



# Onondaga County Health Department

J. Ryan McMahon II, County Executive  
Kathryn Anderson, MD, PhD, MSPH, Onondaga County Commissioner of Health

4170 State Route 31, Clay, NY 13041



Division of Environmental Health  
Lisa A. Letteney, P.E., Director

Animal Disease Prevention  
Phone (315) 435-3165  
Fax (315) 435-1651

## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR THE DISPOSITION OF ANIMAL BITES IN ONONDAGA COUNTY

### I. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE POLICE OR SHERIFF TO:

1. Locate the animal if possible.
2. Determine if the animal is licensed and vaccinated.
3. Give this information sheet to person who has been bitten or to the family.
4. Give this information to the animal owner.
5. Report results of investigation on the prescribed form on the day the police or sheriff were notified concerning the animal bite. **Fax report to: 435-1651 or send to:**

**Onondaga County Health Department-Animal Disease Prevention  
4170 State Route 31  
Clay, NY 13041**

6. Advise the animal owner of the Rules and Regulations of the New York State Sanitary Code; Chapter 1, Sec. 2.14, paragraph (e) regarding control of the spread of rabies (see reverse side).

### II. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PERSON BITTEN, OR HIS FAMILY, TO:

1. Report the bite to the Police or Sheriff's Department, giving them as much information as possible, i.e. description of animal, owner's name and whereabouts if known.
2. Obtain medical consultation immediately as to the care and treatment of the wound.

### III. IT IS THE ANIMAL OWNER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO:

1. Make available to the law enforcement agency accurate information regarding licensing, vaccination against rabies, and age of the animal.
2. Phone Animal Disease Prevention at 435-3165 for the procedure to follow as to quarantine and follow-up exam by a veterinarian.
3. Quarantine the animal at home or at a veterinary facility, or shelter based on vaccination status of the animal (see reverse side).

### IV. IT IS THE VETERINARIAN'S RESPONSIBILITY TO:

1. Advise the animal owner to contact Animal Disease Prevention at 435-3165 concerning quarantine of the animal.
2. Determine that the animal has no signs or symptoms of rabies at the end of the ten-day observation period and file a disposal certificate with Animal Disease Prevention.

### V. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BUREAU OF ANIMAL DISEASE PREVENTION TO:

1. Keep available the report of an animal bite from the police or sheriff, adding pertinent details as received.
2. Notify the person bitten or the family and the attending physician of any decision of the veterinarian that the animal shows signs or symptoms of rabies at any time.

### VI. IT IS THE DOCTOR'S RESPONSIBILITY TO:

1. Treat the local bite wound in an appropriate manner.
2. Contact communicable disease at 435-3236 to discuss need and approval for rabies prophylaxis.
3. Inform the patient or family of this decision as to the necessity of anti-rabies prophylaxis.

## **CHAPTER I NEW YORK STATE SANITARY CODE**

- 2.14 REPORTING OF SUSPECTED RABID ANIMALS AND PERSONS EXPOSED TO THEM ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY HEALTH OFFICER. (See public health law sections 2140-2146 and Agriculture and Markets Law Sections 106-127)
- a) Health care provider shall mean any person or facility which gives primary or secondary medical care to humans.
  - b) It shall be the duty of every health care provider to report immediately to the local health authority having jurisdiction the full name, age, address, and telephone number of any person under his care or observation who has been exposed to any animal suspected by the health care provider of having rabies, and all pertinent facts relating to such exposure. Such notification shall occur prior to starting rabies exposure prophylaxis, except in those cases where prior notification would compromise the health of the patient.
  - c) If no health care provider is in attendance and the person exposed is a child, it shall be the duty of the parent or guardian to make such report immediately. If the person exposed is an adult, such person shall himself make the report, or it shall be made by whomever is caring for the person.
  - d) It shall be the duty of every health care provider who has cause to believe that contact has occurred with a rabid animal or animal suspected of being rabid by the health care provider which requires rabies prophylaxis subsequent to the exposure to report the initiation of such prophylaxis and all pertinent facts related to any bite, exposure, or treatment to the local or health authority.
  - e) It shall be the duty of every person having knowledge of the existence of an animal exhibiting clinical signs of rabies to report immediately to the local health authority the existence of such animal, the place where seen, the owners name if known and the signs of infection suggesting rabies.
  - f) Whenever in accordance with this section, the local health authority is notified of a person who has been exposed to any dog, cat, ferret, or domestic livestock vaccinated or not, the local health authority may cause the animal to be confined for ten days. Any costs associated with this confinement shall be an expense of the animal's owner. Such health authority may, subject to the approval of the owner, if known, cause the animal to be destroyed immediately and have the animals head submitted to a laboratory approved by the state commissioner of health for examination. The dog, cat, ferret or livestock whose ownership cannot be determined may be confined for ten days under the direction of the local health authority. Any costs associated with this confinement shall be an expense of the party seeking this confinement. In the case of a dog, cat, ferret or domestic livestock whose ownership cannot be determined, if confinement is not possible or desirable, the animal may be destroyed immediately and an appropriate specimen shall be submitted to a laboratory approved by the state commissioner of health for examination. Bats and any animal other than a dog, cat, ferret, or domestic livestock suspected of being rabid shall not be held for observation and shall be destroyed immediately, without injury to the head, and may be submitted upon approval of the local health authority to a laboratory approved by the state commissioner of health for examination.

### **PUBLIC HEALTH LAW**

#### **Article 21, Title IV – Rabies, Section 2140**

- “Confinement and observation” refers to the conditions under which apparently healthy dogs, cats, domesticated ferrets, and domestic livestock, which are not exhibiting symptoms of rabies, must be maintained to determine rabies status if such an animal has potentially exposed a person to rabies, and the owner wishes to avoid euthanizing and testing the animal. If the county health authority does not approve home confinement, the ten day confinement and observation period must take place at owner's expense, at an appropriate facility such as an animal shelter, veterinarian's office, kennel or farm. The confinement must include (i) provisions to prevent escape of the animal during confinement period and (ii) requirements that the owner notify the public health authority immediately if the animal becomes ill anytime during the confinement and (iii) verification by the county health authority or their designee at the end of the ten day period that the animal is healthy.