



Moving Pets In Extreme Cold

Our Pet Relocation Counselors assist pets throughout their journeys, facing special challenges in the severe cold and stormy conditions of wintertime. Our Pet Relocation Counselor, Laura, recounts her recent experiences this season and offers advice to families who need to move pets at this time of year.

At WorldCare Pet Transport, our number one priority is the safety and welfare of every pet we move. We believe strongly in educating families about how to keep your pets comfortable and safe in the heat. But what about the winter months, when temperatures seem to dip to new lows and adverse weather can arise unexpectedly?

If your pet will be moving to, from, or transiting through the northern United States, you and your Pet Relocation Counselor should keep a close eye on the snow forecasts and temperatures. We partner with airlines which offer superior pet handling, so in the interest of the pets they move, the airlines will sometimes make the last-minute decision to place a temporary embargo on moving pets when the weather is extremely cold or windy, or in hazards such as heavy snow or freezing rain. This helps protect your pet by rescheduling for a travel day when they won't be exposed to these conditions during the short time it takes to be loaded onto their flight. As soon as it is safe to do so, once the "cold snap" or snowstorm is over, the airlines then lift these temporary embargoes and pets can move safely once again.

If the flights are operating but you are concerned about snow or the cold, please don't hesitate to bring any concerns you may have to the attention your Pet Relocation Counselor. You or your PRC may decide it's in your pet's best interests to reschedule their travel.

In some countries and climates such as Canada, the winters are a bit harsher than in the United States. As a result, the airlines have learned to adapt in order to enable their customers to safely move pets even in the cold weather. Canadian airlines West Jet and Air Canada keep live animal embargoes in place from December through mid-January, but they also have the safeguards in place at their local airports to bring pets off of their flights and safely to a temperature-controlled environment very quickly, minimizing the risk. These airlines will typically only suspend the move of pets or live animals if the temperatures represent extreme, bitter cold or blizzard conditions.

In the winter of 2014, we successfully moved a Golden Retriever and two cats out of Halifax, Canada and into North Dakota. As the owners were moving during the December/January embargoes, the Golden "Gracie" was able to stay with her grandparents and, due to allergies, we boarded the cats for about a week and a half before the embargoes lifted and they were able to travel. A few days prior to travel, we completed health certificates on behalf of our customer. The pets then flew together on a Monday from Halifax to Toronto, and Toronto to Winnipeg. In Winnipeg, we boarded them for a night and then ground transported them 5 hours down to their new home in Minot, ND.

None of the American airline carriers were offering flights which were large enough to carry all of the pets into the surrounding U.S. airports, so this routing made the most sense. We were also lucky that no winter storms caused a change of dates!