note: For equines eligible under III.1.c. transiting CEM-affected countries by land when in route to the port of embarkation, an authorized or government veterinarian must place official seals on the entire transport conveyance or seal the equine into a compartment separate and apart from equines of different CEM status on the day of departure from the premises of residency or examination ([Part X1.a](#)). Seals must be confirmed intact before they are broken and the equine is offloaded, whether that is at a CA-approved facility in the transit country, or the port of embarkation ([Part X1.b](#)). If offloaded into a CA-approved facility, then conditions during the entire duration of holding must be attested to via the addendum in [Part X2](#). Seals must again be placed when leaving the facility and verified at the next destination. Copy and complete the respective addendums for all seal placement and seal breaking/verification activities. Each page must be wet ink endorsed by a government veterinarian of the country in which they occurred.

Note: In order to maintain CEM-free status, [Part X2](#) must be completed for equines eligible to export under III.1.c. that are transiting by air and being held at an approved facility during the duration of the transit. If the equine is held in a transit country for 36 or more hours, the addendum in [Part IX](#) is also required.

III.1.d: Select this option for an equine that has been in a country that APHIS considers CEM affected within the 12 months preceding export to the United States, and is seeking temporary entry into the United States for no more than 90 days **for competition purposes** (i.e., APHIS is granting a limited waiver to CEM import testing requirements, to facilitate participation of equine athletes in international competitions). The equine must not have been bred to CEM-infected equines or equines from any known CEM-affected premises or have had direct or indirect contact with CEM-infected equines, equines from a CEM-affected premises, or CEM contaminated objects.

III.1.e: Select this option for 9 CFR 93.301(g) equines. Note that certain conditions must be maintained throughout the period of temporary export (up to 90 days) to retain CEM-free status for (re-)entry into the United States.

III.2: Intact stallions and mares over 731 days of age, or less than 731 days of age and have been bred, that do not fully comply with one of the options in III.1 must undergo pre-export CEM testing in accordance with the general provisions of this section and either III.2.a, III.2.b, or III.2.c. Line out the options that do not apply. If testing is conducted in a country other than the exporting country, the authorized or government veterinarian issuing the export health certificate must verify compliance with the provisions of this section. If unable to verify, then testing will need to be redone in the country issuing the health certificate.

Part IV. Screwworm Requirements

The CA of the exporting country must verify the screwworm status of the equine by determining whether the equine has been in a country that APHIS considers screwworm affected during the during the 60 days preceding export to the United States and if so, whether acceptable mitigations were conducted.

IV.1: Select this option for an equine that has not been in a country that APHIS considers screwworm affected during the specified timeframe. Line out IV.2 and IV.3.

IV.2: Select this option for an equine that has been in in a country or countries APHIS considers screwworm affected during the specified timeframe and then has been in in one or more countries that APHIS considers screwworm free for at least 7 days prior to export to the United States. The equine must be examined by an authorized or government veterinarian after at least 7 days of residency in an APHIS-recognized screwworm-free country, with negative results. If this option applies, line out IV.1 and IV.3.

Note: The screwworm examination can be completed in the exporting country or in another country that APHIS considers screwworm free. If the latter, the authorized or government

veterinarian of the exporting country is responsible for verifying that the conditions of the export certificate are met. If verification is not possible, IV.3 must be selected.

Note: If an equine resides in a screwworm-affected country after examination, then this statement is not applicable and IV.3 must be selected instead.

IV.3: Select this option for an equine exporting directly from a country that APHIS considers screwworm-affected, an equine that has been in a country that APHIS considers screwworm affected and then moved to a country that APHIS considers screwworm free for less than 7 days immediately prior to export to the United States, and/or an equine that that has been in a country that APHIS considers screwworm affected and was then moved to a country that APHIS considers screwworm free but was not or cannot be examined as per IV.2 or an examination cannot be verified. If this option applies, line out IV.1 and IV.2. **Certification of additional pre-export screwworm mitigations in [Part XI](#) is required.** The mitigations may be conducted by the authorized or governmental veterinarian who issues the export certificate or by a different authorized or governmental veterinarian but must be wet ink endorsed by a government veterinarian of the country in which the mitigations were conducted.

Part V. Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) Requirements

The CVA of the exporting country must verify the FMD status of the equine by determining whether the equine has been in a country that APHIS considers FMD affected during the 5 days preceding export to the United States and if so, whether acceptable mitigations were conducted.

V.1: Select this option for an equine that has not been in a country that APHIS considers FMD affected within the 5 days prior to export. Line out V.2.

V.2: Select this option for an equine that has been in a country APHIS considers FMD affected within the 5 days prior to export. The equine must not have been on any FMD-affected premises, or in an area quarantined due to FMD, or have had direct or indirect contact with domestic or wild animals, including ruminants or swine, that have been on such premises or in such areas. If this option applies, line out V.1.

Part VI. Venezuelan Equine Encephalitis (VEE) Requirements

The CA of the exporting country must verify the VEE status of the equine by determining whether the equine was in a country that APHIS considers VEE affected during the during the 60 days preceding export to the United States, and if so, whether acceptable mitigations were conducted.

VI.1: Select this option for an equine that has not been in a country that APHIS considers VEE affected during the specified timeframe. Line out VI.2 and VI.3.

VI.2: Select this statement for an equine that has been in a country APHIS considers VEE affected during the specified timeframe and then has been in in one or more countries that APHIS considers VEE free for at least 7 days and until export to the United States. The equine must be examined by an authorized or government veterinarian after 7 days, with no clinical signs of VEE detected. If this option applies, line out VI.1 and VI.3.

Note: The VEE examination can be completed in the exporting country or in another country that APHIS considers VEE free. If the latter, the authorized or government veterinarian of the exporting country is responsible for verifying that the conditions of the export certificate are met. If verification is not possible, VI.3 must be selected.

VI.3: Select this option for an equine exporting directly from a country that APHIS considers VEE affected, an equine that has been in a country that APHIS considers VEE affected and then moved to a country that APHIS considers VEE free for less than 7 days immediately prior to export to the United States, and/or an equine that has been in a country that APHIS considers VEE affected and was then moved to a country that APHIS considers VEE free but was not or cannot be examined as per V.2 or the examination cannot be verified. If this option applies, line out VI.1 and VI.2.

Part VII. African Horse Sickness (AHS) Requirements

The CA of the exporting country must verify the AHS status of the equine by determining whether the equine was in a country that APHIS considers AHS affected during the 60 days preceding export to the United States, and if so, whether acceptable mitigations were conducted.

VII.1: Select this option for an equine that has not been in a country that APHIS considers AHS affected during the specified timeframe. Line out VII.2.

VII.2: Select this option for an equine that has been in a country that APHIS considers AHS affected within the specified timeframe. The equine may not be a bred mare beyond 240 days gestation at the time of export, as APHIS requires a 60-day import quarantine. The equine must be housed in a vector-protected facility approved by the CA of the exporting country for at least the 14 days immediately preceding export. **Certification of additional pre-export AHS mitigations in [Part XII](#) is required.** The mitigations may be conducted by the authorized or government veterinarian who issues the export certificate or by a different authorized or government veterinarian but must be wet ink endorsed by a government veterinarian of the country in which the mitigations were conducted.

Part VIII. Signature and Endorsement

The certificate must be signed by the authorized veterinarian who performed the pre-export examination(s), testing, and treatment(s). The veterinarian must provide the requested information in this part and sign in the respective signature block. The date issued is the date of signature by the authorized veterinarian. Certificates issued by authorized veterinarians must be wet ink endorsed by a government veterinarian.

If instead a government veterinarian of the CA of the exporting country performed the pre-export examination(s), testing, and treatment(s) directly, then no signature is required in the authorized veterinarian section. The government veterinarian must provide the requested information and apply a wet ink signature in the respective signature box, as well as the official stamp and/or seal. The date issued and/or endorsed is the date of signature by the government veterinarian.

Part IX Addendum for Equines in Transit from the Export Country to the Port of Embarkation

This addendum is **required for any equine held in a transit country for 36 or more hours** while enroute from the premises of residency (I.14) or the premises of examination (I.15) in the exporting

country to the port of embarkation to the United States. The addendum must be issued by the authorized or government veterinarian who examines the equine and wet ink endorsed by a government veterinarian of the transit country in which the equine was held. A different health certificate number issued by the CA of that country is expected.

IX1: Specify the CA of the country issuing Part IX

IX2: Provide the name, address, and country/ISO code of the premises where the equine was examined.

IX3: Indicate the date(s) of holding.

IX4: Additional attestations:

IX4.a: Verify that the equine to which the addendum applies matches the one identified in I.20 and I.21 on the export health certificate and enter the unique certificate number of the export health certificate assigned by the CA (specified in I.2).

IX4.b: Indicate the date that the equine was examined.

IX4.c & d: Verify that the equine was held separate and apart from equines of lesser health status than specified on the export certificate, and other domestic and wild livestock, in a CA approved facility in conditions sufficient to maintain their export status.

Part IX Signatures: Complete as described in [Part VIII](#).

Part X 1.a. Addendum to Part III.1.c.iv: Placement of Seals on the Transport Conveyance

This addendum pertains to the sealing of CEM-free equines into the transport conveyance at the time of loading to maintain CEM free status. It is only required for an equine exported from a country or countries that APHIS recognizes as CEM free and that transits an APHIS-recognized CEM-affected country or countries by land when enroute from the premises of residency (I.14) or the premises of examination (I.15) in the exporting country to the port of embarkation to the United States. Part X1.a must be completed by the authorized or government veterinarian who places the seals and wet ink endorsed by a government veterinarian of the respective CA

Note that [Part X1.b](#) pertains to verification and breaking of the seals in any transit country or at the port of embarkation where the equine is offloaded. If the equine is reloaded and the transit continues, an additional copy of Part X1.a must be issued and wet ink endorsed to document the re-sealing.

X1.a.1: Specify the CA of the country issuing Part X1.a.

X1.a.2: Provide the name, address, and country/ISO code of the premises where the equine was sealed into the conveyance or compartment.

X1.a.3: Provide the seal number(s).

X1.a.4: Additional attestations:

X1.a.4.a: Verify that the equine to which the addendum applies matches the one identified in I.20 and I.21 on the export health certificate and enter the unique certificate number of the export health certificate assigned by the CA (specified in I.2).

X1.a.4.b: Verify that the equine was sealed onto the conveyance or into a compartment on the conveyance and provide the conveyance identification.

Part X1.a Signatures: Complete as described in [Part VIII](#).

Part X1.b. Addendum to Part III.1.c.iv: Verification/Breaking of Seals on Arrival in Transit Country

This addendum pertains to verification and breaking of seals placed to maintain CEM-free status as described in [Part X1.a](#). If seals are placed in accordance with Part X1.a, a corresponding addendum as per this part must be completed by the authorized or government veterinarian who verifies that the seals are intact on arrival in a transit country or at the port of embarkation, and wet ink endorsed by a government veterinarian of the respective CA.

X1.b.1: Specify the CA of the country issuing Part X1.b.

X1.b.2: Provide the name, address and country/ISO code of the premises where the seals were broken.

X1.b.3: Provide the number(s) of the seals that were broken.

X1.b.4: Additional attestations:

X1.b.4.a: Verify that the equine to which this addendum applies matches the one identified in I.20 and I.21 on the export health certificate and enter the unique certificate number of the export health certificate assigned by the CA (specified in I.2).

X1.b.4.b: Confirm the integrity of the seals and status of the equine. Provide the conveyance identification.

Part X1.b Signatures: Complete as described in [Part VIII](#).

Part X2. Addendum to Part III.1.c.iv: Verification of Status During In-Transit Holding

This addendum pertains to the conditions for holding an equine exported from a CEM-free country when **offloaded for any length of time** during transit through a country that APHIS considers CEM-affected, **by land or by air**, while enroute to the United States. To maintain CEM-free status, this addendum must be completed by the authorized or government veterinarian who verifies the holding conditions and wet ink endorsed by a government veterinarian of the respective CA. A different health certificate number issued by that CA is expected.

X2.1: Specify the CA of the country issuing Part X2.

X2.2: Provide the name, address, and country/ISO code of the CA-approved facility.

X2.3: Provide the date(s) when the equine was held.

X2.4: Additional attestations:

X2.4.a: Verify that the equine to which this addendum applies matches the one identified in I.20 and I.21 on the export health certificate and enter the unique certificate number of the export health certificate assigned by the CA (specified in I.2).

X2.4.b &c: Verify that the equine remained under CA oversight for the duration of hold, separate and apart with no direct or indirect contact with equines of a different CEM status and held in a CA approved facility that is not used for any equine breeding purpose.

Part X2 Signatures: Complete as described in [Part VIII](#).

Part XI. Addendum to Part IV.3: Screwworm Mitigations

This addendum is required for an equine to which Part IV.3. applies. Specifically, an equine that is exporting directly from a country that APHIS considers screwworm affected, an equine that has been in a country that APHIS considers screwworm affected for less than 7 days immediately prior to export to the United States, and/or an equine that has been in a country that APHIS considers screwworm affected and was then moved to a country that APHIS considers screwworm free for more than 7 days but was not or cannot be examined as per Part IV.3. or the examination cannot be verified. **All mitigations specified in Part XI must be completed.** Copies of Part XI may be issued using a different health certificate number if the listed mitigations are completed by different authorized or government veterinarians. Each page must be wet ink endorsed by the government veterinarian of the respective CA.

XI.1: Specify the CA of the country issuing Part XI.

XI.2: Provide the name, address and country/ISO code of the premises of examination.

XI.3: Provide the date of examination.

XI.4: Additional attestations:

XI.4.a: Verify that the equine to which this addendum applies matches the one identified in I.20 and I.21 on the export health certificate and enter the unique certificate number of the export health certificate assigned by the CA (specified in I.2).

XI.4.b: Verify the attestation and specify the active ingredient, concentration, and route of administration of the APHIS-approved product that was used. This statement may be lined out if the issuing veterinarian did not perform the mitigation and instead it was performed by a different veterinarian.

XI.4.c: Verify that the equine was visually and physically examined for signs of screwworm infestation on all mucous membranes and in all wounds. This statement may be lined out if the issuing veterinarian did not perform the mitigation and instead it was performed by a different veterinarian.

Note: The examination must include a thorough inspection of the external genitalia, which requires full extension of the penis for males.

XI.4.d: Verify the attestation and specify the active ingredient and concentration of the APHIS-approved topical product that was used. This statement may be lined out if the issuing veterinarian did not perform the mitigation and instead it was performed by a different veterinarian.

Part XI Signatures: Complete as described in [Part VIII](#).

Part XII. Addendum to Part VII.2: AHS Mitigations

This addendum is required for an equine exporting directly from a country that APHIS considers AHS affected and/or an equine that has been in a country that APHIS considers AHS affected during the 60 days preceding export to the United States. **All mitigations specified in Part XII must be completed.** Contact LAlpolicy@usda.gov if an equine is not directly exporting from an AHS affected country, as some mitigations may not apply as written. Copies of Part XII may be issued using a different health certificate number if the listed mitigations are completed by different authorized or government veterinarians. Each page must be wet ink endorsed by the government veterinarian of the respective CA.

XII.1: Specify the CA of the country issuing Part XII.

XII.2.a: Provide the name, address, and country/ISO code of the premises of the vector-protected facility where the equine was housed pre-export.

XII.2.b: Indicate the date of examination upon entry into the vector-protected facility (must be at least 14 days prior to export to the United States), and/or the date of examination on the day of export.

XII.3: Additional attestations:

XII.3.a: Verify that the equine to which this addendum applies matches the one identified in I.20 and I.21 on the export health certificate and enter the unique certificate number of the export health certificate assigned by the CA (specified in I.2).

XII.3.b: Verify examination of the equine upon entry into the vector-protected facility. This statement may be lined out if the issuing veterinarian did not perform the mitigation and instead it was performed by a different veterinarian.

XII.3.c: Verify testing of the equine for AHS while in the vector-protected facility, with negative results, within 14 days of export to the United States. Testing must be conducted by a laboratory approved by the CA of the exporting country and instead it was performed by a different veterinarian.

XII.3.d: Verify the attestations. Attestations may be lined out if the issuing veterinarian did not perform the mitigation and instead it was performed by a different veterinarian.

Part XII Signatures: Complete as described in [Part VIII](#).

Inquiries

Contact USDA APHIS Live Animal Imports at 301-851-3300 or LAlpolicy@usda.gov.