

# Using the Import Accounts feature



## Where do I find it?

You can find the [Import Accounts](#) page by going to [Animals > Imports](#).

Each import account specifies an animal data file to import and process.

### On this page:

- [How does an Import Account work?](#)
- [How to create your import data file](#)
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  - [Deleting an import account](#)
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The following actions are available for Import accounts with the specified service and user roles:

Action	Description	Services	User Roles
Add, edit, delete import accounts	Able to manage all aspects of the Import Accounts feature	Data Management Pet Adoption Portal Web Site	Site Admin

## How does an Import Account work?

When you set up an Import Account, basically you are telling our system to look for an import file with a specific name in the import directory of your RescueGroups.org [FTP account](#). When RescueGroups.org receives an import file, our system will process it and add or update animals in your RescueGroups.org account.

Import Accounts are typically run on an on-going basis, although some organizations use them to import data one time when first adding animals to their account. If your organization is using an Import Account on an on-going basis, this means animals are continually added and updated in your RescueGroups.org account when you (or your third party software system) upload a new import file to our system. An import file will only ever affect animal records that have already been added through that particular Import Account file. So, if there are already animals listed in your RescueGroups.org account added through other means (such as manually entered), no import file will be able to overwrite or change those existing listings.

Here are a few other items to be aware of:

- The externalID value provided in your import file must be unique for each animal. This field is used to match up the animals in your data file with those that have already been imported through that particular Import Account. If you want to update an animal record previously uploaded, you'll need to use the same unique externalID to do so.
- Animals added through an Import Account will not have a user name listed in the Created By field in the RescueGroups.org animal record.
- If you upload an animal record multiple times through an Import Account, the new data in the import file will always overwrite the existing data for that record. Only the fields you share in the import file will be affected, so for example, if your import file includes photo information and you manually add photos to an imported animal record in your RescueGroups.org account, those photos would be overwritten on the next import.

## How to create your import data file

If you are building an import file for your organization, you will need to make sure your import file uses the fields and formatting described in our [Animal Import Fields](#) article. If you are using a third party system to import your data automatically, they may be able to create this file for you. When your import file is ready, upload it to the **import** directory of your RescueGroups.org [FTP account](#).



The [sample animal data file](#) can only be used for one time imports, and is not valid for use in Import Accounts.

## Adding an import account

To add an Import Account, click the **Add an Import Account** button and provide the following information:

**Configuration Type:**\* Select the type of data file (format) you will be uploading.



If you are uploading your own generated data file, select **CSV** for the configuration type.

**File Name:**\* Enter the name of the file you will be uploading.



The file name you provide must *exactly* match the name of the file you upload into the **import** directory, including case.

**Status:**\* Select whether you'd like to enable the import or leave it disabled.



If you do not enable the account, the data file will not be processed.

**Alert Email Address(es):** Enter the email address that you would like to receive an alert if there is an import error. Separate multiple email addresses with a comma.

Be sure to click **Save Import Account**.

## Editing an import account

To edit an import account, click the **Edit import account settings** button on the Import Accounts page, or click the **Edit** button on the import account's page.

## Deleting an import account

To delete an import account, select the check box next to the import account you want to delete and select **Delete** from the **Actions** drop down.

# Animal records in your Import File

To learn about creating and formatting data for your import file to use with your Import Account, please read through our [Supported Animal Fields](#) article.

## Add an animal record through an Import Account

When you want to add an animal record to your import file, you would make sure your import file has a new row for the animal record. Then, on that new row, include the details for your animal that match your existing header row. Here's a brief example of a file that is adding two animals.

```
"externalID", "status", "name", "type", "priBreed", "secBreed", "mix", "sex", "age", "altered", "size",
"uptodate", "color", "courtesy", "dsc", "photo1"
"12345", "Available", "Gulliver", "Dog", "Chihuahua", "", "No", "Male", "Young", "Yes", "Small", "Yes", "",
"No", "Gulliver is looking for a home!", "https://example.com/Gulliver1.png"
"12356", "Available", "Tiny", "Dog", "Labrador Retriever", "Boxer", "Yes", "Male", "", "Yes", "", "Yes",
"Brindle", "No", "Tiny needs a home!", "https://example.com/Tiny1.png"
```

## Edit an animal record previously added through an Import Account

When you upload an import file again, all the data in that file will be reloaded to your RescueGroups.org account. You'll want to make sure that it contains all the updates needed. To update an animal's data, the externalID value provided in your import file must be unique for each animal and match the existing externalID you used to load the animal record initially. This field is used to match up the animals in your data file with those that have already been imported through that particular Import Account. If you want to update an animal record previously uploaded, you'll need to use the same unique externalID to do so. Below, we've edited the example in our Add section to update the descriptions, add more detail. We also included a new header item because we have more photos!

```
"externalID", "status", "name", "type", "priBreed", "secBreed", "mix", "sex", "age", "altered", "size",
"uptodate", "color", "courtesy", "dsc", "photo1", "photo2"
"12345", "Available", "Gulliver", "Dog", "Chihuahua", "", "No", "Male", "Young", "Yes", "Small", "Yes", "Tan",
"No", "Gulliver is looking for a home!", "https://example.com/Gulliver1.png"
"12356", "Available", "Tiny", "Dog", "Labrador Retriever", "Boxer", "Yes", "Male", "Senior", "Yes", "X-Large",
"Yes", "Brindle", "No", "Tiny needs a home!", "https://example.com/Tiny1.png", "https://example.com/Tiny2.png"
```

## Delete an animal record previously added through an Import Account

Once an animal record is added through an import file in an Import Account to your RescueGroups.org account, it can be deleted by simply not including that animal row in future data files. The animal will automatically be deleted. This is done by tracking each animal's externalID, which must be unique for each animal. The one exception to this rule is if you are removing all imported animals. Our system has encountered many situations where uploaded files had zero rows of readable data by accident. In these cases, our system does not delete all imported animals as this was often done in error. Instead of uploading a file with zero rows of data, be sure to include at least one animal row with the status of 'deleted'. To continue using our examples above, let's say you want to delete Gulliver's animal record. You would just upload a new import file without his row included:

```
"externalID", "status", "name", "type", "priBreed", "secBreed", "mix", "sex", "age", "altered", "size",  
"uptodate", "color", "courtesy", "dsc", "photo1", "photo2"  
"12356", "Available", "Tiny", "Dog", "Labrador Retriever", "Boxer", "Yes", "Male", "Senior", "Yes", "X-Large",  
"Yes", "Brindle", "No", "Tiny needs a home!", "https://example.com/Tiny1.png", "https://example.com/Tiny2.png"
```

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