

Post Brexit Travel with Assistance Dogs Update – February 2021

COVID-19

Under current COVID-19 restrictions the advice from Government is to stay at home and only travel where journeys are essential.

Post Brexit Travel with Assistance Dogs

Following the end of the Brexit transition period 31 December 2020 new arrangements have been introduced for pet travel but are different depending on whether you live in Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) or in Northern Ireland.

Assistance dog users in Northern Ireland

Under the NI Protocol the EU Pet Travel Regulation will continue to apply for assistance dog users living in Northern Ireland and travelling to and from Ireland and other EU member states.

For a Northern Ireland traveller the simplest way to travel to and from GB is using an EU pet passport. If you don't have an EU pet passport you may wish to consider obtaining one.

From 1 January 2021 the previously issued EU pet passport are no longer valid however in the interim an existing EU pet passport can be updated by your vet before you travel.

A new UK/(NI) Pet Passport is being developed and will be distributed to veterinary practices in due course

Alternatively you can travel from GB to NI by obtaining a single use animal health certificate each time you want to travel – this is likely to be very onerous (and expensive). While there are no documentary or health requirements for travelling from NI to GB if you are returning to NI from GB you will also need to get your dog a rabies vaccination and tapeworm treatment.

More detailed guidance is available on the DAERA website - <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/travelling-pets>.

Assistance dog users in Great Britain

People living in GB will have to make additional arrangements if travelling with an assistance dogs to NI and EU member states.

This includes obtaining a single use EU animal health certificate each time you want to travel, a rabies vaccination, tapeworm treatment, a 21 day wait after the rabies vaccination and entry to EU/NI via a Travellers Point of Entry.

These new arrangements are likely to be very onerous for anyone travelling with an assistance dogs from GB to NI or the EU.

There will be no checks on anyone travelling from NI to GB.

More detailed guidance is available from the DAERA website - <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/travelling-pets>.

Grace period

A grace period is in place to allow people to make the changes to meet the new arrangements.

During this period there will be no routine checks of people travelling with an assistance dog to and from NI and GB.

The grace period is due to end on 1st July 2021.

This suspension of checks has been communicated in a press release issued recently which is available at www.daera-ni.gov.uk/news/poots-reiterates-call-common-travel-area-and-confirms-extension-education-phase-pet-checks