



**Animal Bite Reporting and Rabies Control
Summary for the time-stressed, 2010**



Legal Requirements

- The Department of Veterinary Public Health – Rabies Control Program (VPH-RCP) is responsible for enforcing laws pertaining to rabies control in Los Angeles County.
- The California Department of Public Health defines the county as a “rabies area.”
- Rabies titers are never accepted in lieu of documented vaccination.
- All animal bites to people are reportable to VPH-RCP and biting animals must be quarantined or tested for rabies.
- Animal bites are reportable by all individuals who are aware of the bite incident. This includes veterinarians and others, not just physicians.
- DOMESTIC ANIMALS BITING PEOPLE
 - Domestic biting animals are to be quarantined and observed for clinical signs of rabies by VPH-RCP.
 - Healthy domestic animals that have bitten a human are not to be euthanized during the quarantine period. Approval for exceptions must be granted by VPH-RCP. Gravely ill or injured domestic animals that have bitten a human may be euthanized during the quarantine period for humane reasons. In these cases, the head of the animal must be submitted appropriately for rabies testing.
 - Rabbit, gopher, squirrel and rodent bites are not reportable.
- MAMMALIAN WILDLIFE BITING PEOPLE OR DOMESTIC ANIMALS
 - Wild mammals (except rabbits, gophers, squirrels and rodents) are considered rabies suspects unless proven otherwise by testing.
 - Any wild mammal that has bitten a human or pet shall be humanely euthanized and properly submitted for rabies testing.
 - Rabbit, gopher, squirrel and rodent bites are not reportable as these animals are not considered potential rabies vector species. However, as with all animal bites, the bite victim should still consult with their physician.
 - Domestic animals that have had contact with a suspected rabid animal (e.g. wild animal) are quarantined and observed for clinical signs of rabies by VPH-RCP, unless the wild animal tested negative for rabies.

Quarantine procedure

- Dogs/cats that have bitten a human: minimum 10 day quarantine. DO NOT booster vaccine during quarantine.
- Horses/ruminants that have bitten a human: 30 day quarantine. DO NOT booster vaccine during quarantine.
- Dogs/cats/horses/ruminants with rabies vaccination up-to-date, that have been bitten by wild mammals: revaccinate immediately and 30 day quarantine.
- Dogs/cats/horses/ruminants unvaccinated against rabies or without up-to-date rabies vaccination, that have been bitten by wild mammals: euthanasia OR vaccinate immediately and 180 day quarantine.
- Ferrets are illegal in California. Rabies control procedures for ferrets are the same as for dogs and cats with concurrent reporting to CA Department of Fish and Game.
- Acceptable quarantine sites: secure site in home (no charge to owner), veterinary clinic (clinic to determine cost to owner), shelter (shelter to bill owner for costs).
- Our priority is to make sure the animal is healthy. The majority of quarantines are done with the animal remaining at the owner’s home.

How do I report?

- The appropriate forms are enclosed in this packet. See Reporting Forms section. Report bites on a same-day basis. Fax completed reports to (213) 481-2375
- You can also report online at: publichealth.lacounty.gov/vet/biteintro.htm

How do I submit an animal for testing?

- For non-bat animals, submit only the head. For bats, submit the entire body. Do NOT decapitate bats.