businesscompanion
trading standards law explained

Cattle keepers and livestock shows

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In this guide, the words 'must' or 'must not' are used where there is a legal requirement to do (or not do) something. The word 'should' is used where there is established legal guidance or best practice that is likely to help you avoid breaking the law.

This guidance is for England

All cattle born since 1 July 1996 are required to have a passport. Valid documentation must accompany cattle taken to a show.

The movement to the show must be recorded. Without the correct documents, the show secretary will not be able to accept the animals, report movements to the British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS) or record movement details in the passport and holding register.

The movement details are to be reported and recorded within 36 hours of the movement taking place.

Cattle identification

For information on the different types of passport, ear tagging, etc, please see 'Cattle identification'. You may wish to refer to that guide while reading this one.

Recording the movement of cattle to shows

One-page A4-style passports (CPP52):

- these have been issued for newborn cattle or reissued passports since 1 August 2011
- you must complete the movement summary section when the animal moves on to your holding, and when it moves off your holding
- the show secretary reports movements on to and off the showground, and fills in the movement summary for the movement on to and off the showground

Chequebook-style passports:

- movement to the showground must be recorded by fixing the holding barcode and signing and dating the off-holding section
- movement on to and off the showground to be filled in by the show organisers as a through movement, as for markets (for one-day shows only)
- movement back to holding or on to new holding (if sold) to be recorded by fixing the holding barcode and signing and dating the on-holding section

Green passports and certificates of registration:

- movement to the show must be recorded by filling in the box labelled 'seller's details' on the passport
- movement on to and off the showground to be filled in by the show organisers as a through movement, as for markets (for one-day shows only)
- movement back to holding or on to new holding (if sold), the buyer's details box is filled in

Cattle movement details must be reported within 36 hours of the movement taking place. For cattle that have single-page passports, one of the following methods must be used for reporting your movements:

- CTS Online
- CTS Web Services from some farm software packages
- CTS self-service phone line

The above methods may also be used for cattle that have chequebook-style passports or certificates of registration. Alternatively, record the details in your herd book within 36 hours and send completed movement cards to BCMS.

These electronic services should be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. More information on reporting movements is available on the GOV.UK website.

Note: some show organisers will carry out the 'on' and 'off' movement notification electronically, especially if animals move on to and off the showground on different days; therefore, they may not remove a movement card from your chequebook-style passport, but will still fix a barcode and sign and date the passport.

In addition, all cattle keepers (including temporary keepers, such as show secretaries) must keep a holding register showing details of movements. More information on keeping a holding register can be found on the GOV.UK website.

Bovine tuberculosis

Cattle visiting shows may present a risk for the spread of bovine tuberculosis (bTB). bTB can spread between cattle at shows either directly, through very close or nose-to-nose contact, or indirectly via contaminated shared equipment and the environment. To reduce this risk, statutory pre-and post-movement bTB testing rules apply for movements of cattle to and from shows, unless specific exemptions apply. More information on bTB controls for cattle moving to and from shows can be found on the TBHub

website.

For information on bTB generally, see 'Bovine tuberculosis'.

Further information

It is important to report and record the actual movement dates for each animal, and not the show dates. Failure to report the actual movement date is a criminal offence and may cause gaps in the animal's movement history, which could make the passport invalid.

If you plan to temporarily keep livestock on someone else's land or in their buildings, you can apply for a temporary land association (TLA) or temporary county parish holding (tCPH) number. Particular care should be taken to accurately record cattle movements if moving cattle from a historically linked premises. For further information on tCPHs and TLAs see the GOV.UK website.

Animal health inspectors may carry out spot checks at the show. Please remember to bring completed passports for cattle (where applicable), as non-compliance could result in formal action.

Further guidance for show secretaries can be found on the GOV.UK website, including advice for recording movements for one-day shows and shows of more than one day.

If you are organising an exhibition, show or trade stand that includes livestock, please remember this may constitute an 'animal gathering' and would consequently need a pre-approved licence. APHA provides guidance to support best practice at these events and ensure that essential biosecurity measures are carried out. More information on animal gatherings can be found on the GOV.UK website or in 'Animal gatherings'.

For information on the welfare of cattle when they are being transported, see 'Welfare of animals during transport'.

Trading Standards

For more information on the work of Trading Standards services - and the possible consequences of not abiding by the law - please see 'Trading Standards: powers, enforcement and penalties'.

In this update

No major changes.

Last reviewed / updated: February 2025

Key legislation

- Cattle Identification Regulations 2007
- Animal Gatherings Order 2010
- Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (England) Regulations 2018

Please note

This information is intended for guidance; only the courts can give an authoritative interpretation of the law.

The guide's 'Key legislation' links go to the legislation.gov.uk website. The site usually updates the legislation to include any amendments made to it. However, this is not always the case. Information on all changes made to legislation can be found by following the above links and clicking on the 'More Resources' tab.

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