

Best Practices Rabbit Transport Program

PROTECTING THE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF RABBITS DURING THE TRANSPORT PROCESS

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Volunteers frequently transport animals to other cities and/or states for rescue, foster care and adoption. While this practice saves the lives of countless animals, it also requires special attention to the safety and well-being of the animals. We recommend following these best practices when transporting rabbits.

This checklist outlines transport guidelines and best practices. Use this list to help organize your transport.

Transport Checklist For the Transport Organizer:

- Clearly communicate humane standards of rabbit care and transport guidelines to each driver you will be working with.
- Each rabbit must be fully vaccinated for RHDV2 to be eligible to travel across state lines. Each rabbit will travel with documented proof of vaccination.
- Obtain a Health Certificate for each rabbit no more than 7 days before transport. Many states require a Health Certificate for entry. Sick animals are not eligible for transport so bring extra rabbits to the veterinarian in case some of the rabbits do not pass their health check. This ensures the transport will have a full compliment.
- Each rabbit carrier should have a cage card. A cage card includes the following information: Photo of rabbit(s), Name(s), Age, S/N status, Brief physical description, Special medical needs or medications, Destination shelter.
- Create a photo manifest of all rabbits on the transport including what destination shelters they are going to. Each transport participant should have a printed copy of the manifest.
- Consider transport drivers' rabbit care experience when determining the number of drivers needed for the distance travelled. To safely transport rabbits for multiple days over long distances, drivers with significant rabbit care experience are required.
- Create a detailed list of all transport participants and their contact information. Each driver should have a copy of this information.
- Create a transport itinerary that covers the activity for each day of transport and each driver's responsibilities for each day. Every driver should receive a copy of the itinerary.

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- Regularly communicate with your drivers and destination shelters throughout the process.
- Give the starting driver a folder containing proof of RHDV2 vaccination, official Health Certificates and all other paperwork to travel with the rabbits. Such paperwork may consist of: veterinary records, shelter records, prescriptions, travel itinerary, photo manifest, emergency veterinarians along the travel route, contact info for transport participants, etc. Keep all paperwork together in one place.
- Have a contingency plan in place to address weather, mechanical or other unexpected situations during the transport. Qualified veterinarians should be identified ahead of time along the travel route.
- We recommend each driver have the following supplies: emergency first aid kit, RESCUE™ veterinary disinfectant cleaner spray & wet wipes, tie-downs for animal carriers, hay, fresh leafy greens, pellets, gallons of water, trash bags, papertowels, enough towels or other absorbent materials to replace wet bedding on each day of transport, whisk broom and pan, hand sanitizer. (*See our checklist for drivers.*)
- If overnight stays are anticipated the driver should have these additional supplies: exercise pens, tarps, litter boxes, extra litter, trash bags, toys and treats. Confirm motel reservations and that animals are allowed ahead of time.
- After transport is completed, all travel supplies should be disinfected, including: carriers, litter boxes, food and water bowls, towels or fleece bedding, exercise pens, tarps, etc. This is done to protect rabbits by reducing the risk of spreading disease.

We believe each rabbit should be treated with dignity and respect throughout the transport process. Our goal for each transport is to reduce rabbit stress and to keep rabbits healthy on the road and through arrival. Thank you for partnering with us to save rabbit lives!

