

**WAC 246-100-197 Rabies—Measures to prevent human disease. (1)**

The purpose of this rule is to protect the public from rabies, a deadly disease.

(2) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

(a) "Adequate anamnestic response" means paired serum specimens that show a two fold increase in titer between the first and second specimens, and show the second titer is above 0.5 IU/mL (1:50).

(b) "Animal exhibitor" means a person with a valid class C certification as an exhibitor under the Animal Welfare Act, 7 U.S.C. 2131-2159.

(c) "Cat" means an animal of the species *Felis domesticus*, and excludes felid hybrid animals.

(d) "Certificate of veterinary inspection" means a legible veterinary health inspection certificate on an official form (electronic or paper) from the state of origin or from Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) executed by a licensed and accredited veterinarian or a veterinarian approved by APHIS, USDA.

(e) "Dog" means an animal of the species *Canis familiaris* and excludes canid hybrid animals.

(f) "Entry permit" means prior written permission from the director of the department of agriculture.

(g) "Euthanize" means to humanely destroy an animal by a method that involves instantaneous unconsciousness and immediate death or by a method that causes painless loss of consciousness and death during the loss of consciousness.

(h) "Ferret" means an animal of the species *Mustela furo*.

(i) "Hybrid" means any mammal which is the offspring of the reproduction between any species of:

(i) Wild canid or hybrid wild canid and a domestic dog or hybrid wild canid, or is represented by its owner to be a wolf hybrid, coyote hybrid, coy dog or any other kind of wild canid hybrid; or

(ii) Wild felid or hybrid wild felid and a domestic cat or hybrid wild felid or is represented by its owner to be a wild felid hybrid.

(j) "Livestock" means horses, mules, donkeys, cattle, bison, sheep, goats, swine, rabbits, llamas, alpacas, ratites, poultry, waterfowl, game birds, and other species so designated by statute. Livestock does not mean "wild animals" as defined in RCW 77.08.010.

(k) "Owner" means any person legally responsible for the care and actions of a pet animal.

(l) "Person" means any individual, corporation, company, association, society, firm, partnership, joint stock company, or governmental agency; or the authorized agents of these entities.

(m) "Prospective serologic monitoring protocol" means the protocol identified in Part I B.5 of the *Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control*, 2016.

(n) "Research facility" means a person with a valid class R certification as a research facility under the Animal Welfare Act, 7 U.S.C. 2131-2159.

(o) "USDA" means the United States Department of Agriculture.

(p) "Vaccination status" means one of the following:

(i) "Currently vaccinated" means a dog, cat, or ferret that has been initially vaccinated and revaccinated against rabies following veterinary and USDA-licensed rabies vaccine manufacturer instructions.

(ii) "Overdue for vaccination" means a dog, cat, or ferret that has not received a booster vaccination against rabies following veterinary and USDA-licensed rabies vaccine manufacturer instructions.

(iii) "Unvaccinated" means a dog, cat, or ferret that has never received a vaccination against rabies.

(q) "Wildlife rehabilitator" means a person with a valid permit as a wildlife rehabilitator under chapter 77.12 RCW.

(r) "Zoological park" means an accredited member of the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA).

(3) An owner of a dog, cat, or ferret shall have it vaccinated and revaccinated against rabies following veterinary and USDA-licensed rabies vaccine manufacturer instructions. This requirement does not apply to animal shelters.

(4) Zoological parks and other types of animal exhibitors shall confine for a minimum of six months all wild-caught mammals susceptible to rabies and intended for public exhibition.

(5) The following restrictions apply to the importation and movement of certain mammals in Washington state.

(a) All persons are prohibited from acquiring, selling, bartering, exchanging, giving, purchasing, distributing, or trapping to retain any bat, skunk, fox, raccoon, or coyote, except a zoological park, animal exhibitor, research facility, or wildlife rehabilitator.

(b) All persons are prohibited from importing into the state any bat, skunk, fox, raccoon, or coyote, except a zoological park, animal exhibitor, or research facility under an entry permit issued by the director of the department of agriculture in consultation with the secretary of the department.

(c) Any person importing a dog internationally that requires confinement according to requirements of 42 C.F.R. 71.51, shall notify the secretary of the department within seventy-two hours of the animal's arrival in the state.

(6) When a local health officer receives a report that a dog, cat, ferret, or hybrid has been exposed to a rabid or suspected rabid animal, the local health officer shall assess the vaccination status of the animal. Based on the species and vaccination status of the animal, the local health officer may require any of the following:

(a) For currently vaccinated dogs, cats, and ferrets:

(i) Immediate veterinary care;

(ii) Immediate revaccination with a USDA-licensed rabies vaccine;

and

(iii) The animal be kept under the owner's control and observed for signs of illness in a manner considered appropriate by the local health officer for forty-five days from the date of suspected or known rabies exposure.

(b) For unvaccinated dogs, cats, and ferrets:

(i) Immediate euthanasia; or

(ii) Quarantine:

(A) Immediate veterinary care;

(B) Immediate vaccination with a USDA-licensed rabies vaccine;

and

(C) Confinement and observation for signs of illness in a manner considered appropriate by the local health officer for at least four months for dogs and cats, and at least six months for ferrets from the date of suspected or known rabies exposure.

(c) For dogs and cats overdue for vaccination with proof of having received a USDA-licensed rabies vaccine at least once:

(i) Immediate veterinary care;

(ii) Immediate vaccination with a USDA-licensed rabies vaccine;  
and

(iii) The animal be kept under the owner's control and observed for signs of illness in a manner considered appropriate by the local health officer for forty-five days from the date of suspected or known rabies exposure.

(d) For dogs and cats overdue for vaccination without proof of having received a USDA-licensed rabies vaccine at least once:

(i) Immediate euthanasia; or

(ii) Quarantine:

(A) Immediate veterinary care;

(B) Immediate vaccination with a USDA-licensed rabies vaccine;

and

(C) Confinement and observation for signs of illness in a manner considered appropriate by the local health officer for at least four months from the date of suspected or known rabies exposure; or

(iii) An evaluation consistent with the prospective serologic monitoring protocol:

(A) Immediate veterinary care;

(B) Collection of a first blood sample for analysis;

(C) Immediately following collection of the first blood sample, vaccination with a USDA-licensed rabies vaccine;

(D) Collection of a second blood sample for analysis at least five days, but no later than seven days from the first blood sample collection; and

(E) Confinement in a manner considered appropriate by the local health officer until the results of the prospective serologic monitoring protocol are known.

(I) If the prospective serologic monitoring protocol results show the animal has an adequate anamnestic response to the rabies vaccination, the animal must be kept under the owner's control and observed for signs of illness in a manner considered appropriate by the local health officer for forty-five days from the date of the suspected or known rabies exposure.

(II) If the prospective serologic monitoring protocol shows the animal does not have an adequate anamnestic response to the rabies vaccination, the animal must be confined and observed for signs of illness in a manner considered appropriate by the local health officer for at least four months from the date of suspected or known rabies exposure.

(e) For ferrets overdue for vaccination:

(i) Immediate euthanasia; or

(ii) Quarantine:

(A) Immediate veterinary care;

(B) Immediate vaccination with a USDA-licensed rabies vaccine;

and

(C) Confinement and observation for signs of illness in a manner considered appropriate by the local health officer for at least six months from the date of suspected or known rabies exposure.

(f) For hybrids, euthanize immediately.

(7) The owner or caretaker of a dog, cat, or ferret that is confined or under observation as described in subsection (6) of this section shall report any illness in the animal to the local health officer. If signs suggestive of rabies develop, the local health officer may order the animal to be euthanized and tested for rabies.

(8) When a local health officer receives a report that a mammal has bitten or otherwise potentially exposed a person to rabies, the local health officer may institute any or all of the following:

(a) Order a healthy dog, cat, or ferret to be confined in a manner the local health officer considers appropriate and observed daily for at least ten days with any illness reported to the local health officer, and if signs suggestive of rabies develop, order the animal to be euthanized and tested for rabies;

(b) Order immediate euthanasia and rabies testing of any stray or unwanted dog, cat, or ferret; or

(c) Order euthanasia and rabies testing of any hybrid or other mammal that is not a livestock animal.

(9) When a mammal other than a bat is found to be rabid, the local health officer may institute additional community-wide measures as appropriate including, but not limited to, the following actions:

(a) Issuance of orders to pick up and impound stray and unlicensed dogs, cats, hybrids and ferrets;

(b) Issuance of orders to owners of dogs, cats, and ferrets requiring proof of rabies vaccination following veterinary and USDA-licensed rabies vaccine manufacturer instructions;

(c) Restriction of dogs, cats, hybrids, and ferrets to owners' or caretakers' premises except when on leash; or

(d) Provide public and professional outreach education.

(10) When mammals are displaced during or after a man made or natural disaster and require emergency sheltering, the local health officer may implement and coordinate rabies prevention and control measures as described in Part I B.8., Disaster Response of the *Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control*, 2016. A copy of this publication is available for review at the department's website, at [www.doh.wa.gov](http://www.doh.wa.gov).

(11) A person euthanizing a mammal for the purpose of rabies testing as described in this section shall prepare, package, and transport the specimens to be tested in a manner approved by the local health officer and according to the department's *Guidelines for the Submission of Specimens for Rabies Testing*, February 2011. This publication is available from the department at [www.doh.wa.gov](http://www.doh.wa.gov).

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.20.050 and 16.70.040. WSR 17-15-021, § 246-100-197, filed 7/7/17, effective 8/7/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.20.050 and 16.70.040(1). WSR 11-04-017, § 246-100-197, filed 1/21/11, effective 1/1/12.]