

Center for Comparative Medicine and Surgery

Comparative Pathology Laboratory

Guidelines for Import / Export of Animal-Related Research Samples (Tissues, Blood, Carcasses)

In General:

- The Comparative Pathology Laboratory and CCMS do not handle shipping of **research samples** (including tissues, fluids, cells, etc.) to collaborators (institutions or individuals) outside of Mt Sinai.
- CCMS personnel are available to provide guidance, but it is the responsibility of the sender and receiver to make sure that all necessary paperwork is present and protocols have been followed.
 - If it is determined that the recipient needs documentation pertaining to animal health, CCMS can be contacted for assistance. Please see contact information below.
- **It is best to avoid scheduling collection of samples until all paperwork and approvals are in place.**
- We strongly recommend using a dedicated **courier service**, i.e., World Courier, in lieu of, a **shipper** such as FedEx or UPS when sending samples to other institutions.
 - **Couriers** provide door-to-door dedicated service.
 - **Shippers** provide point-to-point service with delivery based upon route and time of day.
- **There is specific documentation, which varies by country, for international and some domestic shipments. World Courier** can facilitate the proper documentation needed for domestic and international shipments to avoid delays in delivery.
- Clear communications between the sender and receiver are absolutely necessary. Proper packaging (packaging materials, dry ice, etc.), labeling and handling must be discussed between sender and receiver. **The sender's laboratory will be responsible for packaging samples.**
 - Please make sure that samples are packed with enough dry ice to last for 2-3 days **longer** than the anticipated shipping time.
 - Provisions for adding dry ice to the shipment may be needed if there are any delays.

- In general, fluids (and tissues in fluids) need to be in leak-proof containers and double bagged. It is usually a good idea to bag samples separately and label samples clearly in multiple places.
- Slides may or may not require ice; this depends on the processing and intended use.
- To make the process smoother, it is best for the researcher to call World Courier as far in advance of their preferred shipping date as possible to set up the “order” in World Courier’s system.
- After receiving a Customs invoice (see below), World Courier can check with the receiving country to confirm their import requirements and the need for any additional documentation.
- **To contact World Courier for information and to set up an account, please call 1-800-221-6600 or +1 (516) 354-2600.**

International Shipments:

- Imports/Exports
 - All international shipments will require a Customs invoice. Blank templates for this form can be obtained from World Courier.
 - **Import** permits are usually required for animal origin material. World Courier’s foreign office will work directly with the recipient to ensure they have the proper permit or can guide them on how to obtain it.
 - The time frame for obtaining the **import** permit varies from destination to destination and is also contingent on the type and quantity of samples being sent. Please factor this into your planning.
 - Estimates of timing to obtain certain documents (actual times may vary):
 - USDA Health Certificate – 3 business days
 - CITES permit¹ – 3-6 months (must be obtained by the exporter, World Courier cannot apply for it)
 - Paperwork review – 24 hours (after World Courier submits the paperwork to the foreign office, they respond next day with their comments)
- Some animal material will require a USDA Health Certificate (VS Form 16-4) which can be obtained by World Courier on the sender’s behalf once a notarized affidavit is provided.

¹ C.I.T.I.E.S. = Convention on International Trade In Endangered Species. Required permit for all nonhuman primate tissues or tissues from any endangered species.

- Note: The European Union does not currently require USDA/APHIS approval for research and diagnostic samples, however this is subject to change and there are exceptions depending on the destination so please check with the receiving country.
- Some animal material (for example: nonhuman primate tissues) will require export clearance from the US Fish & Wildlife. World Courier can assist the sender, but the sender must have a Fish & Wildlife Import/Export License for monkey material, and a CITES permit is required (see footnote 1 above).
- Rules and regulations differ depending on the recipient's location and will require specific documentation to ensure successful delivery.

Contact Information: Please contact the CCMS Comparative Pathology Laboratory at 212.241.1696 (x4-1696) if you have any questions regarding these guidelines.