

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE (DOHMH)

Within the DOHMH, there are two Bureaus that deal with veterinary related issues: the Bureau of Communicable Disease (BCD) houses the Zoonotic, Influenza and Vector-borne Disease Unit (ZIVDU), and the Bureau of Pest Control and Veterinary Affairs houses the Office of Veterinary Public Health Services (VPHS).

Bureau of Communicable Disease (BCD) Zoonotic, Influenza and Vector-borne Disease Unit (ZIVDU) 347-396-2600

- Provides consultation for rabies postexposure and preexposure prophylaxis and titer testing
- Monitors animal rabies epidemiology
- Accepts and investigates reports of animal diseases
- Distributes veterinary alerts and newsletters

ZIVDU is a resource for animal and human health providers. It is responsible for the surveillance and investigation of diseases that are transmissible between humans and animals (zoonoses) and of arthropod transmitted diseases. **ZIVDU** also oversees animal disease reporting and maintains the link between animal and human health. Veterinary Alerts describing acute public health emergencies are distributed via fax and a **ZIVDU** newsletter is mailed annually. To view previous publications or to find out more about ZIVDU, visit nyc.gov/html/doh/html/diseases/zoo.shtml.

To join the fax and/or mailing list or for more information, please call **BCD**. Staff is available 24 hours a day for consultation on patients with a known or potential disease of public health concern, clinical questions about rabies or information about rabies pre and postexposure prophylaxis.

Veterinary Public Health Services (VPHS) Animal Bite Unit (ABU) 646-632-6604 and 646-632-6074

- Accepts and investigates reports of animals biting humans
- Provides guidance on pets exposed to rabies
- Coordinates arrangements for rabies testing
- Oversees animal related permits

VPHS has regulatory oversight and enforces laws pertaining to dog licensing, rabies vaccination, animal exhibition permits, animal handling establishment licensing and rental horse licensing. It also monitors the contract for animal control services with Animal Care & Control (**ACC**).

Within VPHS is the Animal Bite Unit (**ABU**), which receives and investigates reports of animal bites, domestic animals exposed to rabies and dangerous dogs. **ABU** also coordinates rabies testing with the DOHMH rabies laboratory.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- **Dog Licensing** – All dogs in NYC must be licensed. Applications are available through 311 or online at nyc.gov/doglicense.
- **Rabies Vaccination** – All dogs and cats, four months and older, must be actively vaccinated against rabies.
- **Illegal Animals in NYC** – Several types of animals are illegal to own and may only be brought into NYC under certain circumstances and with prior approval. Non-permitted or illegal animals may be reported by calling 311. Animals brought into NYC for exhibit, motion pictures, TV commercials and educational exhibitions must meet specific requirements and obtain a permit. For a list of illegal animals and information about permits, visit nyc.gov/html/doh/html/licenses/permit.shtml#animals.
- **Clusters of Dead Animals or Birds** – Call 311 to report a dead mammal, clusters of ten or more dead birds of any type or clusters of three or more dead water birds.
- **Infectious Disease Consultations** and diagnostic assistance are available for zoonotic or novel diseases or conditions with potential public health concern. Call **BCD** for more information.
- **Animals in Disasters** – To order the Office of Emergency Management’s “Ready New York, My Pet’s Emergency Plan” brochure, call **311** or visit nyc.gov/readyny.
- **Radiographic Equipment Registration and Inspection** – Registered equipment is inspected every 3 to 5 years. Facilities must provide the inspector with the following documents: registration certificate, notice to employees, radiation protection survey and Article 175 of the NYC Health Code pertaining to radiation. For more information, call **311**.
- **Animal Bites** – Report animal bites to humans by calling 311 or **ABU**, or online at nyc.gov/html/doh/html/environmental/animals-bite-rpt.shtml.
- **License Requirements** and applications for animal boarding, training, grooming, pet shops or shelters can be obtained by calling VPHS or online at nyc.gov/html/doh/html/licenses/permit.shtml#animals.
- **Animal Related Complaints** – To file a complaint about a pet shop, boarding, training or grooming establishment or other animal issue, call 311.
- **Responsible Pet Ownership Booklets** can be ordered by calling 311. They can also be downloaded by visiting nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/vet/veterinary_public_health_services_responsible_dog_ownership.pdf

REPORTING ANIMAL DISEASES

Upon suspicion, call **BCD** immediately to report any of the following:

- Anthrax
- Brucellosis
- Glanders
- Influenza caused by a novel influenza viral strain with pandemic potential
- An outbreak of any disease or condition in animals, of known or unknown etiology, which may pose a danger to public health
- Monkeypox
- Plague
- Q fever
- Rabies
- SARS
- Tularemia

Call **BCD** at 347-396-2600

Upon diagnosis, call or fax **BCD** within 24 hours to report any of the following:

- Arboviral encephalitides
- Leptospirosis
- Psittacosis
- Salmonellosis
- Tuberculosis
- Rocky Mountain spotted fever

Complete an Animal Disease Report Form and fax to 347-396-2753

The Animal Disease Report form is available online at nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/zoo/zoo-disease-report-form.pdf

For more information on reportable diseases, diagnostic assistance or infection control guidance, call **BCD** or visit nyc.gov/html/doh/html/diseases/zoo.shtml.

RABIES INFORMATION

Vector Species – The primary rabies vector species in NYC include raccoons and bats. Raccoon and bat rabies have been reported in all five boroughs, although the epizootiology varies each year. Other animals testing positive for rabies in NYC are typically infected after a bite from a rabid raccoon and have included skunks and cats. To get the most updated surveillance data regarding rabies in NYC, please visit nyc.gov/health/rabies.

Transmission – Rabies can be transmitted from an infected animal through a bite or through contamination of a fresh open wound with saliva or neural tissue. Bites or other exposures to humans from rabies vector species or any animal known or suspected of being rabid should immediately be reported and evaluated by BCD or a health care provider to assess the need for rabies postexposure prophylaxis.

New York City Laws:

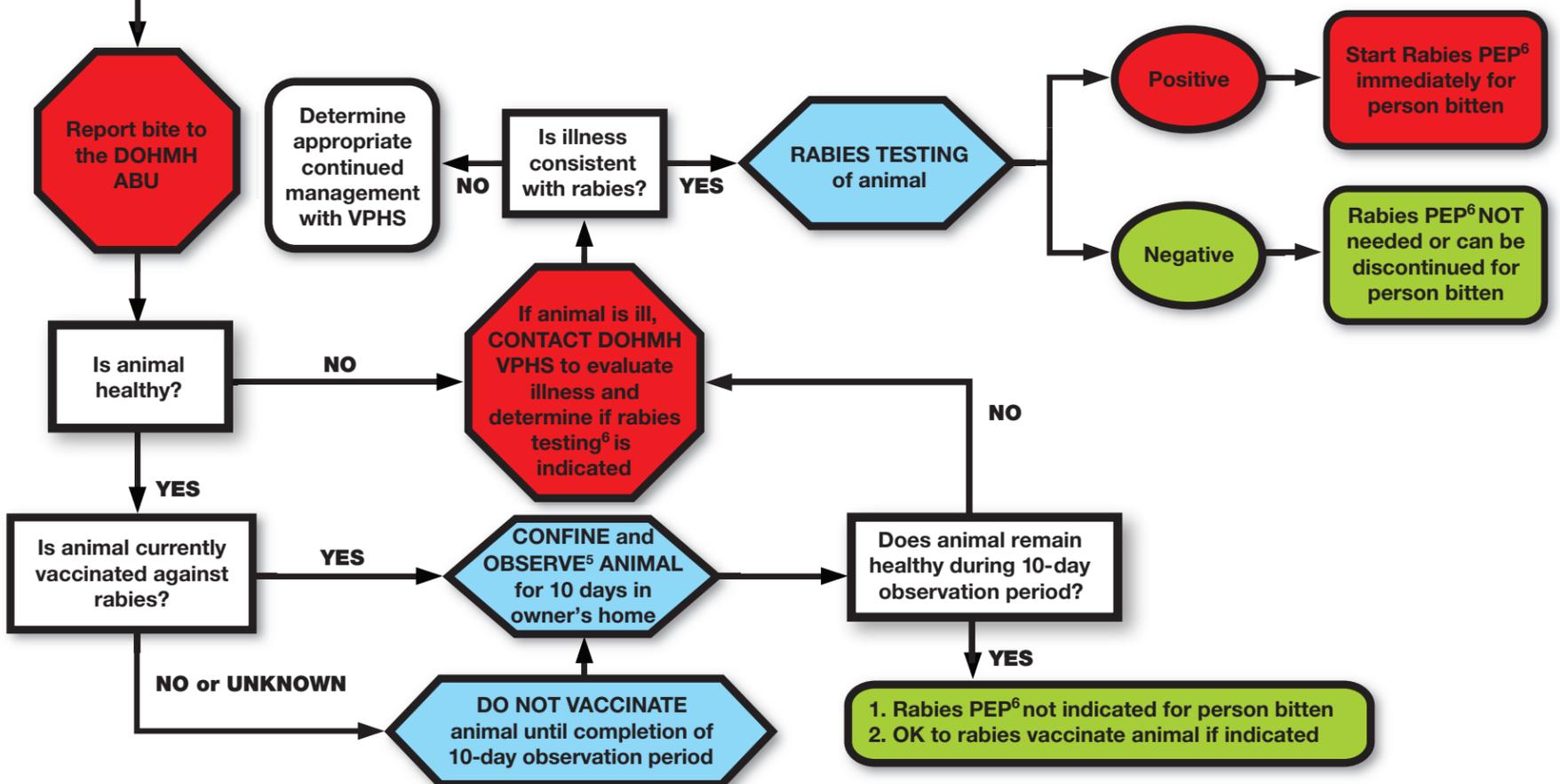
- **Rabies Vaccination** – Any person who owns or harbors a dog or cat four months of age or older in New York City shall have such animal actively immunized against rabies. Actively immunized shall mean injection of a rabies vaccine that meets the standards prescribed by the United States Department of Agriculture for interstate sale and is administered according to the manufacturer’s instructions by or under the direct supervision of a duly licensed veterinarian.
- **Reporting Rabid Animals** – Any veterinarian, staff member or animal owner who is aware of an animal affected with or suspected of having rabies shall immediately report it to **VPHS**. The animal should be confined in a manner that does not pose a threat to the persons handling it, and surrendered to the DOHMH for rabies testing.
- **Management of Animals Exposed to Rabies** – Any dog, cat or domestic ferret or livestock which has been bitten by or otherwise exposed to a rabid or potentially rabid animal must be reported to the DOHMH. Please refer to the algorithm for additional guidance.
- **Management of Biting Animals** – Reports of humans bitten by animals should be made to the **ABU**, 311 or filed online at nyc.gov/html/doh/html/environmental/animals-bite-rpt.shtml. **ABU** coordinates follow-up with the animal, its owner and the person bitten to ensure that the animal is managed appropriately. Healthy dogs, cats, ferrets and livestock that have bitten someone must be watched for a 10-day observation period at the owner’s home. Unvaccinated animals should not be given the rabies vaccine until the conclusion of the 10-day observation period. If the animal remains healthy, the bite victim does not need rabies postexposure prophylaxis (PEP). Animals that are ill at the time of the bite or that develop illness during the 10-day observation period must immediately be reported to the **ABU** and evaluated by a veterinarian to determine whether rabies testing is indicated. Please refer to the algorithm for additional guidance.

Dog/cat/ferret³/livestock⁴ bites a person

(Management of other biting animals is less straightforward and requires consultation with BCD.)

Management of Dogs/Cats/Ferrets³/Livestock⁴ that Bite Humans

All animal bites are reportable to the DOHMH and are usually made by a physician or the person bitten. The ABU within the Office of VPHS coordinates follow-up with the animal, its owner and the person bitten to ensure that the animal is managed appropriately. Healthy dogs, cats, ferrets and livestock that have bitten someone can be watched for a 10-day observation period at the owner's home. Questions regarding human rabies postexposure prophylaxis should be directed to BCD.

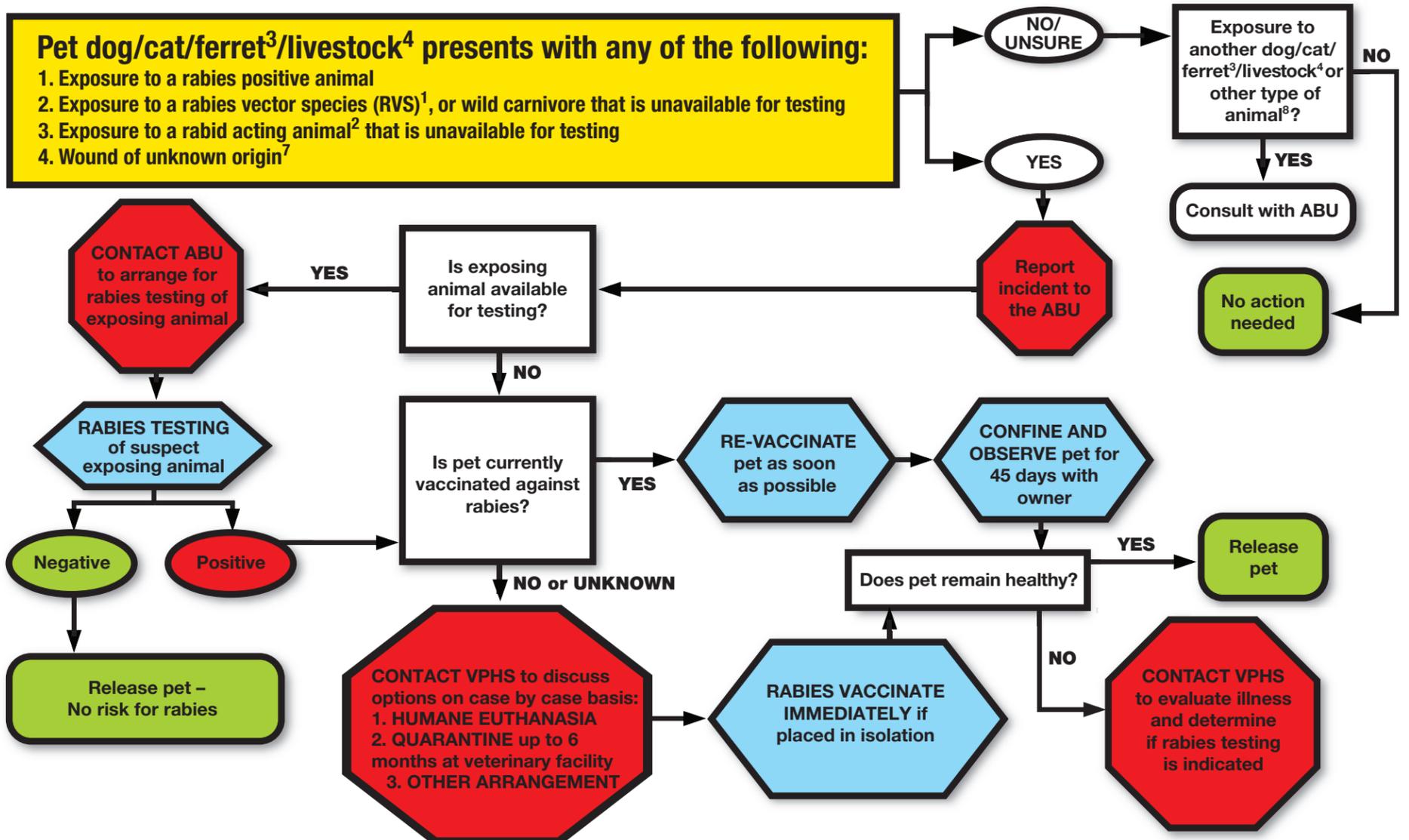


Management of Pets with a Rabies Exposure

A rabies exposure is defined as any bite or incident in which saliva or central nervous system (CNS) tissue from a rabid or potentially rabid animal did or could have had direct contact with mucous membrane or a break in the skin of a domestic animal.

Pet dog/cat/ferret³/livestock⁴ presents with any of the following:

1. Exposure to a rabies positive animal
2. Exposure to a rabies vector species (RVS)¹, or wild carnivore that is unavailable for testing
3. Exposure to a rabid acting animal² that is unavailable for testing
4. Wound of unknown origin⁷



1 Rabies Vector Species (RVS): Raccoon, bat, skunk, fox, coyote and mongoose.

2 Suspect rabid animal: Any carnivore that is unavailable for testing or any mammal with illness or behavior consistent with rabies that is unavailable for testing. Exposures to other domestic animals may warrant further investigation if the animal exposed is not currently vaccinated against rabies.

3 Ferrets are illegal in NYC.

4 Livestock: Horse, mule, donkey, cattle, sheep, goat and swine (pig).

5 10-Day Observation: Done at the owner's home unless otherwise indicated.

6 Contact BCD for guidance on rabies PEP in humans.

7 Wounds of unknown origin must be considered a potential rabies exposure.

8 Small rodents and lagomorphs are deemed low risk for rabies. Encounters with these animals are not considered an exposure to rabies unless there is reason to suspect the animal is rabid. Large rodents such as groundhogs and beavers, as well as opossums (marsupials), have tested positive for rabies in areas where raccoon rabies is established. Consult with the ABU for encounters with such animals to determine the appropriate course of action.

When handling an animal with a potential rabies exposure, ALWAYS:

- Wear gloves when handling saliva-contaminated wounds or hair.
- Irrigate fresh wounds for 10-15 minutes and disinfect.
- Refer persons with potential rabies exposures to BCD for consultation.

DOHMH CONTACT INFORMATION

BCD = Bureau of Communicable Disease

347-396-2600

ZIVDU = Zoonotic, Influenza and Vector-Borne Disease Unit

347-396-2600

VPHS = Veterinary Public Health Service

please specify "ZIVDU"

ABU = Animal Bite Unit

646-632-6604

646-632-6074