

10 SAFETY PRACTICES for Companion Animal Land Transport*

The following Transport Guidelines are recommended for land transport:

1

Source/Destination organizations must meet state regulations and Federal Department of Transportation guidelines to ensure driver safety even if they are not subject to said regulations. All transports should be staffed with sufficient personnel to appropriately handle and care for all animals. Teams of at least two are required for all transports lasting longer than four hours or for any distance if the vehicle is large and animals cannot easily be monitored by a driver alone.

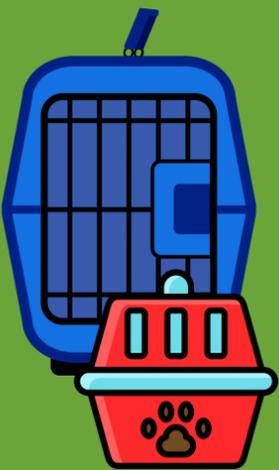
2

Transport vehicles and equipment must be cleaned and sanitized according to organization cleaning protocols.



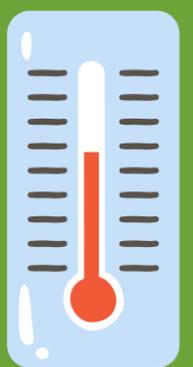
3

Do not overload vehicle. Individual housing units must be loaded so kennel doors do not directly touch vehicle walls or other kennels. Ensure appropriate identification on each animal and its carrier during transport. Performing a visual check on every animal without having to move or unload any of the kennels must be possible.



4

Proper climate control maintained with adequate airflow and temperature regulations within every individual kennel. The vehicle must be able to provide heat and/or air conditioning to the animal housing areas and there must be sufficient air ventilation. Place a thermometer where kennels are located and can be easily visible. Carbon monoxide detectors must be in place where animals are kept during transport. All monitors need to be able to be read by the driver or passenger while in transit.



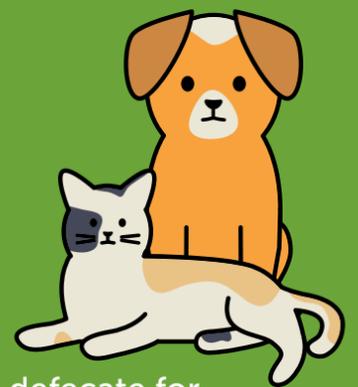
5

Animals must be transported in separate enclosures (except in the case of litters) with solid, leak-proof bottoms and adequate bedding. Animals must be able to comfortably stand up, lie down, and turn around. Litters or single juveniles under six months of age must not be co-housed.



6

Separate transport of species is preferred, but when transporting mixed species, consideration must be given to: Noise level, visual barriers between the species, and access to fresh water for every animal at breaks.



7

Felines must have access to a space to urinate and defecate for transports longer than two hours. There must be adequate space for a resting area where the cat can stand, sit, and lie in a comfortable, normal position. While on the transport, litterboxes should be used for kittens. Puppy pads may be used as a substitute for adults and are preferred by some organizations. Any felines who are to be housed in the transport crate overnight must be provided with a litter box. Felines must be provided a place to hide within their transport kennel or a lightweight enclosure cover that allows sufficient airflow.



8

Dogs must be walked or exercised on trips that require an overnight stay or when transport requires dogs moving to a new vehicle/crate. Dogs must be walked at a safe and secure site. This limits stress and ensures safety for the animals. These areas should be monitored and left clean after walking dogs.



9

At a minimum, stop every 4-6 hours in a safe area to perform a visual check of animals and, as appropriate, to clean transport kennels and provide water. For puppies and kittens, small amounts of canned food should be provided. Provided adult animals are fed at least once in a 24-hour period, withholding food for adults is appropriate to diminish issues with possible motion sickness.



10

Driver, staff, and animal safety is of utmost importance and a contingency plan should be established to address weather, mechanical, or other unexpected situations during the transport. Have a plan to remove all animals safely and quickly from the transport vehicle if necessary. Drivers must travel with cell phones, maps, preferably GPS, and emergency equipment.



The Association for
Animal Welfare
Advancement



*Sourced from the Companion Animal Transport Programs Best Practice. Download the complete document at theaawa.org.