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Commissioner Adam Putnam waives rules to help Puerto Ricans evacuate with pets

Inky the cat Hardison (top) and Goldy the cat Hardison (bottom) relax Tuesday morning in the unrecorded subdivision known as Jemlands in Levy County as their counterparts in Puerto Rico struggle through life after a direct hit by Hurricane Maria. These two cats spent a week at a motel as Hurricane Irma passed



through Florida.

Photo by Jeff M. Hardison

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**From the Press Office
of Adam Putnam**

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TALLAHASSEE -- In an effort to support the safe evacuation of Puerto Ricans and their pets, Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Adam H. Putnam issued an emergency order today (Tuesday, Oct. 3) suspending import paperwork requirements for pets that arrive in Florida with their evacuee owners.

This emergency order does not apply to stray animals or livestock.

“Our fellow Americans in Puerto Rico face a long road to recovery, and they need all the support we can provide,” Putnam said. “By removing some of the hurdles for evacuees coming to Florida with companion pets, we’re making the process of evacuating to Florida easier.”

The following import requirements are temporarily suspended:

- Rule 5C-3.002(1), F.A.C. – All animals OCVI/Health Certificates requirement;
- Rule 5C-3.009(1) and (3), F.A.C. – Dogs and Cats OCVI/Health Certificates and rabies vaccination requirements; and
- Rule 5C-3.0012(1), F.A.C. – Domestic Fowl OCVI/Health Certificates requirement.

For additional details on the emergency order, contact the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services at 1-800-HELP-FLA.