

AVMA MODEL RABIES CONTROL ORDINANCE

Section I—Definitions

For the purposes of this ordinance, the following definitions shall prevail:

Animal—Any of the order Mammalia, all of which are capable of being infected with and transmitting rabies.

Cat—Any domestic feline animal (*Felis catus*).

Dog—Any domestic canine animal (*Canis familiaris*).

Bite—Wound made by biting where the skin has been penetrated by an animal's teeth.

Isolation—Confinement of an animal exposed or potentially exposed to rabies.

Non-bite exposure—Instance where saliva from an animal has come in contact with an open wound or a mucous membrane.

Own—To keep, harbor, or have control, charge, or custody of an animal.

Owner—Any person who keeps, harbors, or has charge or control of, or permits any animal to habitually be or remain on or be lodged or fed within his or her house, yard, or premises. This term shall not apply to veterinarians or kennel operators who have temporary custody, for a period of less than 60 days, of animals owned by others.

Animal shelter—A public facility that is maintained by a government entity or a private facility providing contractual services to a government entity for the purpose of impounding or harboring animals.

Quarantine—The strict confinement of an animal in a manner which precludes direct contact with other animals not concurrently in quarantine or persons other than the owner or caretaker. The quarantine shall be conducted under an order issued by the Public Health Official or the Rabies Control Authority designating the specific place, manner, and provisions of the quarantine.

Rabies Control Authority—A government agency or persons who are legally authorized and responsible for enforcement of this ordinance.

Currently vaccinated against rabies—Description of an animal that has received a primary rabies vaccine or has received a booster vaccine administered in accordance with the most recent version of the Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control, authored by the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians. Rabies vaccination must be performed by or under the direct supervision of a veterinarian who is licensed or legally permitted to practice veterinary medicine in the state.

Section II—Rabies Vaccination Requirements

A. Initial Vaccination

Effective _____ in the (city, town, village, or county) of _____, the owner of every dog, cat, or ferret 3 months of age or older shall have the animal vaccinated against rabies. Vaccination at a younger age should be in accordance with the labels of USDA-licensed rabies vaccines. Unvaccinated dogs, cats, or ferrets more than 3 months of age that are acquired or moved into the (city, town, village, or county) must be vaccinated within 30 days of purchase or arrival unless there is documented evidence of current vaccination.

B. Revaccination

The owner of every dog, cat, or ferret shall have the animal revaccinated 12 months after initial vaccination. Thereafter, the interval between revaccinations should conform to the manufacturer's product labeling.

Section III—Duties

A. Duties of Veterinarian

It shall be the duty of each veterinarian, when vaccinating any dog, cat, or ferret, to complete a certificate of rabies vaccination (or generate a computer printout) for each dog, cat, or ferret that is vaccinated. The certificate shall include the following information:

1. Owner's name, address, and telephone number
2. Description of the dog, cat, or ferret (species, breed, sex, markings, age, and name)
3. Date of vaccination
4. Date of vaccination expiration
5. Rabies vaccination tag number
6. Vaccine producer and product name
7. Manufacturer's serial or lot number of vaccine
8. Veterinarian's signature
9. Veterinarian's address and license number
10. Microchip number, if applicable

The original certificate of rabies vaccination shall be provided to the owner. The veterinarian who administers the vaccination shall retain one copy and make a third copy available to the Rabies Control Authority or Public Health Official as needed. All parties should retain the certificate for the duration of the vaccination plus one year. A durable metal or plastic, series-numbered rabies tag issued by the Rabies Control Authority or the veterinarian who administers

the vaccine shall be provided to the owner with instructions that it must be securely attached to the dog, cat, or ferret's collar or harness.

B. Duties of Owner

The owner is responsible for procuring rabies vaccination for his or her dog, cat, or ferret as outlined above and for securing a license. The owner is responsible for assuring that his or her dog, cat, or ferret wears a collar or harness with identification and the approved license or rabies tag securely attached. The license or rabies tag shall be worn at all times unless specific exemptions are set forth in the local ordinance.

Section IV—Transient or Show Dogs, Cats, or Ferrets

Owners of dogs, cats, or ferrets who are temporarily visiting a specific rabies control jurisdiction with their dog, cat, or ferret or who are exhibiting a dog, cat, or ferret in competition must carry with them and be prepared, upon demand of a legal authority, to present a current certificate of rabies vaccination for each dog, cat, or ferret.

Section V—Management of Animals that Bite Humans

Anyone knowing of an animal bite to a human shall immediately report the bite to the Rabies Control Authority or the Public Health Official.

A. Vaccinated Dogs, Cats, or Ferrets

1. A healthy dog, cat, or ferret that is currently vaccinated against rabies and that bites a human will be examined by a licensed veterinarian, who will determine the animal's health status. If no signs of illness compatible with rabies are detected, the animal will be quarantined under such conditions as are outlined in an official quarantine order issued by the Rabies Control Authority or Public Health Official and observed for a period of 10 days from the date of the bite. Alternatively, at the discretion of the Rabies Control Authority or Public Health Official, the animal may be humanely euthanized and tested for rabies at an approved laboratory.

Quarantined animals may be treated by a veterinarian, but rabies vaccine should not be administered to the animal until the quarantine period is complete. At the end of the quarantine period, the dog, cat, or ferret will be reexamined by a veterinarian. The results of the veterinary examinations will be documented and communicated to the Rabies Control Authority or Public Health Official.

2. If at the end of the quarantine period the dog, cat, or ferret shows no signs of illness compatible with rabies, it may be released from quarantine with the approval of the Rabies Control Authority or Public Health Official.

3. If at any time during quarantine or upon examination the dog, cat, or ferret shows signs of illness compatible with rabies, the animal shall be humanely euthanized and tested for rabies in an approved laboratory at the discretion of the Rabies Control Authority or Public Health Official after conferring with the examining veterinarian.

B. Dogs, Cats, and Ferrets that are Not Currently Vaccinated Against Rabies

1. A dog, cat, or ferret that is not currently vaccinated against rabies that bites or reportedly bites a human will be considered a rabies suspect and will be seized by the Rabies Control Authority and quarantined under such conditions as are outlined in the official quarantine order issued by the Rabies Control Authority or Public Health Official. The quarantine shall be conducted under the supervision of the veterinarian for a period of not less than 10 days from the date of the bite. Alternatively, at the discretion of the Rabies Control Authority or Public Health Official, the animal may be humanely euthanized and tested for rabies in an approved laboratory. Quarantined animals may be treated by a veterinarian, but rabies vaccine should not be administered until the quarantine period is complete.

2. The rabies suspect dog, cat, or ferret will be examined by a licensed veterinarian at the beginning and at the end of the quarantine period to determine its health status. The results of the examination will be recorded and communicated to the Rabies Control Authority, the Public Health Official, and the owner.

3. If at any time during the quarantine period or upon examination the dog, cat, or ferret shows signs of illness compatible with rabies, the Rabies Control Authority or Public Health Official will order the immediate humane euthanasia and rabies testing of the quarantined animal in an approved laboratory after conferring with the examining veterinarian.

4. If at the end of the quarantine period the dog, cat, or ferret shows no signs of illnesses compatible with rabies, it may be released from quarantine with the approval of the Rabies Control Authority or Public Health Official. Prior to its release, the dog, cat, or ferret will be vaccinated against rabies at the owner's expense. Alternatively, the dog, cat, or ferret will be vaccinated within 72 hours of release. The owner will pay to the Rabies Control Authority a prescribed rabies vaccination deposit that will be reimbursed upon the presentation of proof of rabies vaccination by a private veterinarian.

C. Other Animals

1. Animals other than dogs, cats, or ferrets that bite or reportedly bite a human will, at the discretion of the Public Health Official, be treated according to the circumstances of exposure, the species, and the presence of rabies in the area. The pathogenesis and length of incubation and virus-shedding periods of rabies in those other animals are unknown.

2. The animal may, at the discretion of the Public Health Official, be seized by the Rabies Control Authority and immediately euthanized for rabies testing in an approved laboratory. Reports of the laboratory test will be provided to the Rabies Control Authority, the Public Health Official, the bite victim, and the submitting veterinarian.

Section VI—Animals that are Bitten by or Potentially Exposed to Rabid or Suspect Rabid Animals

A. Dogs, Cats, or Ferrets Currently Vaccinated Against Rabies

1. A currently vaccinated dog, cat, or ferret that is bitten by or otherwise potentially exposed to a rabid or suspect rabid animal will be revaccinated immediately and placed in isolation under observation for 45 days or euthanized.

2. At the end of the isolation period, the dog, cat, or ferret will be examined by a veterinarian, who will report the results of the examination to the Rabies Control Authority or Public Health Official.

3. If the examination determines that the dog, cat, or ferret is free of signs of illness compatible with rabies, it may be released from isolation with the approval of the Rabies Control Authority or Public Health Official.

4. If at any point during the isolation period or upon examination the dog, cat, or ferret shows signs of illness compatible with rabies, the Rabies Control Authority or Public Health Official will order the immediate humane euthanasia and rabies testing of the animal in an approved laboratory after conferring with the examining veterinarian.

B. Dogs, Cats, or Ferrets that are Unvaccinated or Not Currently Vaccinated Against Rabies

1. A dog, cat, or ferret that is not currently vaccinated against rabies and is bitten by or otherwise potentially exposed to a rabid or suspect rabid animal shall be euthanized immediately.

2. If the owner is unwilling to consent to euthanasia, the animal shall be seized by the Rabies Control Authority and impounded at the owner's expense for six months in strict isolation under such conditions as are outlined in an official isolation order issued by the Rabies Control Authority. If the animal shows no signs of rabies at the end of five months, it will be vaccinated against rabies at that time.

3. At the end of the six-month impoundment, the dog, cat, or ferret will be examined by a licensed veterinarian, who will report the results of the examination to the Rabies Control Authority or Public Health Official.

4. If the examination determines that the dog, cat, or ferret is free of signs of illness compatible with rabies, it may be released from impoundment with the approval of the Public Health Official.

5. If at any point during the impoundment period or upon examination the dog, cat, or ferret shows signs of illness compatible with rabies, the Rabies Control Authority or Public Health Official will order the immediate humane euthanasia and testing of the impounded animal after conferring with the examining veterinarian.

C. Livestock

1. Currently vaccinated livestock bitten by or otherwise exposed to a rabid or suspect rabid animal will be revaccinated immediately and isolated under observation for 45 days or be euthanized.

2. Unvaccinated livestock bitten by or otherwise exposed to a rabid or suspect rabid animal should be slaughtered immediately. If the owner is unwilling to consent to euthanasia, the animal will be kept in strict isolation for six months under such conditions as are outlined in an official isolation order issued by the Rabies Control Authority.

D. Other Animals

Any animal other than a dog, cat, ferret, or livestock that is bitten by or otherwise exposed to a rabid or suspect rabid animal should be euthanized immediately. Animals maintained in USDA-licensed research facilities or accredited zoological parks that are exposed or potentially exposed to rabies shall be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Rabies Control Authority or Public Health Official.

E. Testing of Suspect Rabid Animals

If a suspect rabid animal is available for testing, an animal that was bitten by or otherwise potentially exposed to the suspect rabid animal will be isolated pending the results of the rabies test on the suspect animal. If the testing results are negative, the bitten or otherwise potentially exposed animal shall be released with the approval of the Rabies Control Authority or Public Health Official.

Section VII—Impoundment of Animals Found in Violation of This Code

A. The Rabies Control Authority shall operate a shelter or shelters, or the Rabies Control Authority may enter into cooperative agreements with a licensed veterinarian or other organization for the establishment and operation of a quarantine facility.

B. Any animal that is found off the owner's premises at large or without a valid rabies vaccination tag shall be impounded. All impounded animals shall be given proper care and maintenance. Each impounded animal shall be kept and maintained at the shelter for a minimum of five days (120 hours) unless it is reclaimed earlier by the owner.

C. Notice of impoundment of all animals, including any significant identification marks, shall be posted at the shelter as public notification of impoundment.

D. An owner may reclaim a vaccinated animal that is impounded for lack of rabies vaccination tag by furnishing proof of rabies vaccination and paying all impoundment and licensing fees prior to release.

E. An owner may reclaim an unvaccinated animal during the period of impoundment by paying the prescribed shelter and vaccination fees of \$_____. A rabies vaccination must be administered prior to or within 72 hours of release; arrangements will be made by the local government to reimburse the rabies vaccination fee to a veterinarian designated by the owner after receipt of proof of vaccination.

F. Any animal that is unclaimed at the end of five days shall become property of the Rabies Control Authority in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Section VIII—Penalties for Violation of Ordinance

Any owner who fails to comply with any of the provisions of this ordinance shall be guilty of an infraction and subject to a fine of not less than \$_____ and not more than \$_____.

Section IX—Shelter Fees

Impoundment fees shall be paid by the owner.

Section X—Enforcement

It shall be the responsibility of the _____ to administer this ordinance and to promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for its implementation.

Enforcement shall be the responsibility of _____.

Effective _____ in the (city, town, village, or county) of _____, all regulations pertaining to rabies control (and licensing) will be enforced by the (local, county, or state) enforcement officers or others with regulatory authority specified by the governing unit.

Explanatory Notes

Communities that require licensure of dogs or cats may insert the following sections in the model ordinance:

Licensing

Effective _____ in the (city, town, village, or county) of _____, every dog or cats 4 months of age and older shall be licensed. On proof of rabies vaccination in accordance with Section II of this ordinance and upon application for licensure and payment of the required fee to the (city, town, village, or county) clerk of _____, a license shall be issued.

All licenses will expire _____ and each year thereafter.

Fees

The license fees shall be as follows:

Male (sexually intact)	\$ _____
Male (neutered)	\$ _____
Female (sexually intact)	\$ _____
Female (neutered)	\$ _____

NOTE: Rabies vaccinations may be recommended for animals other than dogs, cats, and ferrets for which a USDA-licensed vaccine is available; however, a current vaccination history may not eliminate the need for euthanasia and rabies testing if the animal bites a human.

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