Siam Legal International Outlines How to Bring Pets to Thailand in 2026

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Bangkok, Thailand - August 18, 2026 -
Siam Legal International, a full-service law firm with more than 22 years of experience assisting foreign nationals in Thailand, is publishing updated guidance on how foreign nationals can bring pets into Thailand, following a Bangkok Metropolitan Administration ordinance that introduced new pet ownership rules effective January 10, 2026. The guidance covers the veterinary and documentation steps required before travel, alongside the registration and housing rules that now apply once a pet arrives in the capital.

Most dogs and cats can enter Thailand without difficulty, though a small number of categories face restrictions. Wolf hybrid dogs are not permitted, and Savannah and Bengal cats must be at least five generations removed from their wild ancestors with certified lineage. Pit Bull Terriers and American Staffordshire Terriers are not banned outright, but many airlines decline to carry them and Bangkok applies strict handling rules, while flat-faced breeds such as pugs and bulldogs are frequently refused by airlines due to breathing risks during flights.

The veterinary process must follow a specific order. A pet must receive an international 15-digit microchip before its rabies vaccination, since reversing that sequence typically means the vaccination has to be

repeated. Dogs require rabies, leptospirosis, distemper, hepatitis, and parvovirus vaccinations, while cats require rabies and feline panleukopenia, usually given as a combined vaccine, and the first vaccination must generally be administered at least 21 days before travel.

An import permit from the Animal Quarantine Station, issued by the Department of Livestock Development, is also required, with applications typically submitted between 7 and 60 days before travel. A licensed veterinarian in the pet's home country must issue an International Health Certificate, which then requires endorsement from a government authority, such as the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service or the United Kingdom's Animal and Plant Health Agency, within 10 days of departure. Siam Legal International's pet relocation guide walks through this timeline in full, including the parasite treatment window and airport arrival procedure.

On arrival, most pets enter through Suvarnabhumi Airport, where owners must present their endorsed health certificate, vaccination records, and import permit at the Animal Quarantine Station before clearing customs. Owners whose documents or pet health raise concerns may face a quarantine hold of up to 30 days.

Once a pet has entered the country and its owner settles in Bangkok, the new municipal ordinance adds further obligations. All dogs and cats must be microchipped and registered with the local district office within 120 days of birth, or within 30 days of the animal's arrival in Bangkok. Space limits are tied to housing type, with condominiums or rented units between 20 and 80 square metres permitted one pet and larger units permitted two, while houses on land may accommodate more, up to six pets depending on the size of the property.

The rules are not retroactive for owners who already exceed the pet limits, though every animal must still be registered regardless of when it was acquired. Restricted breeds, including Pit Bull Terriers, Bull Terriers, Staffordshire Bull Terriers, Rottweilers, and Fila Brasileiros, must be muzzled and kept on a lead no longer than 50 centimetres in public, with age restrictions placed on who may handle them, and failure to register a pet or comply with handling requirements can result in penalties of up to 25,000 Baht.

Rex Baay, Senior Immigration Consultant and Operations Manager at Siam Legal International, said pet relocation is often treated as a secondary concern by families focused on visas and housing, even though the documentation timeline requires early planning.

"Families relocating to Bangkok are usually focused on visas and housing, and the pet registration requirements can be an afterthought until a district office asks for documentation that has not been prepared," said Rex Baay, Senior Immigration Consultant and Operations Manager at Siam Legal International. "Confirming microchip registration and breed restrictions early avoids complications after the family has already settled into the city."

Siam Legal International noted that airline policies and government regulations affecting pet relocation can change without extensive notice, and recommended that owners confirm current requirements with their veterinarian, airline, and the Department of Livestock Development before booking travel to Thailand.

Siam Legal International is a full-service law firm with more than 22 years of experience assisting foreign nationals in Thailand, with offices in Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Phuket, and Pattaya. The firm provides comprehensive legal and immigration support across visa planning, property transactions, business law, and litigation.

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