

# TUSCARAWAS COUNTY

**HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANIMAL BITE & RABIES INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE**

## THE PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF RABIES

Division of Environmental Health

### Revision Page

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A regulation of the Tuscarawas County General Health District providing for the prevention and control of rabies. The reporting of all animals biting people incidents; quarantining of animals involved in biting incidents; prescribing duties, responsibilities and authorities of the Tuscarawas County Health Department; and providing for the enforcement of the Regulation and penalties for the violation of its provisions.

### Cross References

Rabies quarantine – Ohio Revised Code 955.26 Report of bite of animal- Ohio Administrative Code 3701-3-28

Biting animal to be confined; veterinarian to report – Ohio Administrative Code 3701-3- 29

Report of suspected rabid animal – Ohio Administrative Code 901:1-17-05 Importation of dogs into state – Ohio Administrative Code 901:1-17-05

### DEFINITIONS

As used in this Regulation, certain terms are defined as follows:

1. “Agricultural animal” means member of any animal species that are recognized as a food source for man, a work animal for man, or provide a source of raw materials for manufacturing by man. These animals are usually herbivores and have been bred to serve man as resources for generations, including, but not limited to cattle, sheep, pigs, American Bison, goats, horses, etc.
2. “Bite” means any puncture, tear, scrape of the skin inflicted by the teeth or claws of a rabies susceptible animal.
3. “Board of Health” means the Board of Health of the Tuscarawas County General Health District appointed pursuant to Section 3809.02, Ohio Revised Code.
4. “Contact animal” means any animal which has been in association with a rabid animal in such a manner that the transmission of rabies is likely.
5. “Dog” means any member of the domestic canine species which more than three months of age.
6. “Domesticated animal” means any member of an animal species capable of transmitting rabies, that has not existed in the wild for generations, that has a history of cohabitation with man in a friendly environment for centuries, is dependent upon the race of man to provide for its care, and for which there is an approved, tested U.S.D.A. anti-rabies vaccine available, i.e. domestic dogs.
7. “Exotic animal” means a member of any non-domesticated animal species which is not indigenous to the State of Ohio, which is capable of transmitting rabies, and for which there is not a USDA approved anti-rabies vaccine specifically tested for effectiveness for that animal species.
8. “Feral” means any animal of a domestic species that has returned to the wild and is self-maintaining without assistance from man.
9. “Health District” means the Tuscarawas County General Health District created pursuant to Section 3809.02 of the Ohio Revised Code.
10. “Isolation” means the placing of a suspected rabid animal or a contact animal separate and apart from all other animals or persons so that the accidental transmission of rabies is unlikely.
11. “Owner” “Keeper” or Harborer” means any person who owns, keeps, harbors, possesses, maintains or otherwise controls an animal within the Tuscarawas County General Health District. This term shall not apply to dogs owned by other persons when the animals are temporarily maintained on the premises of a veterinarian or kennel operator.
12. “Person” means any person, firm, corporation, partnership, or association.
13. “Pocket pal” means small herbivorous animals including, but not limited to hamsters, chinchillas, gerbils, guinea pigs, rabbits, white rate, white mice, etc., which do not normally have the capability of transmitting rabies.
14. “Quarantine” means to confine an animal to the premises of the owner or harborer or on the premises of a veterinarian, where certainty of continued confinement can be assured.
15. “Rabid animal” means any animal exhibiting, in the professional opinion of the veterinarian, definite symptoms of rabies.
16. “Rabies susceptible animal” means any animal or animal species to or from which rabies may be transmitted.
17. “Stray” means any animal whose owner cannot be determined or one which cannot be apprehended and isolated for observation.
18. “Suspected rabid animal” means an animal which has bitten or scratched a person and is being held for observation to determine if rabies symptoms develop.
19. “USDA” means the United States Department of Agriculture.
20. “Vaccination” means the administration, by a licensed veterinarian or a dog owner, of a USDA approved anti-rabies vaccine that has been specifically tested for effectiveness for that animal species.
21. “Veterinarian” means a veterinarian who is duly licensed under the laws of the State of Ohio to diagnose and medically treat animal injuries and diseases.
22. “Wild animal” means a member of any non-domestic animal species, including the offspring of wild animals crossbred to domestic dogs and cats, which is capable of transmitting rabies, and for which there is not a USDA approved anti-rabies vaccine specifically tested for effectiveness for that animal species.

### VACCINATION TO BE ADMINISTERED BY A VETERINARIAN

A rabies vaccine shall be administered by or under the supervision of a veterinarian licensed by the State of Ohio.

VETERINARIAN REPORTS TO THE TUSCARAWAS COUNTY DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

All veterinarians and dog owners shall provide the Tuscarawas County Division of Environmental Health upon request, verbal or written verification of rabies vaccinations for the dogs they have immunized or re-immunized against rabies.

### ANIMAL BITE INCIDENT REPORTING

Whenever a person suffers a bite, scratch, or is otherwise potentially exposed by a dog, cat, or other rabies susceptible animal within the Health District, a report of all facts relating to the bite incident shall be made to the Tuscarawas County Division of Environmental Health. Such report shall be made as soon as possible, but not later than 24 hours after the bite incident occurred. The following persons shall have the duty of reporting to the Tuscarawas County Division of Environmental Health all information within their knowledge or in their possession concerning the bite incident:

* 1. The attending physician to the bite victim;
  2. The person in charge, or their designee, of a hospital emergency department or other health care facility providing care to the bite victim;
  3. The bite victim;
  4. The parent or guardian of the bite victim, if the victim is a minor,
  5. The owner or harborer of the biting animal; and,
  6. Any other person, including a veterinarian, having knowledge of the bite incident.

The Bite Incident Report shall include the name, age, and address of the person exposed; a description of the injury and treatment provided; and, if know, the name and address of the owner or person in control of the dog, cat, or other rabies susceptible animal inflicting the potential rabies exposure injury.

### QUARANTINE OF SUSPECTED RABID ANIMALS DOGS AND CATS

Whenever it is reported that a dog or cat has bitten, scratched, or otherwise potentially exposed a person in the Health District to rabies infection, the Tuscarawas County Division of Environmental Health shall order the dog or cat quarantined for the following period:

1. Unvaccinated dogs and cats that are exposed to a rabid or suspected rabid animal should be euthanized. If the owner is unwilling to euthanize, the animal should immediately receive veterinary care and be administered a rabies vaccine. The strict **quarantine period** for**unvaccinated dogs and cats can be reduced from six to four months if the rabies vaccine was administered within 96 hours of the exposure.**  The reduced quarantine period is based on a review of incubation period data available from a few states. Longer incubation periods have occasionally been documented but are extremely rare.
2. **Dogs and cats**that are **overdue for vaccination but have documentation** (a valid vaccination certificate) of having previously received a USDA-licensed rabies vaccine, should immediately receive veterinary care, be administered a booster rabies vaccine, and kept under the owner’s observation for **45 days.** Published data demonstrates that previously vaccinated dogs and cats will mount a robust anamnestic response to a booster rabies vaccination despite being out-of-date.
3. **Dogs and cats** that are **overdue for vaccination but do NOT have documentation** (a valid vaccination certificate) of having previously received a USDA-licensed rabies vaccine should immediately receive veterinary care and be treated as unvaccinated (see #1 above). If the owner wants to have the dog or cat treated as vaccinated (see #2 above), the veterinarian may, in consultation with the local rabies control official, use a **prospective serologic monitoring** protocol to demonstrate whether the animal mounts an adequate anamnestic response to a rabies vaccination.

Quarantined dogs and cats shall be examined by a veterinarian or a representative of the Board of Health for evidence of rabies infection at the end of the quarantine period. The examination shall be at the expense of the owner, keeper, or harborer of the dog or cat. A written report shall be made to the Tuscarawas County Division of Environmental Health regarding the conclusions reached as a result of the examination. If the report shows no indication of rabies infection, the Tuscarawas County Division of Environmental Health may release the dog or cat from the quarantine.

No dog or cat shall be released from quarantine unless and until it has been properly vaccinated against rabies in accordance with the requirements of this Regulation and the Ohio Administrative Code 3701-3-29.

When a quarantined dog or cat dies while under quarantine, the owner, or caretaker shall immediately notify the Tuscarawas County Division of Environmental Health. The Tuscarawas County Division of Environmental Health shall provide for submittal of the animal’s head to an approved laboratory for rabies examination. The owner of the dog or cat shall be responsible for any and all costs incurred during the quarantine and laboratory examination for rabies under this section.

If the owner, keeper, or harborer of a biting dog or cat is unknown and the animal is a stray, the Tuscarawas County Division of Environmental Health may quarantine the dog or cat at a veterinarian’s kennel until the owner, keeper, or harborer can be identified or may order the humane sacrifice of the animal and submittal of the animal’s head to an approved laboratory for rabies examination.

### DOMESTIC ANIMALS

Whenever it is reported that any other domestic animal that is known to transmit rabies has bitten, scratched, or otherwise potentially exposed a person in the Health District, the Tuscarawas County Division of Environmental Health shall order the animal to be quarantined for a period of time as determined by the Tuscarawas County Division of Environmental Health or humanely sacrificed and the head submitted to an approved laboratory for rabies examination.

Quarantined animals shall be examined by a veterinarian or a Board of Health representative for signs of rabies at the end of the quarantine period. The examination shall be at the expense of the owner of the animal. A written report shall be made to the Tuscarawas County Division of Environmental Health regarding the conclusions reached as a result of the examination.

If the report shows no indication of rabies infection, the Tuscarawas County Division of Environmental Health may release the animal from the quarantine.

If the animal dies while under quarantine, the owner or caretaker shall immediately inform the Tuscarawas County Division of Environmental Health. The Tuscarawas County Division of Environmental Health shall provide for submittal of the animal’s head to an approved laboratory for rabies examination.

The owner of the animal may be responsible for any and all costs incurred in the quarantine and the laboratory examination for rabies under this section.

### WILD ANIMALS

Whenever it is reported that a wild animal that is known to transmit rabies has bitten, scratched, or otherwise exposed a person in the Health District, the Tuscarawas County Division of Environmental Health shall order the animal, if available, to be humanely destroyed and the animal’s head submitted to an approved laboratory for rabies examination.

### KILLING OF QUARANTINED ANIMALS PROHIBITED

No person shall kill a quarantined dog, cat, or domestic animal until such quarantine period has been completed, except that this prohibition shall not apply to the humane killing of dog, cat, or domestic animal in order to prevent further injury or death if such animal is diseased or seriously injured and the Tuscarawas County Division of Environmental Health consents to the sacrifice of the animal. The head of any animal sacrificed shall be submitted to an approved laboratory for rabies examination. The owner of the animal shall be responsible for all costs incurred in the laboratory examination for rabies under this section.

### REMOVAL OF QUARANTINED ANIMALS PROHIBITED

No person shall remove a quarantined animal from the Health District prior to its release from quarantine without the written permission of the Tuscarawas County Division of Environmental Health.

### TRANSFER OF QUARANTINED ANIMALS PROHIBITED

No person shall transfer ownership or keeping of a quarantined animal prior to its release from quarantine without the written permission of the Tuscarawas County Division of Environmental Health.

### HANDLING OF SUSPECTED RABID OR EXPOSED ANIMALS

Any animal which is bitten or exposed to a rabid or suspected rabid animal shall be managed as a rabid animal.

### REPORT OF SUSPECTED RABID ANIMAL REQUIRED

Any person who owns an animal exhibiting symptoms suggestive of rabies shall have the animal examined immediately by a veterinarian. Any veterinarian who examines, treats, or otherwise cares for any animal which exhibits symptoms or behavior suggestive of rabies, shall confine and isolate the animal in suitable quarters and shall report this event to the Tuscarawas County Division of Environmental Health as soon as possible but not later than twenty-four hours after the event. The animal shall be confined until it has been determined that it is not infected with rabies. If it is determined that the animal is rabid, the Tuscarawas County Division of Environmental Health shall take such action as may be necessary to prevent the occurrence of rabies in persons or animals known or presumed to have been exposed to the rabid animal.

### FEES

The Board of Health may establish, by resolution, any fees deemed necessary to carry out the requirements of this Regulation.

### ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING

Upon written request, the Board of Health shall grant an administrative hearing to any person affected or aggrieved by this Regulation. The hearing shall be scheduled for the next regularly scheduled meeting or a special meeting of the Board of Health occurring not less than ten day after the receipt of the written request. The hearing shall be governed by Chapter 119 of the Ohio Revised Code.

### VARIANCE

The Board of Health may grant a variance from the requirements of this Regulation when it will not be contrary to the public interest and where a person shows that because of practical difficulties or other special conditions, their strict application will cause unusual and unnecessary hardship. No variance shall be granted, however, that will defeat the spirit and general intent of this regulation or otherwise be contrary to the public interest.

### PENALTIES

Any person who violates any provision of this Regulation shall be in violation of sections 3709.21 and/or 3707.48 of the Ohio Revised code and shall be subject to the penalties provided by sections 3707.48, 3707.53, and 3707.99 of the Ohio Revised Code.