ALABAMA STATE COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC HEALTH
ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
DIVISION OF DISEASE CONTROL
ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

CHAPTER 420-4-4
RABIES CONTROL PROGRAM

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420-4-4-.01 Definitions.

(1) "Animal" means any non-human mammal of the Kingdom *Animalia*.

(2) "Cat" means all members of the domesticated feline (*Felis catus*) family.

(3) "Dog" means all members of the domesticated canine (*Canis familiaris*) family.

(4) "Ferret" means all members of the ferret (*Mustela putorius furo*) family.

(5) "Department" means the Alabama Department of Public Health.

(6) "Domestic animal" means animals which, through association with people, have been bred to a degree which has resulted in genetic changes affecting the temperament, color, conformation, or other attributes of the species to an extent that make them unique and distinguishable from wild animals of their species.

(7) "Exposure" or "Exposes" means an incident resulting in contact of saliva or neural tissue with a break or abrasion of the skin or with any mucous membrane. The term includes a bite or scratch.

(8) "Extra-1abel use of vaccine" means the use of an animal vaccine in a species that is not specified on the product label or product insert.

(9) "Health Officer" means the State Health Officer or any county health officer as defined in §22-3-2, *Ala. Code 1975*, or his or her designee.

(10) "Hybrid-cross" means an animal resulting from the crossbreeding between two different species or types of animals. Crosses between wild animal species and domestic animals are considered to be wild animals.

(11) "NASPHV" means the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians, Inc.

(12) "Wildlife" means native or exotic animals normally living in the wild, other than those defined as domestic, including mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fresh water fish.
Author: William B. Johnston, D.V.M., Dee Jones, D.V.M.
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§3-7A-1, et seq., 22-2-2(6).
History: **New Rule:** Filed September 19, 1997; effective October 24, 1997; operative November 4, 1997. **Repealed and New Rule:** Filed November 18, 2009; effective December 23, 2009.

Ed. Note: Rule .01, Purpose, was repealed and .02 was renumbered to .01 as per certification filed November 18, 2009.

420-4-4-.02 Nuisance Menacing Public Health.

All unvaccinated dogs, cats and ferrets of any age that have exposed humans are declared to be nuisances menacing public health.
Author: William B. Johnston, D.V.M., Dee Jones, D.V.M.
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§3-7A-1, et seq., 22-2-2(6), 22-10-1(5).
History: **New Rule:** Filed September 19, 1997; effective October 24, 1997; operative November 4, 1997. **Repealed and New Rule:** Filed November 18, 2009; effective December 23, 2009.

Ed. Note: Rule .03 was renumbered to .02 as per certification filed November 18, 2009.

420-4-4-.03 Reporting Of Exposures.

Suspected exposures to humans by animals capable of transmitting the rabies virus shall be reported to the county health department.

(a) Who Shall Report. The following individuals shall report exposures:

1. Health care professionals who treat persons with suspected exposures.

2. Veterinarians who have knowledge of suspected exposures.

3. Law enforcement personnel, including animal control officials, who have been informed of or who have investigated suspected exposures.

4. Any person having knowledge that a human has been exposed.

(b) What Shall be Reported. Suspected exposures by an animal to a human shall be reported to the county health department.

(c) When and How to Report. Suspected exposures must be reported to the county health department within 48 hours of the exposure. Reports may be given by written notice, telephone, or any reliable telecommunication system (e.g., facsimile, e-mail).

Author: William B. Johnston, D.V.M., Dee Jones, D.V.M.
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§3-7A-1, et seq., 22-2-2(6).
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Ed. Note: Rule .04 was renumbered to .03 as per certification filed November 18, 2009.

420-4-4-.04 Investigation of Reports Of Exposures.

(1) Initiation of Investigation. When the county health department receives a report from health care professionals, law enforcement personnel, or other persons concerning a possible animal exposure to a human, an investigation shall promptly be conducted.

(2) Investigation Report. Information from the investigation shall be recorded by the environmental staff of the county health department. Reports shall remain on file in the county health department for a minimum of three years.

(3) Quarantine Orders. Quarantine orders resulting from an investigation may be issued by the Health Officer upon the confirmation of an exposure by a health care professional. Such orders may include home quarantine pursuant to Rule 420-4-4-.07.
Author: William B. Johnston, D.V.M., Dee Jones, D.V.M.

Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§3-7A-1, et seq.; 22-2-2(6).
History: New Rule: Filed September 19, 1997; effective October 24, 1997; operative November 4, 1997. **Repealed and New Rule:** Filed November 18, 2009; effective December 23, 2009.

Ed. Note: Rule .05 was renumbered to .04 as per certification filed November 18, 2009.

420-4-4-.05 Exceptions To Veterinary Confinement And Quarantine.

(1) Assistance Animals. Guide, hearing, and service dogs shall be exempt from the quarantine period specified in §3-7A-1(10), Code of Ala. 1975, if exposures occur in the line of duty and evidence of immunization against rabies is presented. An assistance animal shall be examined by a licensed veterinarian ten days after it exposes a human. Extended observation periods or additional testing may be required depending upon the animal's species, health status, circumstances of the exposure, and epidemiology of rabies in the area.

(2) Canine Corps Dogs. Canine corps dogs shall be exempt from the quarantine period specified in §3-7A-1(10), Code of Ala. 1975, if exposures occur in the line of duty and evidence of immunization against rabies is presented. A canine corps dog shall be examined by a licensed veterinarian ten days after it exposes a human.

(3) Home quarantine may be permitted at the discretion of the Health Officer only if all of the following conditions are met:

(a) The exposure was as a result of a provoked incident. A provoked incident occurs when a person creates a situation such that an expected reaction of the animal is to bite or attack (e.g., feeding, grabbing, threatening, etc.). An unprovoked incident occurs when an animal bites or attacks for no apparent reason.

(b) The animal is currently vaccinated against rabies.

(c) The owner or person responsible for the animal agrees to have the animal examined by a licensed veterinarian ten days following the exposure. If the bite victim is an owner of the animal or lives in the same household as the animal, the Health Officer may permit home quarantine without requiring an examination by a licensed veterinarian on the tenth day of the quarantine.

(d) The animal is kept in an enclosed area (e.g., house, pen) in a designated confinement area (e.g., one room of house, one

run isolated at a kennel facility) to avoid interaction with people and animals other than a single caretaker.

(e) If during the period of home quarantine the animal dies or exhibits clinical signs suggestive of rabies as determined by a licensed veterinarian, the owner or person responsible for the animal shall immediately contact the county health department. The Health Officer shall notify the person exposed and his/her physician so the physician can determine if post-exposure treatment is indicated.

(f) The owner is responsible for securing the animal during the period of home quarantine. Should the animal expose a human or animal and/or if the animal escapes or disappears from home quarantine, the owner or person responsible for the animal shall immediately notify the county health department.

Author: William B. Johnston, D.V.M., Dee Jones, D.V.M.
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§3-7A-1 et seq., 22-2-2(6).
History: **New Rule:** Filed September 19, 1997; effective October 24, 1997; operative November 4, 1997. **Repealed and New Rule:** Filed November 18, 2009; effective December 23, 2009. **Amended:** Filed February 19, 2015; effective March 26, 2015.

Ed. Note: Guide dogs ("seeing eye dogs") included in 1975 Code. Canine Corps dogs included in 1975 Code. Home quarantine for owners approved April 14, 1994, by administrative order. Rule .08 was renumbered to .05 as per certification filed November 18, 2009.

420-4-4-.06 Rabies Vaccine Requirements.

(1) Every owner of a dog, cat, or ferret required to be immunized shall cause the animal to be immunized by the rabies officer, his or her authorized representative, or any duly licensed veterinarian, when the animal reaches three months of age and subsequently in accordance with the intervals specified in the rabies vaccine's license.

(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1) above, in order to assure that the maximum number of animals remain vaccinated for the prevention of rabies in humans and animals, the vaccine interval for rabies vaccines administered in public rabies clinics shall be one year.

Author: William B. Johnston, D.V.M., Dee Jones, D.V.M.
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§3-7A-1, et seq., (Alabama Legislature Act 2009-636), 22-2-2(6).
History: **New Rule:** Filed September 19, 1997; effective October 24, 1997; operative November 4, 1997. **New Rule:** Filed November 18, 2009; effective December 23, 2009.

420-4-4-.07 Evidence Of Immunization.

Evidence of rabies immunization shall be provided to the owner of the animal by the issuance of a certificate and a serially numbered tag.

(a) The information required by §3-7A-2(a), Code of Ala. 1975, shall be stated on a printed Certificate of Immunization, dated and signed by the person authorized to administer the vaccine. The certificate of immunization shall be provided to the owner of the animal and shall be accompanied by a serially numbered tag bearing the same number and year as that of the certificate.

(b) Certificates of Immunization may be issued on forms provided by the Department. Alternatively, the NASPHV Form 51, which can be obtained from vaccine manufacturers may be used, as well as any computer generated form containing the information required in §3-7A-2(a), Code of Ala. 1975.

(c) Certificates and records of immunization shall be maintained by the veterinarian for a period of one year past the expiration date on the certificate.

(d) The NASPHV standard tag system shall be used to aid local animal control and public health authorities in identifying the immunization status of animals. The rabies license tags shall follow NASPHV guidelines, distinguishable in shape and color by year of issuance.

Author: William B. Johnston, D.V.M., Dee Jones, D.V.M.
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§3-7A-1, et seq., 22-2-2(6).
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Ed. Note: Rule .06 was renumbered to .07 as per certification filed November 18, 2009.

420-4-4-.08 Exemptions From Vaccination.

(1) With the written consent of an animal's owner, a veterinarian with a valid client/patient relationship (VC/PR) may issue a certificate exempting an animal from the rabies vaccination requirements in §3-7A-2, Code of Ala. 1975, if he or she determines that it would be medically contraindicated to vaccinate the animal due to an infirmity, other medical condition, or

regimen of therapy. The Certificate of Exemption from Rabies Vaccine form in Appendix A to these rules shall be used.

(2) Certification that the animal is exempt from vaccination shall be valid for a period of one year from the date of the issuance of the certificate of exemption, after which time the animal shall be re-examined by a licensed veterinarian and vaccinated against rabies or a new Certificate of Exemption shall be issued to the animal's owner.

(3) An exempt animal must be vaccinated against rabies as soon as its health permits.

(4) The Certificate of Exemption shall be provided to the animal's owner and a copy shall be provided to the Department within seven days from the date of the issuance of the certificate. The veterinarian who issues the certificate shall maintain a copy of the certificate for a minimum of one year from the date of issuance.

(5) An exemption from the rabies vaccination requirements of these rules does not exempt the animal from other laws and regulations related to animal and rabies control. If the exempted animal is exposed or is suspected of being exposed to rabies (e.g., due to an exposure from a rabid or suspect rabid animal), the Health Officer shall require it to be euthanized or quarantined for six months. If the animal is suspected of exposing a human, it shall be quarantined for 10 days.
Author: William B. Johnston, D.V.M., Dee Jones, D.V.M.
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§3-7A-1, et seq. (Alabama Legislature, Act 2009-636), 22-2-2(6).
History: **New Rule:** Filed September 19, 1997; effective October 24, 1997; operative November 4, 1997. **New Rule:** Filed November 18, 2009; effective December 23, 2009.

420-4-4-.09 Extra-Label Use Of Animal Rabies Vaccines.

Extra-1abel use of rabies vaccines may be considered under the following conditions:

(a) The United States Department of Agriculture regulations and the Food and Drug Administration regulations and guidelines for pharmaceuticals shall be followed relative to the extra-1abel use of animal rabies vaccines. Notations of extra-1abel use in domestic animals must also be entered on the animal's veterinary medical record.

(b) Animal rabies vaccines licensed for use in other species may be used in domestic animals when there is a demonstrated need for the product, provided there is evidence that some efficacy can be expected.

(c) Parenteral vaccination of captive native wildlife species shall not be allowed because the period of viral shedding, the clinical syndrome, and the efficacy of vaccines are not established.

(d) Zoos, research institutions, and exotic exhibitors licensed under the United States Department of Agriculture Animal Welfare Act may establish rabies vaccination programs under the supervision of the Department in an attempt to protect valuable animals. These programs should not be in lieu of appropriate quarantine and isolation measures that protect humans.

(e) Due to some uncertainties of the immunologic response to vaccination, the infective period of viral shedding, and the clinical course of disease in hybrid-cross animals, such animals involved in exposures to humans shall be considered for euthanasia on a case-by-case basis by the Department with due consideration given to the species, the circumstances of the exposure, and the epidemiology of rabies in the area.

Author: William B. Johnston, D.V.M., Dee Jones, D.V.M.
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§3-7A-1, et seq., 22-2-2(6).
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Ed. Note: Rule .07 was renumbered to .09 as per certification filed November 18, 2009.

420-4-4-.10 Adoption Of National Compendium.

The *Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control* published in 2008 by the NASPHV and the Centers for Disease Control is hereby adopted by reference and shall serve as a guide for the Department's animal rabies control activities in situations not specifically addressed in the Rules of the State Board of Health. A copy of the *Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control* may be obtained by contacting the Department's Epidemiological Division of the Bureau of Communicable Diseases at 201 Monroe Street, Suite 1468, Montgomery, Alabama 36130. Standard fees for retrieving and making copies of public records, as referenced in State Board of Health Rule 420-1-5-.04, shall apply.
Author: William B. Johnston, D.V.M., Dee Jones, D.V.M.
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§3-7A-1, et seq., 22-2-2(6).
History: **New Rule:** Filed September 19, 1997; effective October 24, 1997; operative November 4, 1997. **Repealed and New Rule:** Filed November 18, 2009; effective December 23, 2009.

Ed. Note: Rule .09 was renumbered to .10 as per certification filed November 18, 2009.

420-4-4-A **Appendix A.**

Alabama Department of Public Health
CERTIFICATE OF EXEMPTION FROM RABIES VACCINE

Name of Owner (Print)		Telephone Number
Street Address	City, State, Zip	
Animal Name	Sex: □ Male □ Female	Neutered: □ Yes □ No
Species	Age	Weight
Breed	Color(s)	

The animal described above has been examined by me on:_____ and I have determined that vaccinating this animal would be medically contraindicated and may cause death due to an infirmity, other physical condition, or regimen of therapy. Describe nature and duration of infirmity, other physical condition, or regimen of therapy:

_____

_____

_____

PLEASE NOTE: A reluctance to administer a rabies vaccine prior to the expiration of the previous vaccination will not be accepted as a valid reason for an exemption because it has not been associated with an increased occurrence of adverse reactions and is not medically contraindicated.

Name of Veterinarian (Print)	License Number	
Address		
Signature of Veterinarian		Date

This Certificate is valid until _____ (not to exceed one year from date signed).

By signing below, I acknowledge that I am the owner of the animal described above. I have been informed that this animal is exempt from rabies vaccination for a period of up to one year. I have also been informed of the following important information:

- This animal must be re-examined by the expiration date listed above. At the time the animal must either be vaccinated against rabies or, if exemption status still applies, a new certificate must be issued.
- Once the duration of immunity from the last rabies vaccination has lapsed, this animal is not protected against rabies and, as a result, is at increased risk of becoming infected if exposed to a rabid animal.
- It is recommended that the animal be closely observed when outside, walked on a leash and not allowed to run at large. Prevent the animal from coming into contact with suspect rabid animals such as raccoons, skunks, foxes, groundhogs, bats and free-roaming cats.
- Exemption from rabies vaccination does not exempt the animal from other laws related to rabies. If this animal is exposed or suspected to be exposed to rabies (e.g., due to a bite or exposure from a rabid or suspect rabid animal), the Health Officer will require it to be euthanized or quarantined for six months. If this animal potentially exposes a person to rabies (by bite or other means), it must be quarantined for 10 days and in a manner prescribed by the Health Officer

Date Signed	Date

A copy of this certificate must be provided to the owner of the animal listed above and kept as proof of exemption.
A copy of this certificate shall be maintained by the veterinarian for a period of one year from the date of issuance.
A copy of this certificate shall be provided to the Department of Public Health within (7) days of issuance.

Author: William B. Johnston, D.V.M., Dee Jones, D.V.M.
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§3-7A-1, et seq. (Alabama Legislature, Act 2009-636), 22-2-2(6).
History: **New Rule:** Filed November 18, 2009; effective December 23, 2009.