

**VETERINARY HEALTH CENTER at KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
OFFICIAL PROTOCOL**

**RABIES BITES AND QUARANTINE**

I. VHC Quarantine Policy:

As a general rule, the VHC does not quarantine animals for any reason. Community law enforcement officers, animal shelters and humane societies do not have authority to require the VHC to admit an animal for quarantine (including rabies suspects). Exceptions must be pre-approved by the Hospital Director or Hospital Administrator.

II. Riley County Health Department Rabies Quarantine Protocol (effective August 1, 2009.)

A. Human Bites

1. A vaccinated healthy dog, cat or ferret that bites a person should be confined and observed daily for 10 days at home if the animal is current on its vaccinations. A healthy dog, cat or ferret that is not current on rabies vaccinations that bites a person shall be confined and observed daily for 10 days at a local veterinarian clinic. (See Variance of Requirement for Quarantine at an Animal Care Facility below.) Administration of rabies vaccine is not recommended during the observation period to avoid confusing signs of rabies with possible side effects of vaccine administration. They should not be vaccinated until the observation period is finished. Such animal should be evaluated by a veterinarian at the first sign of illness during confinement. Any illness in the animal should be reported immediately to the Riley County Health Department (785-776-4779, ask for Susie Kufahl or Patty Group). If after hours call Patty Group at 913-952-2043. If signs suggestive of rabies develop, the animal should be euthanized and the head tested. Any stray or unwanted dog, cat, or ferret that bites a person may be euthanized immediately and the head submitted for rabies examination.
2. Other Biting Animals. Other biting animals which might have exposed a person to rabies should be reported immediately to the Riley County Health Department. Management of animals other than dogs, cats and ferrets depends on the species, the circumstances of the bite, the epidemiology of rabies in the area, the biting animal's history, current health status, and potential for exposure to rabies. Prior vaccination of these animals may not preclude the necessity for euthanasia and testing.

- B. Post Exposure Rabies Management of Unvaccinated Animals This section refers to any animal exposed to a confirmed or suspected rabid animal. Wild, mammalian carnivores or bats that are not available for testing should be regarded as rabid animals.

Unvaccinated dogs, cats and ferrets exposed to a rabid animal should be euthanized immediately. If the owner is unwilling to have this done, the animal should be placed in strict isolation for 6 months according to the following rules. Rabies vaccine should be

administered 1 month prior to release to comply with pre-exposure vaccination recommendations. There are currently no USDA licensed biologics for post-exposure prophylaxis of previously unvaccinated domestic animals, and there is evidence that the use of vaccine alone will not reliably prevent the disease in these animals. Animals with expired vaccinations need to be evaluated on a case by case basis. Dogs, cats, and ferrets that are currently vaccinated should be revaccinated immediately, kept under the owner's control and observed for 45 days. Any illness in an isolated or confined animal should be reported immediately to the Riley County Health Department. If signs suggestive of rabies develop, the animal should be euthanized and the head tested.

- C. Variance of Requirement for Quarantine at an Animal Care Facility. Allowing quarantine of animals under the owner's care is not normal procedure and shall not normally be allowed. However, under certain unusual circumstances, the Riley County Health Officer may allow an animal to remain under quarantine at the owner's home. Such home quarantine shall meet any and all other requirements and will be allowed only under the following conditions.
1. The Health Department designee determines that the owner has proper impoundment facilities and is willing to follow quarantine rules.
  2. The victim, the victim's family, or the owner of the animal bitten shall receive and sign for printed material describing rabies and possible outcomes of the disease.
  3. The owner of the biting animal (if known) shall receive and sign for printed material describing rabies and possible outcomes of the disease.
  4. The owner of the biting animal shall agree in writing to abide by requirements as set down by the Riley County Health Department on quarantine.
  5. Caregivers shall be capable of understanding the dangers associated with rabies.
  6. Caregivers shall be responsible enough to restrict access to the animal by others and to protect themselves. Persons under the age of eighteen (18) years shall not be allowed to care for animals in quarantine.
  7. Receive signed documentation indicating the caregiver has read and understands how rabies is spread and that rabies is fatal once symptoms occur.
- D. Housing Requirements for Rabies Quarantine
1. Housing requirements for small animals shall meet the following requirements:
    - a. The cage shall provide sufficient size to allow the humane care of the animal during isolation. Cage size should be based on the length of the isolation period.

- b. The cage shall be placed in an isolated room, run, or building which does not allow entrance by other people or animals known to carry rabies and which will provide containment in the event the animal escapes from the cage. The outer structure shall be kept locked except when feeding and caring for the animal.
- c. Small animals shall be placed in a cage which is secure on all sides including walls, floors, and ceiling.
- d. Cage openings shall be small enough that the animal can not bite the caregiver through the cage.
- e. The cage shall allow easy feeding of the animal without reaching in to the cage or allowing exit of the animal during care. Examples of easy access include:
  - (i). Small lockable swinging doors to which the feeding bowls are attached; or
  - (ii). Small pass through which can be kept locked when not in use. Bowls fixed with chains or cables so that they may be easily retrieved.
- f. Cage and feeding equipment shall be cleaned by hosing and flushing the cage with an appropriate detergent and disinfectant solution. It shall then be thoroughly rinsed.
- g. Excrement shall be removed from the outer structure frequently enough to prevent the accumulation of feces and food wastes and to reduce disease hazards, pests, insect, and odors.
- h. Provide adequate lighting and ventilation.

2. Housing requirements for animals which are too large to be caged.

- a. A containment area or kennel constructed of sturdy chain length fencing shall be selected to provide sufficient size that will allow the humane care of the animal during long-term (6 month) isolation.
- b. Confinement shall occur in a lot, barn, or building which does not allow entrance by other people and limits access by animals known to carry rabies.
- c. A second outer structure shall be available or be constructed which will provide containment in the event the animal escapes from the inner structure and to prevent possible exposure to people's hands or fingers. The outer structure shall be kept locked except when feeding and caring for the animal.

- d. The containment areas shall allow easy feeding of the animal with minimal animal contact and without allowing exit of the animal during care.
- e. The inner area of the pen and feeding equipment shall be kept clean (where possible by hosing and flushing with an appropriate detergent, disinfectant solution, and rinse water).
- f. Excrement shall be removed from the pen frequently enough to prevent the accumulation of feces and food wastes and to reduce disease hazards, pests, insect, and odors.
- g. The pen shall provide adequate lighting and ventilation.

- 3. In unusual situations, the Riley County Health Department designee has the authority to determine other such standards as may be necessary to protect the safety of the public and their animals.

E. Animals Found Not to be Quarantined According to the Conditions Set Down by the Health Department (Riley County). Any animal found not to be quarantined in the conditions set down by the Health Officer shall be immediately impounded, at the owners' expense, for the remainder of the required quarantine period or euthanized humanely.

F. Variance. The Riley County Health Officer shall have the authority to grant exceptions when reliable data is provided which can justify the exception and which will still protect the health and safety of the public and their domestic animals and not create a nuisance. Such information shall be documented in writing.

III. Quarantine regulations vary by county, so you will need to contact the appropriate health department if the incident did not occur in Riley County.

IV. If there is ANY doubt as to what to do in a possible rabies exposure situation, you may call the **EPIDEMIOLOGY HOTLINE 877-427-7317**. There are trained people available 24 hours per day. If they can't answer your question they will have access to the State of Kansas veterinarian, Ingrid Garrison, or other state veterinarians.

V. Other Contacts for Rabies Questions

Riley County Animal Control (785-537-2112). Ask for Dispatch. They will take your information and contact animal control. Make sure you tell the Dispatcher you actually need to speak to Animal Control so you can relay the appropriate message. (If you do not speak to an Animal Control employee, the Dispatcher may think it is a Good Sam pickup.)

Riley Co. Health Department (785-776-4779). Susan Kufahl, Director

Geary Co. Health Department (785-762-5788)

Pottawatomie Co. Health Department (785-457-3719)

**CATEGORY** Clinical Sections, House Officers, Staff and Students

**APPROVED** 6/25/12, VHC Administrator