

## **Rabies Vaccination Policy**

In an effort to maintain compliance with Florida State Statutes and help control the spread of rabies in our local area the Barbara Grice Memorial Spay and Neuter Clinic requires all animals, of appropriate age, coming through our facility to be up to date on their rabies vaccination. The owner can accomplish this by either providing the Barbara Grice Memorial Spay and Neuter Clinic with a copy of their animal's up to date rabies certificate no later than the morning of their animal's appointment during the time of check-in. Without **proper documentation** to prove that the animal is up to date on rabies vaccination the animal will be required to receive their rabies vaccination, for a charge of \$10, the day of their appointment.

The Barbara Grice Memorial Spay and Neuter Clinic has always encouraged, and continues to encourage, all owners to have their animals fully vaccinated, with their full service vet, **prior** to the day of their spay or neuter appointment with our facility.

## **WHAT HAPPENS IF A BITE WAS TO OCCUR?**

If an animal that is not vaccinated or not current for rabies vaccination bites a person, or another animal, that animal runs the risk of prolonged quarantine or being  **euthanized**  so that confirmatory testing can be performed. Unfortunately, **postmortem testing (autopsy)** is the only definitive way to accurately test an animal for rabies virus.

## WHAT QUALIFIES AS VALID PROOF OF RABIES VACCINATION?

A COPY OF THE PAPER RABIES CERTIFICATE, PROVIDED BY YOUR ANIMAL'S VETERINARIAN, THAT WAS ISSUED TO YOUR ANIMAL AT THE TIME OF THEIR RABIES VACCINATION.

IN ORDER TO BE VALID THIS CERTIFICATION MUST HAVE THE VETERINARIAN'S SIGNATURE AND LICENSE NUMBER.  
WITHOUT ALL PROPER INFORMATION THE CERTIFICATE WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

## WHAT DOES NOT QUALIFY AS VALID PROOF OF RABIES VACCINATION?

- Rabies Certificate that does not have the veterinarian's signature and license number.
- Receipt of rabies from your animal's vet showing you purchased a rabies vaccination for your animal.
- An invoice of rabies from your animal's vet showing you purchased a rabies vaccination for your animal.
- A record booklet showing rabies was given to your animal from your full service vet.

# **FLORIDA STATE STATUES FOR RABIES**

## **828.30 Rabies vaccination of dogs, cats, and ferrets.—**

(1) All dogs, cats, and ferrets 4 months of age or older must be vaccinated by a licensed veterinarian against rabies with a vaccine that is licensed by the United States Department of Agriculture for use in those species. The owner of every dog, cat, and ferret shall have the animal revaccinated 12 months after the initial vaccination. Thereafter, the interval between vaccinations shall conform to the vaccine manufacturer's directions. The cost of vaccination must be borne by the animal's owner. Evidence of circulating rabies virus neutralizing antibodies shall not be used as a substitute for current vaccination in managing rabies exposure or determining the need for booster vaccinations.

(2) A dog, cat, or ferret is exempt from vaccination against rabies if a licensed veterinarian has examined the animal and has certified in writing that at the time vaccination would endanger the animal's health because of its age, infirmity, disability, illness, or other medical considerations. An exempt animal must be vaccinated against rabies as soon as its health permits.

(3) Upon vaccination against rabies, the licensed veterinarian shall provide the animal's owner and the animal control authority with a rabies vaccination certificate. Each animal control authority and veterinarian shall use the "Rabies Vaccination Certificate" of the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians (NASPHV) or an equivalent form approved by the local government that contains all the information required by the NASPHV Rabies Vaccination Certificate. The veterinarian who administers the rabies vaccine to an animal as required under this section may affix his or her signature stamp in lieu of an actual signature.

(4) Each ferret vaccinated according to this section must be quarantined, when necessary, according to rules of the Department of Health.

(5) An animal owner's name, street address, phone number, and animal tag number contained in a rabies vaccination certificate provided to the animal control authority is exempt from s. [119.07\(1\)](#) and s. 24(a), Art. I of the State Constitution. However, any person who has been bitten, scratched, or otherwise exposed to a zoonotic disease or the physician of such person; a veterinarian who is treating an animal that has been bitten, scratched, or otherwise exposed to a zoonotic disease; or the owner of an animal that has been bitten, scratched, or otherwise exposed to a zoonotic disease shall be provided with any information contained in a rabies vaccination certificate but only with respect to the

particular animal biting, scratching, or otherwise causing exposure. Any person with an animal tag number may receive vaccination certificate information with regard to that animal. Law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies; other animal control authorities; emergency and medical response and disease control agencies; or other governmental health agencies shall be provided information contained in the rabies vaccination certificate for the purpose of controlling the transmission of rabies; however, the receiving agencies and authorities must not release the exempt information.

(6) Violation of this section is a civil infraction, punishable as provided in s. 828.27(2).

(7) This section does not prohibit or limit municipalities or counties from establishing requirements similar to or more stringent than the provisions of this section for the implementation and enforcement of rabies-control ordinances. However, local governments shall not mandate revaccination of currently vaccinated animals except in instances involving postexposure treatment for rabies.

**History.**—s. 7, ch. 94-339; s. 3, ch. 95-220; s. 1, ch. 98-178; s. 1, ch. 98-213; s. 1, ch. 2003-170; s. 1, ch. 2005-74; s. 9, ch. 2006-289.

**Note.**—Former s. 585.69.

**If you have any questions you can reach the Barbara  
Grice Memorial Spay and Neuter Clinic at  
(850)898-3380. Thank you.**