

PCIT Process

Accessing PCIT or VEHCS for the First Time Industry Users Quick Reference Guide

The USDA APHIS Application Access website provides access to either PCIT (Phytosanitary Certificate Issuance and Tracking System) or VEHCS (Veterinary Export Health Certificate System).

Before you can access the PCIT or VEHCS system, you must create a USDA eAuthentication user account. USDA eAuthentication is the security portal for all USDA applications, and the user account allows you to login to USDA websites, such as PCIT and VEHCS.

Please Note: Without a valid eAuthentication account you will not be able to create your new PCIT or VEHCS account.

Action One: Logging into PCIT or VEHCS

1. Access the website <https://pcit.aphis.usda.gov/pcit/>.
2. Click **Log In**. The eAuthentication Login page displays.
3. Choose one of the following paths:
 - a. If you do not have a USDA eAuthentication Account, proceed to **Action Two: Creating a USDA eAuthentication Account**.
 - b. If you are logging into PCIT or VEHCS for the first time and already have an eAuthentication account, proceed to **Action Three: Linking Your New eAuthentication Account to PCIT or VEHCS**.

Action Two: Creating a USDA eAuthentication Account

1. On the eAuthentication Login page, Click the **Create an account** link under the Quick Links box in the upper left hand corner.
 2. Click the **Register for Level 1 Account** link in the middle of the page. **NOTE: If you sign up for a Level 2 account, it will revert back to a Level 1 account.**
 3. Follow the instructions provided on the USDA eAuthentication website to Register for a Level 1 Account.
 4. On the Step 1 of 4 – Level 1 Access Account Registration page, complete required fields and click **Continue**.
 5. On the Step 2 of 4 – Level 1 Access Account Verification page, review the information and click **Submit**.
 6. The Step 3 of 4 – Print Confirmation email page displays. Your confirmation email should arrive within 1 hour.
 7. From the confirmation email, click the ACTIVATE MY ACCOUNT link.
 8. The Step 4 of 4 – Account Activated page displays that your account has been activated with Level 1 Access. Please wait 20 minutes from the time of activation before using your account.
 9. After your account has been activated, return to the website <https://pcit.aphis.usda.gov/pcit/> and click **Log In**. Proceed to **Action Three: Linking Your New eAuthentication Account to PCIT or VEHCS**.
- For user ID/password assistance and technical support regarding eAuthentication, you must contact the APHIS eAuthentication Helpdesk. 1-866-794-2827 or aehd@aphis.usda.gov **Accessing PCIT or VEHCS for the First Time Industry Users Quick Reference Guide**

Action Three: Linking Your New eAuthentication Account to PCIT or VEHCS

1. On the eAuthentication Login page, enter your eAuthentication User ID and password and click **Login**.
 - a. LincPass is the HSPD-12 Personal Identity Verification (PIV) card issued by USDA. If you have a card reader attached to your workstation, you can use your LincPass card to log in to eAuthentication.
 - i. Verify that your LincPass card is inserted into the card reader for your computer.
 - ii. Click **Login with your LincPass (PIV)** button. RESULT: A pop-up box "Select a Certificate" may appear.
 - iii. Select your **PIV Authentication** certificate and click **OK**.
 - iv. Try your first certificate. If your login fails, try again and change your selection to your second certificate.
 - v. The certificate (first or second) that works for you will be the same for future logins.
 - vi. If prompted, enter your **PIN**.
 - b. Enter your user ID and password by completing the following steps:
 - i. Enter your eAuthentication User ID in the User ID field.
 - ii. Enter your eAuthentication Password in the Password field.
 - iii. Click the **Login** button.
 - o If you entered your credentials incorrectly, you will be taken to a "Login Failed" error page. Click the "Back" button and try again.
 - o If you are not authorized to access the URL that you have requested, you will be taken to an "Access Denied" error page.
 - o If you entered your credentials correctly and you are authorized, you will be taken to the URL that you requested.
2. The APHIS Application Access page should appear showing your successful login to eAuthentication. If this is the case, your eAuthentication ID is working correctly. Now you can choose to either continue to PCIT or VEHCS.

If you are exporting plants and/or plant products, click **Continue to PCIT**.

If you are exporting live animals and/or live animal products, click **Continue to VEHCS** and click **Yes** to confirm this selection.

NOTE: Your eAuthentication ID can access PCIT or VEHCS, not both. It's very important that you make the correct selection.

3. Now that you've accessed PCIT or VEHCS, you can create a new organization or join an existing one. These systems are organization based, meaning that you will belong to an organizational group that can share data in these systems. At this point you can create a new organization, or join an existing one. To join an organization, the organization administrator would have provided you a PIN. Make a selection based on the options below:

- a. Creating a New Organization in PCIT – Proceed to Action Four.
- b. Joining an Existing Organization in PCIT – Proceed to Action Five.
- c. Creating a New Organization in VEHCS – Proceed to Action Six.
- d. Joining an Existing Organization in VEHCS – Proceed to Action Seven.

Action Four: Creating a New Organization in PCIT

1. To create a PCIT account for your organization, click the **Create Applicant Organization** button on the left.
2. The Registration Wizard – User Information page appears. Enter your Name and Phone, and then click **Next**.
3. The Registration Wizard – Choose a Path page appears. Select the Create a New Organization Account within PCIT option and click **Next**.
4. The Registration Wizard – Create New Organization page, enter your company's information and click **Submit**.

NOTE: Only one profile per applicant organization is needed. As the organization administrator, you are responsible for adding and maintaining other PCIT user accounts for your company or organization.

When entering additional user accounts to your applicant organization, you should also designate at least one other user as an administrator.

5. The Registration Wizard – Create Successful page appears. Click **Continue** to start using PCIT.

6. Your eAuthentication account is now synchronized with your organization's new PCIT account and you are now logged into the system.

7. The next time you access the PCIT website, simply enter your eAuthentication User ID and password and click Login. This will log you all the way into PCIT.

Action Five: Joining an Existing Organization in PCIT

1. Your organization's account administrator should provide you with a unique personal identification number (PIN) to connect to the organization's account. Under Option 2, enter this information and click **Join**.

2. Your eAuthentication account is now synchronized with your organization's PCIT account and you are now logged into PCIT.

For PCIT questions or further assistance, contact the PCIT Help Desk 1-866-HLP-PCIT (457-7248) or pcithelpdesk@aphis.usda.gov **Accessing PCIT or VEHCS for the First Time Industry Users Quick Reference Guide**

Create Application

Applications require external applicants (Industry Organizations) to be listed as the applicant. All 572 applications processed by a Federal duty station, State, or County must have an external applicant (Industry Organization) listed as the applicant. The following Application Step By Step field descriptions apply to the 577, 579 and State certificates. See the description below for 578 Application Step by Step.

The items at the top of the *Application Step by Step* page can be accessed at any time while creating an application.

The fields include the following:

Tracking

Tracking numbers are populated immediately when you enter the *General* page. This number can be used later for retrieval of the associated application while it is a work in progress or for

- monitoring the movement of the application, from submission through to certificate process.

Certificate Type

- Displays the type of [certificate](#).

Save as Work in Progress

- At any time during the application creation process, you may save your work for completion in the future.
- When you click the **Save as Work in Progress** button, a date and time displays on the screen. You may save an application to be used as a template for future applications. Saving as a template will allow you to generate future applications using most of the current application's information
- without having to manually re-enter the information.

Save as Template

- At any time during the application creation process, you may save your work as a template. An application template simplifies creating a new application by reusing existing information, such as exporters and commodities. To save the current application as a template, enter a template name and click the **Save** button.

NOTE: Some information, such as quantities of commodities or unlisted commodities, will not be saved in the template.

View Application (Not applicable for 578)

- At any time during the application creation process, you may view or print a copy of the application. A new browser window opens and the application is displayed in portable document format (PDF).

View Certificate Draft

At any time during the application creation process, you may select the **View Certificate Draft** tab in the upper right corner of the screen to display a draft certificate prior to issuing the certificate. A

- new browser window opens and the draft certificate is displayed in portable document format (PDF).
- NOTE:** The certificate draft will not display the Place of Issue, Certificate number or Inspection date.

Close

At any time during the application creation process, you may select the **Close** tab in the upper right corner of the screen to close the application.

Delete

- Use to delete an application at any time in the creation process (before submitting the completed application).

The *Application Step by Step* page field descriptions are as follows:

Certificate Type

- Select the type of certificate you are requesting (577, 578*, 579, or State Certificate).

Certificate Type & Certification (For 579 applications only)

When creating a PPQ Form 579 Phytosanitary Certificate for Reexport, the *Foreign Certification Information* page captures the certificate details entered in the Application Step by Step submission process.

General

Captures information about the exporter and consignee, as well as requested issuing duty station information and alerts about the existence of import permit number, reference information, and comments.

Export & Shipping Details

Captures information about the movement of the application commodities as well as the date and packaging information.

Commodities Overview

Captures information about the location, description, quantity, and origin of the application commodities.

Attachments

- Enables users to add, remove, or download documents as attachments to 577, 578*, 579, and State certificates.

Summary/Submit

- Provides a mechanism to review all application information, certify commodity origin, and submit it to the requested issuing duty station.

***Application Step by Step field descriptions specific for 578 are as follows:**

Certificate Type

- Select 578 as the type of certificate you are requesting.

General

Captures information about the exporter and consignee, as well as requested issuing duty station information and movement of the application commodities

Products

- Products associated with the certificate.

Attachments

- Enables users to add, remove, or download documents as attachments to 578 certificates.

Summary/Submit

- Provides a mechanism to review all application information, certify commodity origin, and submit it to the requested issuing duty station.

IMPORTANT NOTE: You may enter application information in any order by selecting the links at the left of the screen; for example, you can enter commodity information then general information. In this Help file, data entry into the *Application Step by Step* pages will be explained sequentially as if using the **Next** button.

Create a PPQ Form 577 Phytosanitary Certificate

To create a PPQ Form 577 Phytosanitary Certificate for Foreign Consignees, complete the following steps:

1. Under the [Create Application](#) link, click the [Without Template](#) link.
RESULT: The *Select Your Certificate Type* page appears.
2. Select **PPQ Form 577** from the drop-down list and click the **Next** button.
RESULT: The *General* page displays and the application fields are pre-populated with previously entered template information.
3. Enter the required information on each of the *Application Step by Step* pages. You may enter the information in any order. When complete, go to Summary/Submit to submit the application. If you would like to finish the application at a later time, you may save the application as a work in progress.

NOTE: From this step forward, the Creating and Submitting Applications process is the same for all types of certificates.

Export & Shipping

The items at the top of the *Application Step by Step* page can be accessed at any time while creating an application.

IMPORTANT NOTE: You may enter application information in any order by selecting the links at the left of the screen; for example, you can enter commodity information then general information. In this Help file, data entry into the *Application Step by Step* pages will be explained sequentially as if using the **Next** button.

To enter the Export & Shipping details, complete the following steps. These details apply to the entire shipment.

Export Details

Select the **Shipment Value** from the drop-down list. This field is required for Federal Duty

1. Stations.

Enter the **Approximate Date For Departure From Port Of Export**. You can click the calendar to
2. select the appropriate date.
3. Enter the [Port of Export](#).
4. Select the **Declared Means Of Conveyance From Port Of Export** from the drop-down list.
5. You can also add free text to the **If Other, More Details** field as needed.

Default Shipping Details

Each commodity will default to the values you enter, but can be overridden on the *Commodity Details* page. You may enter the following values for this shipment:

- [Number Of Packages](#) - The Number Of Packages field must be zero or blank when a [pre-defined package description](#) is used.
- [Package Description](#) - Click the **Edit** button to update a custom-entered Package Description. Use the **If Other, More Details** field to add a new entry.
- [Distinguishing Marks](#) - Click the **Edit** button to update a custom-entered Distinguishing Mark. Use the **If Other, More Details** field to add a new entry. For a helpful hint, see the [Copy and Paste Data in PCIT](#) topic.

IMPORTANT: The default values entered will apply to *new commodities only*. To apply one or more of these defaults to commodities already included in the application, select the corresponding checkbox and click the **Apply** button. You can also use the [Select All](#) link.

6. Enter the [Point Of Entry](#). If this field is left blank, the consignee country will be automatically added.
7. When you have completed entering your information, click the **Next** button.

Commodities

The items at the top of the *Application Step by Step* page can be accessed at any time while creating an application.

IMPORTANT NOTE: You may enter application information in any order by selecting the links at the left of the screen; for example, you can enter commodity information then general information. In this Help file, data entry into the *Application Step by Step* pages will be explained sequentially as if using the **Next** button.

The *Commodity Overview* page is specifically for 577 applications. The *Application Step by Step Commodities Overview* page field descriptions are as follows:

- **Commodities Available for Inspection At:** The location at which the commodities will be made available for inspection. For example, warehouse or package house.
- **Commodities Available On:** The date and time the commodities will be available for inspection. You can click the calendar to select the appropriate date.
 - **Time:** Select the hour and minutes. A phytosanitary certificate cannot be issued if the time limit between the inspection and the shipping date has been exceeded.
- Click the **View General Requirements** button to view the General Requirements for the country.
- **RESULT:** A new browser window displays the *Phytosanitary Export Database (PExD)* page.
 - **NOTE:** You can use the [Need Help](#) link in PExD for more information on the General Requirements Help topic.
 - Once you have completed your review and you want to return to PCIT, click the **Close PExD** button in the upper right corner.
 - A table displays the Common Name, Botanical Name, Part, Quantity, Unit and Requirements.
 - **NOTE:** Once a foreign consignee has been selected for the application, a **View** button will display in the Requirements column for each commodity. Clicking **View** will open a new window to PExD to review the country requirements for the selected commodity and part. If there is no requirement for the commodity/part, the country's General Requirements will display. If your commodity uses the option 'Other' for the part, a **View** button will not display.

To enter the Commodity Overview information, complete the following steps.

1. Enter the location, date, and time the commodities will be available for inspection.
 - To add a new commodity to the application, click the [Add Commodity](#), [Add Mixed Commodity](#), or [Add Cross Commodity](#) button and follow the instructions on the screen.
 - To update and delete existing commodities, click the corresponding checkbox next to the commodity and click either the **Update Selected** or **Delete Selected** button.
4. When you have completed entering your information, click the **Next** button.

Attachments

All users are able to attach and view PDF and Images to a certificate. The attachments will not become part of the phytosanitary certificate and they will not affect the phytosanitary certificate page count or cause automatic text to be printed in the Additional Declarations block. If you want to include an attachment(s) as part of the phytosanitary package you will need to print the attachment separately then manually bundle the attachment with the PCIT Phytosanitary Certificate. Attachments can be added and/or removed prior to the 'Submit' status. If an application requires additional attachments after "Submit", the ACO shall return the application to the applicant. The ACO can add/remove attachments at any time in the process until the certificate is issued. After the certificate is issued, no attachments can be added or removed by anyone.

NOTE: Each attachment can be up to 5 megabytes. Total combined attachments per application cannot be more than 10 megabytes.

Type of attachments include the following:

- Import Permits
- Lab Results

- Field Inspections
- Foreign Phytos
- Other

NOTE: If you need to access Attachments that have been archived, please send an email to the [PCIT Help Desk](#) with your request. Specify the Phytosanitary Certificate Number and indicate which of the Attachments you need.

Summary/Submit

The *Application Step by Step Summary/Submit* page displays all the entered application information.

If you want to change a section of the application information, complete the following steps:

1. Click the **Edit** button next to the section of information you wish to change.
2. The Section is displayed in which you can make changes to this part of the application.
3. Make the desired changes.
4. Click the **Next** button to return to the *Summary/Submit* page.

If you want to view or update detailed commodity information on the application, complete the following steps:

- Click the **Details** button located next to commodity to see additional information about the
1. commodity.
 2. Click the **Edit** button to make changes to the commodity.
 3. Click the **Save** button to return to the *Summary/Submit* page.
 4. Click the **Back** button to return to the *Summary/Submit* page

If you want to submit an application, read the certification of origin warning, and then click the Submit Application button.

If no errors are found, one of the following *Confirmation* page appears with the tracking number displayed.

If there are CITES products on the application, the warning appears with the "Review" checkbox on the *Summary* screen.

Financial Management

The PCIT application manages certificate payments, allowing users to add money to their accounts via the Pay.gov interface, and managing the balance of that account within PCIT. PCIT interacts with the Department of Treasury Pay.gov system to collect and process the fee for issuing certificates.

Each PCIT applicant organization has an account within PCIT. To pay for their certificates, applicants submitting applications to federal duty stations must supply the processing ACO with a manual check or add money to their [pre-purchase PCIT account](#) via the Pay.gov interface. A further way of processing is when an ECS sets up an interagency agreement for a PCIT organization, allowing certificate payment to be handled outside of PCIT.

NOTE: States and Counties also have the option of collecting their fees via PCIT. A list of participating States and Counties is available on the *Financial Management* page. Please verify that the duty station(s) you submit to participate in PCIT fee collection before depositing funds to cover their fees.

To either add funds to the applicant's pre-purchase account (via check or credit card), or, to charge them for [certificate issued outside of PCIT](#), complete the following steps:

- On the *Applicant Organization Financial Transactions* page, click the **Transactions** button beside
1. the organization of your choice.

