

2.01.009 Rabies Control

(a) Vaccinations.

- (1) **Required.** Every owner of a dog or cat three (3) months of age or older shall have the animal vaccinated against rabies. All dogs or cats vaccinated at three (3) months of age or older shall be revaccinated at one year of age and every three (3) years thereafter. Any person moving into the city from a location outside of the city shall comply with this section within ten (10) days after having moved into the city. If the dog or cat has inflicted a bite on any person or another animal within the last ten (10) days, the owner of the dog or cat shall report that fact to the veterinarian, and no rabies vaccine shall be administered until after the ten (10) day observation period.
- (2) **Certificate of vaccination.** Upon vaccination, the veterinarian shall execute and furnish to the owner of the dog or cat, as evidence thereof, a certificate upon a form furnished by the veterinarian. The veterinarian shall retain a duplicate copy. The certificate shall contain the following information:
 - (A) The name, address and telephone number of the owner of the vaccinated dog or cat;
 - (B) The date of vaccination;
 - (C) The type of rabies vaccine used; and
 - (D) The breed, age, color and sex of the vaccinated dog or cat.
- (3) **Rabies tags.** Concurrent with the issuance and delivery of the certificate of vaccination, the owner of the dog or cat shall cause to be attached to the collar or harness of the vaccinated dog or cat a metal tag, serially numbered to correspond with the vaccination certificate number, and bearing the year of issuance and the name of the issuing veterinarian and his or her address. The owner shall cause the collar or harness, with the attached metal tag, to be worn by his or her dog or cat at all times.
- (4) **Duplicate tags.** In the event of loss or destruction of the original rabies tag, the owner of the dog or cat shall obtain a duplicate tag. A vaccination certificate (and tag) shall be valid only for the animal for which it was originally issued.
- (5) **Proof of vaccination.** It shall be unlawful for any person who owns or harbors a vaccinated dog or cat to fail or refuse to exhibit his or her copy of the certificate of vaccination upon demand to any person charged with the enforcement of this section.
- (6) **Harboring an unvaccinated animal.** It shall be unlawful for any person to harbor any dog or cat which has not been vaccinated against rabies, as provided herein, or which cannot be identified as having a current vaccination certificate.

(b) Animals exposed to rabies.

- (1) Any person having knowledge of the existence of any animal known to have been, or suspected of being, exposed to rabies must immediately report that knowledge to the local rabies control authority, or his or her designee, giving any information which may be required.
- (2) For any animal known to have been, or suspected of being, exposed to rabies the following rules must apply:
 - (A) Animals having a current vaccination must be revaccinated immediately and confined according to the method prescribed by the local rabies control authority

for a period of not less than forty-five (45) days' quarantine.

- (B) Animals not having a current vaccination should be humanely euthanized. However, if the owner of such an animal elects, he or she may, at his or her expense and in a manner prescribed by the local rabies control authority confine the animal in accordance with chapter 826 of Texas Local Government Code.

(c) Animal bites to humans.

- (1) Any person having knowledge of an animal bite to a human will report the incident to the local rabies control authority or his or her designee as soon as possible, but not later than twenty-four (24) hours from the time of the incident.
- (2) The owner of the biting animal will place that animal in quarantine as prescribed in subsection (d) under the supervision of the local rabies control authority or his or her designee.
- (3) The local rabies control authority, or his or her designee, will investigate each bite incident, utilizing standardized reporting forms provided by the department of state health services.
- (4) Human bites from rodents, rabbits, birds, and reptiles are excluded from the reporting requirements of this section.

(d) Quarantine procedures.

- (1) When a dog or cat which has bitten a human has been identified, the owner will be required to produce the animal for ten (10) days' confinement at the owner's expense. Refusal to produce the dog or cat constitutes a violation of this section, and each day of the refusal constitutes a separate and individual violation. The animal must be placed in the animal control facilities specified for this purpose, if available. However, the owner of the animal may request permission from the local rabies control authority, or his or her designee, for home quarantine if the following criteria can be met:
 - (A) Secure facilities must be available at the home of the animal's owner, and must be approved by the local rabies control authority or his or her designee;
 - (B) The animal is currently vaccinated against rabies;
 - (C) The local rabies control authority, his or her designee, or a licensed veterinarian must observe the animal at least on the first and last days of the quarantine period. If the animal becomes ill during the observation period, the local rabies control authority, or his or her designee, must be notified by the person having possession of the animal. At the end of the observation period the release from quarantine must be authorized in writing;
 - (D) The animal was not in violation of any laws at the time of the bite; and
 - (E) If the biting animal cannot be maintained in secure quarantine it shall be euthanized and the brain submitted to a department of state health services certified laboratory for rabies diagnosis.
- (2) No wild animal shall be placed in quarantine. All wild animals involved in biting incidents shall be euthanized in such a manner that the brain is not mutilated. The brain shall be submitted to a department of state health services certified laboratory for rabies diagnosis.