

## Pet Health Insurance in California

In 1849 hundreds of men made the grueling climb across the Rocky mountain range before stepping onto California's soil. These men, who history remembers as forty-niners, came to California with dreams of striking a mother lode of gold and spending the rest of their days in the lap of luxury. Few of these forty-niners had possessions worth speaking of, just the tattered torn clothes they were wearing, a shovel, a pan specially designed to sift through river sediment, and an old mule to haul their find out of the mountains.

Over a hundred and fifty years have passed since the last forty-niner made their final trek across the Rockies with only his own voice and a cantankerous old mule named Worthless for company. In this new modern world a different type of person is journeying across the country seeking the answers to all their dreams and prayers in the warm California sunlight. Today its students, freshly armed with brand new high school diplomas and a tiny sub-compact car loaded down with expensive clothing and glamour shots, seeking not gold but rather fame under the bright lights of an acting studio. Like the forty-niners, many of these future stars have only their CD collections and a family pet to keep them company on the long drive across the country.

What many of these Hollywood hopefuls don't realize is the animal health branch of the California Department of Food and Agriculture has rules and regulations for bringing pets into the state. Most of the rules will involve the young pet owner to take their pet to the veterinarian for a round of shots and an exam before leaving for the land of movie stars and millionaires. The purchase of pet health care coverage can sometimes let the youngsters get the routine vet work out of the way without forcing them to dip to heavily into their savings.

Domestic cats that are infected with a contagious disease are not allowed into California. Cats are not required to have a current rabies vaccination nor do they have to have a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection before they cross the state line into California. They must have a health certificate if they are coming from an area that was under rabies quarantine. If you are coming into the state of California via airplane check with the airline about what health requirements they enforce before allowing your cat to fly. Before you leave your home town for the California shore line, ask your veterinarian what can be done to make the trip as comfortable and safe for your cat.

Just like cats the California Department of Food and Agriculture will not allow dogs that are carrying an infectious disease to cross the state line into California. Any dog over four months of age is required to a certificate stating the date of its last rabies vaccination, the type of vaccination used, the manufacturer lot number of the rabies vaccine used, and the name of the vet who gave the injection. If you are traveling by plane ask the airline about any additional health requirements your dog must meet before it is allowed to fly. The sooner you contact your airline the better.

If you are bringing a more exotic type of pet, such as a potbellied pig, into

the state of California you may be required to have an entry permit.