

ASCMV Transport Guidelines and Best Practices

Many of the guidelines you read here were gleaned from the Best Practices Committee of the National Federation of Humane Societies (NFHS) which included state veterinarians, source and destination agencies and third-party facilitators in their information gathering, and the Association of Shelter Veterinarians Animal Transport and Relocation Programs Guidelines.

In all transport programs there are several key components that must drive all decisions relating to transfers. These are:

1. Public health and safety must be the primary concern.
2. All participants must be committed to abiding by all local, state, and federal regulations.
3. Humane standards of care must be afforded to every animal being transported.

Requirements for ASCMV and destination (receiving) agencies:

1. ASCMV and destination agencies should establish a solid working relationship for ongoing communication. Agencies should have a general agreement about the types of medical and behavioral evaluations that are important to each organization.
2. ASCMV shall provide destination agencies with a ***Transfer Partner Agreement** to be signed by receiving agency. All requirements between agencies and MOU's must be obtained in writing prior to transport.
3. Receiving agencies shall have a 501(c)(3) or pending status or be a municipal agency dealing with animal control. Certain Agencies that do not have a non-profit status can still be considered based on approval by the ASCMV.
4. The receiving agency must:
 - a. Have a community demand of adopters for animals being transported.
 - b. Not euthanize animals of the species being transferred for time or space.
 - c. Have a strong infrastructure to receive groups of animals.
5. ASCMV must:
 - a. Follow all transport best practices outlined.
 - b. Transport all animals with respect and dignity in a humane manner.
 - c. Follow guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters:
 - Vaccines shall be administered on intake and in compliance with appropriate vaccine handling protocols.

- Rabies vaccinations shall be administered under the direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian for all animals 16 weeks or older, or in compliance with state standards for the source agency, unless contraindicated for health reasons.

Selection Process Guidelines and Best Practices:

1. There should be a designated Transport Coordinator at both ends of the transport. This is essential. The role of the coordinator is to:
 - a. Organize number and types of animals being transported and secure date and time of transport.
 - b. Maintain good communication between the agencies and work with full transparency and honesty in a professional manner.
 - c. Share contact info for all transport drivers and establish a plan of communication and plan of action in emergency situations.
2. Develop a transport census:
 - a. ASCMV shall develop and share a working list of animals being considered for transport. Information for each animal shall include medical records, description, age, weight, bite status, behavior notes, photos and videos as requested by receiving agencies. Receiving agencies shall approve final list prior to transport.
 - b. A copy of the final transport list shall be kept in an accessible location separate from the transport vehicle itself.
 - c. If requested, ASCMV shall provide medical records to receiving agencies for transport determination prior to transport.
 - d. All animals scheduled for interstate transport must travel with a valid Health Certificate (CVI), vaccination records and be transported in accordance with all local, state and federal laws.
 - e. Injured animals or animals that are showing signs of illness are not eligible for transport, unless traveling within the state of New Mexico and agreed upon by receiving agency.
 - f. All animals will be provided with individual identification in the form of a microchip or paper collar.

Driver Requirements:

1. Drivers must fill out a ***Travel Request** prior to transport. Request must be approved and signed by a supervisor.
2. Driver must follow ***Driver Checklist**, located in each transport vehicle.

3. Drivers must obtain a Transport Card from supervisor to refuel vehicle upon return. All fuel receipts will need to be kept and attached to Travel Request upon return.
4. Driver must be licensed and trained in use of the specific vehicle they are operating.
 - a. Large Transport vehicle (Big Bertha) will require new drivers to participate in a practice transport with an experienced driver prior to embarking in any solo transports.
 - b. Driver must be trained in identifying medical emergencies or signs of distress in animals.
5. Driver must be an ASCMV employee to operate any shelter owned vehicles.
6. All transports shall be made with a minimum of two drivers if longer than 12 consecutive hours per day, to allow sufficient personnel to appropriately handle and care for all animals.
7. Transports that exceed 12 consecutive hours per day shall be broken up with an overnight rest stop for a minimum of 10 hours rest. All animals shall be walked and exercised for trips that require an overnight stay and clean bedding/food shall be provided as necessary. Total transport time from source agency to destination shall not exceed 28 hours, excluding overnight rest stops. Animals are not to be housed on transport vehicle overnight unless adequate monitoring and care is available.
8. Safety is of utmost concern. Drivers shall travel with working cell phones that are GPS capable, and emergency equipment including portable battery chargers. Driver shall be provided contact information for an emergency contact who can provide guidance in emergency situations.

Transport Requirements:

1. Transport of multiple species is not recommended unless a visual and/or sound barrier can be created, the receiving agency agrees in advance, and the animal is at great risk of euthanasia otherwise.
2. Proper climate control must be maintained. The vehicle must be able to provide heat and/or air conditioning to the animal housing areas and there must be sufficient air ventilation.
3. Temperatures shall not fall below 65° F or above 80° F. Thermometer must be placed in an area where kennels are located and be easily visible during the transport. Carbon monoxide monitor must be audible to driver during transport.
4. At minimum, every 4 hours, the vehicle shall be stopped, and a visual observation of each animal shall be performed and documented. Kennels must not be placed in a way where access is blocked.
5. Juvenile animals shall be loaded on vehicle first and staff must always maintain proper PPE, changing gloves between animals.
6. Animals shall be transported in separate enclosures (except in the case of litters) unless they are familiar with each other or have been house together prior to transport.
7. Animal enclosures shall be large enough for animals to comfortably stand up, turn around, and lie down. Nursing puppies/kittens being transported with their mother must be transported in an

enclosure large enough to allow mom to lie down in a natural position without laying on top of the nursing animals.

8. All animals shall be supplied with adequate bedding (towel or blanket).
9. All cages shall be properly locked and secured with hitch pin.
10. If transport exceeds 6 hours, all felines shall be provided with a litter box that does not take up more than 50% of enclosure floor.
11. All animals shall be provided clean water at each stop during the transport, no more than every 4 hours
12. Young animals shall be fed a small meal or snack every 4-6 hours, as directed by medical staff. For juvenile animals, a small meal should be given no more than 4 hours before departure, and small amounts of food should be provided every 4 hours throughout transport.
13. Animal must have corresponding kennel card attached to kennel or carrier for easy identification.
14. If clinical signs of illness or injury are present during the loading process, a supervisor or medical staff shall be immediately notified. Ideally, all animals should be examined by trained staff within 24 hours prior to travel and deemed fit for transport.
15. If an animal has recently been spayed/neutered, or he/she is recuperating from other medical treatment, the animal should have at least 48 hours of recovery time before transport.
16. Exterior doors on large transport vehicle are to remain closed when opening any kennels.