Certificates of Veterinary Inspection

What you need to know about CVIs

Certificates of veterinary inspection, or CVIs, are documents that are vital to our ability to trace animals when there is an animal disease outbreak. You may have called them health certificates years ago. Today we call them by the new name to emphasize that veterinarians must inspect the animals before they sign their names to the certificates. CVIs must accompany livestock shipped into Wisconsin from other states in most cases. There are a few narrow exemptions that we will discuss here, along with explaining what information you need to provide and why.

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**Consignor:** Name and address of the person or business selling the livestock.

**Consignee:** Name and address of the person or business receiving the livestock.

**Herd status:** Specific disease status of the herd where the livestock originated.

**Purpose of movement:** Examples would be “breeding”, “exhibit”, “sale”, etc. Be sure this information is accurate, because there may be exemptions from some requirements based on purpose.

**Shipment:** Required record-keeping for tracing animals when necessary.

**Official Identification:** List official identification numbers, unless exempted by state rule (ATCP 10). Acceptable identification forms:
- Official alpha-numeric metal tag
- Breed association registration tattoo
- Breed association registration number
- Unique registration freeze brand number
- For horses, official breed registration lip tattoo, written description, or drawing by veterinarian
- For swine under 80 pounds, premises registration number for premises where they originated.

**Breed/Sex/Age:** These details may affect requirements. For example, steers may not need official identification.

**Veterinarian Signature:** CVI must be signed to be valid.

**ID Exemptions:** Under ATCP 10, the rule that covers animal movements, you do not need a certificate of veterinary inspection in the following circumstances.

**Bovine animals and swine that are:**
- Imported to a federally approved market. Note that animals do not need a CVI to leave the market except to go to slaughter or for veterinary treatment
- Imported and sent directly to slaughter
- Enter the state to receive veterinary treatment and return to their home state

**Equine animals that are:**
- Enter the state to receive veterinary treatment and return to their home state
- Imported for a trail ride, show or exhibition if ownership does not change, the animal does not stay more than seven days, the animal has had a negative equine infectious anemia test within the calendar year, and its state of origin allows the same exemption for Wisconsin horses

**Sheep and goats that are:**
- Imported directly to slaughter
- Enter the state to receive veterinary treatment and return to their home state

**FAQs**

**Frequently asked questions**

**How long do I need to keep my copy of CVIs?**
If your business is licensed or registered by the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (deer and fish farms, and animal truckers, dealers and markets), you are required to retain all records, including CVIs, for five years.

**Why should I review the CVI if I pay the veterinarian to fill it out?**
If you are importing animals to Wisconsin, it is also your responsibility to be sure it is done in compliance with Wisconsin rules and statutes. If there are violations, both you and the veterinarian are legally liable.

**What disciplinary action could I face if I import an animal illegally?**
For a first offense, we usually quarantine the imported animals until you satisfy the import requirements, and issue a warning notice. For severe or repeated violations, we may pursue court charges and financial penalties. If we license or register you or your business, the license may be suspended or revoked.

**What happens to the veterinarian who completes the CVI incorrectly?**
We may impose penalties under Wisconsin animal health laws if the veterinarian is licensed in Wisconsin. We also report these violations to the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Investigative Enforcement Service. The veterinarian may lose the federal accreditation that permits him or her to perform regulatory work and/or may face prosecution.