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TITLE 250 – DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

CHAPTER 40 – AGRICULTURE AND RESOURCE MARKETING

SUBCHAPTER 05 – ANIMAL HEALTH

PART 2 – Rules and Regulations Governing the Prevention, Control, and Suppression of Rabies Within the State of Rhode Island

2.1 Authority

A. These rules and regulations are promulgated pursuant to authority provided under R.I. Gen. Laws §§ 4-13-1.3, 4-13-29, and Chapters 4-13, 42-17.1 and 42-35 for the purpose of carrying out the functions required to prevent, control and/or suppress rabies.

2.2 Purpose

A. The purpose of these rules and regulations is to suppress and control rabies found within the state and to prevent the spread of rabies when rabies appears in any area within the State of Rhode Island and its appearance creates a threat of infection to animals or humans.

2.3 Incorporated Materials

A. These regulations hereby adopt and incorporate the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians' "Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control" (2016) by reference, not including any further editions or amendments thereof and only to the extent that the provisions therein are not inconsistent with these regulations.

B. These regulations hereby adopt and incorporate the American Veterinary Medical Association's "AVMA Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals" (2013), by reference, not including any further editions or amendments thereof and only to the extent that the provisions therein are not inconsistent with these regulations.

2.4 Definitions

A. As used in these rules and regulations, the following terms shall, where the context permits, be construed as follows:

1. "Animal control officer" or "ACO" means any person(s) employed by a city or town as a canine control officer, a dog or animal warden or a police

officer responsible for animal control delegated authority by the Rhode Island Rabies Control Board.

2. "Attacking animal" means the animal that caused potential exposure to the rabies virus with exposure as defined in § 2.4(A)(10) of this Part. An animal may be classified as both an attacking animal and victim animal as defined in § 2.4(A)(19) of this Part, in certain circumstance, including but not limited to fights between animals.

3. "Cat" means any member of *Felis catus* (excluding hybrids with wild felines).

4. "Currently vaccinated" means administration of a vaccine that has been properly stored and subsequently injected by or under the direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian with a rabies vaccine licensed for use in that species by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and satisfying the following criteria:

   a. For dogs, cats and ferrets:

      (1) The manufacturer's protocol with regards to minimum age of animal as well as frequency and intervals of vaccination(s) was followed; and

      (2) At least thirty (30) days have elapsed since the initial vaccination; and

      (3) Not more than twelve (12) months have elapsed since the last vaccination if last vaccination was the initial vaccination or the animal is a ferret, or if the vaccine has an annual booster recommendation. Dogs, cats, and ferrets shall be considered currently vaccinated if the last booster was administered within the time frame specified by the "Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control" incorporated above at § 2.3(A) of this Part regarding frequency and interval of vaccination for the particular product used and for the specific species for which the product was used.

      (4) For dogs, cats, and ferrets that were previously vaccinated but are not considered currently vaccinated, either one of the following must apply:

         (AA) Dogs, cats, and ferrets presented for vaccination that are overdue at the time of booster vaccination by any timeframe for a booster on a one-year certificate, or if overdue by more than six-months on a three-year or longer duration certificate, are required to receive a

booster vaccination with the resultant vaccination certificate having an expiration date no greater than one year from the date of administration of the booster.

(BB) Dogs, cats, and ferrets presented for vaccination that are overdue at the time of vaccination by less than six months as determined by the expiration date on a three-year or longer duration certificate, may be issued a certificate up to the duration of immunity stated on the product label upon vaccination.

(5) Vaccine status will be determined from the dates on the most recent rabies vaccination certificate. It will be the responsibility of the animal owner to maintain and produce that document as proof of vaccine status.

b. For all other species for which there exists an unconditionally licensed rabies vaccine, the animals must be vaccinated against rabies in accordance with the "Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control" incorporated above at § 2.3(A) of this Part.

c. Failure or inability by the owner/keeper of a dog, cat or ferret to present or make available a rabies certificate or a copy thereof to an ACO investigating a possible rabies exposure shall result in classification of the animal in question as not currently vaccinated against rabies.

5. "Director" means the Director of the Department of Environmental Management or his/her duly authorized designee.

6. "Dog" means any member of *Canis familiaris*, excluding hybrids with wild canids.

7. "Domestic animal" means animals which, through extremely long association with humans, have been bred to a degree which has resulted in genetic changes affecting the temperament, color, conformation or other attributes of the species to the extent that makes them unique and distinguishable from wild individuals of their species. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

a. Domestic dog (*Canis familiaris*);

b. Domestic cat (*Felis catus*);

c. Domestic horse (*Equus caballus*);

d. Domestic cattle (*Bos taurus* and *Bos indicus*);

e. Domestic sheep (*Ovis aries*)

8. "Environmental Police Officer" means any commissioned environmental police officer for the Department of Environmental Management, Division of Law Enforcement.

9. "Euthanasia" means the humane destruction of an animal accomplished by a method that involves nearly instantaneous loss of consciousness followed immediately by death or by a method that involves anesthesia produced by an agent which causes painless and rapid loss of consciousness and death during that period of unconsciousness. All methods of euthanasia must comply with Rhode Island General Laws and with the most current AVMA Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals incorporated above at § 2.3(B) of this Part.

10. "Exposure" means the possible exposure to the rabies virus via a direct bite or scratch, which results in a break in the skin of the victim, or contact between infectious material such as saliva or central nervous system tissue and fluid with mucosa of the eye, nose or mouth, or a via pre-existing break in the skin.

11. "Ferret" means any member of the family *Mustela putorius* or Common European Ferret.

12. "Guardian" means a person(s) having the same rights and responsibilities as an owner, and the terms may be used interchangeably. A guardian shall also mean a person who possesses, has title to or an interest in, harbors or has control, custody or possession of an animal and who is responsible for an animal's safety and well-being.

13. "Manual" means the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations Manual for Rabies Management and Protocols Guidance Document.

14. "Owner" means any person or agency keeping, harboring or having charge or control of or responsibility for control of an animal or any person or agency which permits any dog, cat, ferret, or domestic animal to habitually be fed within that person's yard or premises. This term shall not apply to veterinary facilities, any licensed boarding kennel, municipal pound, pet shop, or animal shelter See R.I. Gen. Laws § 4-13-1.2.

15. "Person(s)" means an individual, firm, joint stock company, partnership, association, private or municipal corporation, trust, estate, state, commission, political subdivision, any interstate body, the federal government or any agency or subdivision of the federal government, other government entity, or other legal entity.

16. "Quarantine" means the act of holding an animal for the purpose of prevention of spread of rabies, for a definite period of time and in a

manner that prevents contact of that animal with other animals, or the public, at an escape-proof facility that has been approved for this use by the State Veterinarian. For livestock only, quarantine may be carried out at the farm where the animal is usually kept provided that access by the public can be restricted and the animal can be kept isolated from other susceptible species.

17. "Quarantine facility" means a facility that has been approved by an authorized representative of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management for the purpose of quarantine (as defined above).

18. "Strict confinement" means:

    a. For attacking animals - The act of confining an animal at the home of the animal in a manner that the animal is not allowed to run free and is not allowed to have contact with any person or animal that does not reside at that location. This type of action may be ordered in lieu of quarantine at the discretion of the Animal Control Officer and only when the animal being held in strict confinement is currently vaccinated against rabies (as defined above) and is not considered at high risk of escaping, and the owner of the animal is considered by the Animal Control Officer to be certain to adhere to the order for strict confinement.

    b. For animals that are the victims of wounds of unknown origin or are victim animals - The act of confining an animal at the home of the animal in a manner that the animal is not allowed to run free and is not allowed to have contact with any person or animal that does not reside at that location. This type of action may be ordered in lieu of quarantine at the discretion of the Animal Control Officer and only when the animal is not considered a high risk of escaping and the owner of the animal is considered by the Animal Control Officer to be certain to adhere to the order for Strict Confinement.

19. "Victim animal" means the animal that was potentially exposed to the rabies virus in accordance with exposure as defined in § 2.4(A)(10) of this Part. An animal may be classified as both a victim animal and an attacking animal in certain circumstance, including but not limited to fights between animals.

2.5 Compulsory Rabies Vaccination and Rabies Risk Signage

A. Animals Residing within Rhode Island

1. Any owner of a dog, cat, or ferret that is three (3) months of age or older and which resides in Rhode Island shall have such dog, cat or ferret currently vaccinated against rabies.

B. Exhibition of Animals within Rhode Island

1. Any owner of any animal species for which United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) licensed unconditionally approved rabies vaccine exists, and who uses such animals for show or exhibit purposes, or who allows such animals to come into direct physical contact with the public, shall keep such animals currently vaccinated against rabies. Examples of such exhibition or show venues include but are not limited to: petting zoos, nature centers, riding stables, fairs, shows, exhibitions, pony rides and educational programs.

C. Posting of Signage for Dogs, Cats, and Ferrets Maintained at Municipal or Private Facilities

1. Dogs, cats, and ferrets maintained at facilities (municipal or private) where animal/public contact is allowed must be either:

a. Currently vaccinated against rabies; or

b. If not currently vaccinated against rabies due to any lawful reason must be:

(1) Separated from the public by sufficient means so as to disallow direct animal/public contact; and

(2) Identified as possible rabies carrier by conspicuously posted and readily legible signs stating: “RHODE ISLAND RABIES CONTROL BOARD NOTICE: FEED AND TOUCH THESE ANIMALS AT YOUR OWN RISK.”

2. Facilities subject to this regulation shall include but not be limited to the following: pet shops, dog pounds, and animal shelters.

3. Lawful reasons for keeping animals that are not currently vaccinated include but are not limited to animals that are too young to vaccinate or animals that have been vaccinated but thirty (30) days have not lapsed since the vaccination.

D. Posting of Signage for Animals for Which No USDA Licensed Unconditionally Approved Vaccine Exists

1. Animals which are used for public display exhibition or show must be:

a. Separated from the public by sufficient means to disallow direct animal/public contact; or

b. Identified as possible rabies carriers by conspicuously posted and readily legible signs stating: “RHODE ISLAND RABIES CONTROL BOARD NOTICE: FEED AND TOUCH THESE ANIMALS AT YOUR OWN RISK.”

2. Facilities and/or events subject to this regulation shall include but not be limited to the following: show, petting zoos, zoos, nature centers, fairs, exhibitions, or educational programs involving animals.

E. Exemptions

1. Low risk rabies susceptible species, including but not limited to rodents and rabbits which can be documented as being born and raised indoors, need not be isolated from direct physical contact with the public nor have posted any public notice of rabies risk.

F. Variances

1. Any person seeking exception to §§ 2.5(A) through 2.5(D) of this Part, inclusive, shall apply in writing to the Rhode Island Rabies Control Board for such variance.

2. The Rabies Control Board, may, upon demonstration that rabies vaccination is likely to cause hardship, and, if satisfied that the variance conditions do not constitute a threat to public health or safety, may grant said variance.

3. The Rabies Control Board will meet from time to time to consider any variances that have been received. The Rabies Control Board will meet no less frequently than once per year for this purpose, but may, at the discretion of the State Veterinarian, meet more frequently.

4. The Rabies Control Board may seek an opinion from municipal officials regarding granting of a variance.

5. The Rabies Control Board may issue stipulations and/or conditions to any variance granted that will decrease the public health risk by an owner keeping an unvaccinated animal.

6. If a variance is granted, the owner of the animal and the Animal Control Officer with authority in the jurisdiction where the animal for which the variance is granted will be notified in writing of the variance.

7. If the animal is relocated to another municipality within the state, the State Veterinarian must be notified a minimum of fourteen (14) days prior to

relocation so that the ACO of the municipality that the animal is being relocated to can be notified of the relocation.

8. Failure of the owner to maintain any of the stipulations and/or conditions of these Regulations or of the specific variance may result in penalties as set forth in these regulations.

9. The Animal Control Officer with authority in the jurisdiction where the animal for which a variance is granted is kept shall have the responsibility of ensuring that the stipulations and/or conditions of the variance have been maintained.

10. The application for a variance shall demonstrate that:

    a. strict adherence to the regulation causes undue hardship or the impossibility of performance; and

    b. the procedures to be followed if the variance is granted are as protective as the section from which relief is requested.

2.6 Rabies Vaccination Protocol

A. Vaccine Administration

1. For animals to be considered Currently Vaccinated, rabies vaccinations shall be administered by or under the direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian. All rabies vaccine must be stored, handled, and administered in strict accordance with the vaccine manufacturer's labeled directions.

B. Record Keeping and Tag Issuance

1. The Veterinarian must maintain a record identifying the vaccinated animal, the owner's name and physical address, the rabies tag number issued (if applicable) as well as the date of inoculation and the date the next booster is due. Such records must be maintained for five (5) years following vaccination.

2. The licensed veterinarian or person working under the direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian who administered a rabies vaccination must issue a rabies tag to the owner/keeper of any dog or cat that (s)he vaccinates against rabies. Such tags shall clearly identify the veterinary hospital/clinic at which the animal was vaccinated, the telephone number of that clinic, the year of rabies vaccination, and also contain an identification number unique to that animal.

C. Rabies Certificates

1. The licensed veterinarian or person directed by a licensed veterinarian must issue a rabies vaccination certificate to the animal's owner:

2. If the animal vaccinated is a dog, cat, ferret or horse, the rabies vaccination certificate shall include, but not be limited to, the following items:

    a. Name of the licensed veterinarian, his/her practice name, practice address and state veterinary license number.

    b. The animal owner or guardian's name and physical address;

    c. The animal's name, species, breed, age, sex and coloration;

    d. The name of the rabies vaccine manufacturer, the brand name of the product used, the vaccine serial number;

    e. The date of rabies inoculation and the date when the next rabies booster shall be administered;

    f. If a dog or cat, number of the rabies tag issued; and

    g. Signature, or authorized use of a signature stamp or electronic signature, of the licensed veterinarian who administered or supervised the administration of the rabies vaccine.

3. If the animal vaccinated is a bovine, sheep or domestic animal other than a dog, cat, horse or ferret for which a species-approved rabies vaccine exists; the rabies vaccination certificate shall include, but not be limited to, the following items:

    a. Name of licensed veterinarian who gave or directed rabies vaccine administration, his/her practice name, and state veterinary license number;

    b. Animal owner or guardian's name and physical address;

    c. The animal's unique official ear tag number, breed registration number, microchip number, or individualized tattoo number;

    d. The animal's species, breed, age and sex;

    e. The name of the rabies vaccine manufacturer, the brand name of the product used, the vaccine serial number;

    f. The date of rabies inoculation and the date when the next rabies booster shall be administered;

g. The signature, or authorized use of a signature stamp or electronic signature, of the licensed veterinarian who administered or supervised the administration of the rabies vaccine.

D. The owner or guardian of a rabies vaccinated animal shall keep such certificate or a copy thereof stating that such animal has been vaccinated and shall, upon request, make such certificate or copy available to an ACO or an agent of the Department of Environmental Management acting in their official capacity.

E. A rabies vaccination certificate is the only official proof of vaccination.

F. Failure to Present Rabies Certificate

1. Failure or inability by the owner or guardian of an animal to present or make available such rabies certificate or a copy thereof to Animal Control Officer, Police personnel, Department of Environmental Management personnel upon request shall result in classification of the animal in question as not currently vaccinated against rabies. Such animal may then be seized and placed in quarantine or euthanized at owner's expense for rabies testing.

G. Release of Information

1. Veterinarians shall, upon request from any ACO, Police Department, Department of Environmental Management, or Department of Health personnel investigating a possible rabies exposure, release all requested patient information pertinent to such investigation. Such information may include, but is not limited to: animal's species, name, breed, sex, coloration, age, date of last rabies vaccination, the date when the next rabies booster is due, ear tag, registration, and/or tattoo number, owner/guardian's name, physical address, and telephone number(s), the rabies tag number, the name of the rabies vaccine manufacturer, and the name of the veterinarian who administered the most recent rabies vaccination.

2.7 Importation of Domestic Animals: Health Certificates

A. Imported Dogs, Cats, Ferrets

1. Any dog, cat or ferret transported into the State of Rhode Island must be accompanied by an Official Certificate of Veterinary Inspection that is compliant with § 1.7 of this Subchapter, (Rules and Regulations Governing the Importation of Domestic Animals) signed by a duly licensed veterinarian from the state of origin stating that the animal is not showing signs of infectious, contagious and/or communicable disease, did not originate within an area under quarantine for rabies or any other communicable disease, and has not been exposed to rabies.

2. For all dogs, cats, and ferrets three (3) months of age or older, the Official Certificate of Veterinary Inspection must also show proof of rabies vaccination administration in accordance with the Compendium of Animal Rabies Control incorporated above at § 2.3(A) of this Part prior to entry into Rhode Island.

3. For all dogs, cats, and ferrets over six (6) months of age that have no proof of prior vaccination, a period of thirty (30) days must lapse between vaccination and entry into Rhode Island. See also Rules and Regulations Governing the Importation of Domestic Animals, Part 1 of this Subchapter.

B. Other Imported Species

1. All age appropriate domestic animals other than dogs, cats or ferrets for which species-approved rabies vaccine is available and which are being imported into Rhode Island for exhibition or show purposes must be accompanied by proof of rabies immunization administered in accordance with the vaccine product label prior to entry into Rhode Island. The certificate must also state that the animal did not originate within an area under quarantine for rabies or any other communicable disease, and has not been exposed to rabies.

C. Vaccine Administration

1. All rabies vaccines described within this Ssection must be administered by or under the direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian. Rabies vaccinations that were administered in another state must be administered in a manner consistent with the vaccine requirements of Rhode Island for the animal to be considered currently vaccinated.

2.8 Adoptions and Sales

A. Notice to New Owner of Rabies Vaccination Requirement

1. It shall be unlawful for any pound, protection league, animal shelter, kennel, pet store, humane society, rescue, breeder or any other duly licensed facility to sell, give away, or adopt out any dog, cat or ferret without providing the new owner with a form indicating that inoculation against rabies is required, under R.I. Gen. Laws § 4-13-4.1, within thirty (30) days of adoption for all such animals three (3) months of age or older.

B. Signing of Register by New Owner

1. The pound, protection league, animal shelter, kennel, pet store, humane society, rescue, breeder or other duly licensed facility shall require the new dog, cat or ferret owner to sign a register indicating that the new owner has received such a form and such register shall also contain the name, physical address, and signature of the new owner and shall be

permanently maintained by the facility, pursuant to the provisions of R.I. Gen. Laws § 4-13-4.1(b).

2.9 Rabies Exposure

A. Exposures from Domestic Animals

1. In the event that any human being or domestic animal receives an exposure from any domestic animal, the owner or guardian of the attacking animal, and the individual exposed, or the owner or guardian of the domestic animal that was exposed, must:

    a. Immediately contact the ACO in the city or town within whose borders the exposure occurred.

    b. Upon report of an exposure involving a domestic animal, the ACO shall make a site visit within twenty-four (24) hours and make a report including but not limited to, facts surrounding the exposure, description of the attacking animal, proof of most recent rabies vaccination for animal that was exposed, if any, proof of most recent rabies vaccination for the attacking animal, if any, the attacking animal owner's name and physical address, victim's name and physical address or exposed animal owner's name and physical address along with the ACO's recommendations and/or order of disposition of the attacking animal.

B. Investigation

1. During the course of the ACO's site visit and investigation, he/she shall make an order concerning:

    a. euthanasia,

    b. quarantine,

    c. strict confinement,

    d. close observation and/or

    e. rabies immunization of any species of animal for which a USDA licensed rabies vaccine is available. If an exposure involves a species for which there is no USDA licensed rabies vaccine available, the ACO should contact the State Veterinarian to discuss extra-label vaccine use.

2. The person exposed and/or the owner or guardian of a suspect rabid or attacking dog, cat or ferret shall be notified by the ACO within twenty-four (24) hours of the disposition of the exposing/exposed animal.

a. All orders of quarantine, strict confinement, or observation shall be for a duration sufficient to control rabies as determined by the ACO. The ACO may seek the recommendations of the RI Rabies Control Board as published in the State of Rhode Island Manual for Rabies Management and Protocols.

b. If the exposure occurs during an animal attack and the attacking dog, cat or ferret is killed during the attack, the ACO may, after determining if the attacking animal caused a potential exposure, require the head of the attacking animal to be submitted for examination and testing to the Department of Health Laboratory.

c. Canines belonging to State/Municipal police departments that bite during their police duties may not necessarily be placed under quarantine provided such animals are current on their rabies immunization. Such animals, if not quarantined, must be examined by a veterinarian fourteen (14) days following any such exposure incident and be certified in writing to be free from signs of rabies.

d. If the suspect rabid animal(s) reside in a municipality other than that where the exposure occurred, the responding ACO shall notify the ACO of the city or town where the suspect animal resides. The ACO for the municipality where the animal resides, shall then be responsible for ensuring that the conditions of confinement/quarantine are met.

e. If the suspect rabid animal resides in a state other than RI or if the ACO has good cause to believe that the owner or guardian of the animal will not comply with any action to protect the health of the victim of an exposure, whether that victim is a person or domestic animal, then the ACO may hold the suspect animal under quarantine in the municipality where the exposure occurred. All orders of quarantine must be of a duration sufficient to control rabies as determined by the ACO. The ACO may seek the recommendations of the RI Rabies Control Board as published in the State of Rhode Island Manual for Rabies Management and Protocols. Any expense related to quarantine as described will be the financial responsibility of the suspect animal's owner.

C. Humans Exposed by a Wild Mammal, or Stray or Feral Domestic Animal

1. If any human being is exposed by a feral or stray domestic mammal, or wild mammal, the individual exposed must immediately call the ACO in the city or town within which the exposure occurred. The domestic mammal, or wild mammal may be ordered euthanized by an ACO.

2. The euthanized animal's head shall be submitted to RI Department of Health Laboratory for rabies testing.

3. Any feral or stray domestic mammal, or wild mammal that is not euthanized must be quarantined by the ACO for a duration sufficient to control rabies as determined by the ACO in concurrence with the State Veterinarian. Feral and stray dogs must be held in compliance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 4-13-15. Feral and stray cats must be held in compliance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 4-22-5.

4. The ACO must notify RIDOH of all potential and documented animal exposures to humans.

D. Domestic Animals Exposed by a feral or stray domestic mammal, or wild mammal

1. If any domestic animal is exposed to or attacked by a feral or stray domestic mammal, or wild mammal, the owner of the domestic animal shall immediately contact the ACO in the city or town within which the exposure occurred.

2. The attacking feral or stray domestic mammal, or wild mammal may be ordered euthanized by an ACO and the head may be submitted to the Rhode Island Department of Health Laboratory for rabies testing.

3. Any attacking feral or stray domestic mammal, or wild mammal that is not euthanized must be quarantined by the ACO for a duration sufficient to control rabies as determined by the ACO in concurrence with the State Veterinarian. Feral and stray dogs must be held in compliance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 4-13-15. Feral and stray cats must be held in compliance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 4-22-5.

4. If the victim animal is domestic and other than a dog, cat or ferret, the responding ACO shall notify the State Veterinarian. The State Veterinarian will make recommendations regarding management of the exposed animal to the ACO. The responding ACO shall make an order concerning euthanasia, quarantine, strict confinement, close observation and/or rabies immunization of the victim animal in concurrence with the State Veterinarian.

5. If the victim animal is non-domestic (i.e. wild or exotic animal), the ACO shall contact the State Veterinarian. The State Veterinarian will make recommendations regarding management of the exposed animal to the ACO. The responding ACO shall make an order concerning euthanasia, quarantine, strict confinement, close observation and/or rabies immunization of the victim animal in concurrence with the State Veterinarian.

6. If the attacking and/or victim animal(s) reside in a municipality other than that where the exposure occurred, the responding ACO shall notify the ACO of the city or town where the animal resides. The ACO for the municipality where the animal resides shall then be responsible for ensuring that the conditions of confinement/quarantine are met.

7. If the attacking and/or victim animal(s) resides in a state other than RI or if the ACO has good cause to believe that the owner of the animal will not comply with any action to protect the health of the victim of an exposure, whether that victim is a person or domestic animal, then the ACO may hold the suspect animal under quarantine in the municipality where the exposure occurred. All orders of quarantine must be of a duration sufficient to control rabies as determined by the ACO. The ACO may seek the recommendations of the RI Rabies Control Board as published in the State of Rhode Island Manual for Rabies Management and Protocols. Any expense related to quarantine as described will be the financial responsibility of the suspect animal's owner.

2.10 Rabies Testing

A. Domestic animal testing: No suspect rabid animal shall be euthanized without being tested for rabies. Any suspect rabid animal that dies during quarantine shall be tested for rabies at the RI State Health Laboratory or a laboratory recommended by the State Veterinarian.

B. Wild animal testing: The decision whether to test wild animals will be made on a case-by-case basis. The State Veterinarian will have the authority to authorize testing of wild animals.

2.11 Quarantine

A. An ACO shall order euthanasia, quarantine, strict confinement, close observation and/or rabies immunization for any mammal suspected of rabies incubation or exposure. Any order for quarantine or strict confinement shall specifically enumerate all conditions of such quarantine or strict confinement. All orders of quarantine must be of a duration sufficient to control rabies as determined by the ACO. The ACO may seek the recommendations of the RI Rabies Control Board as published in the State of Rhode Island Manual for Rabies Management and Protocols. A copy of such order shall be sent to the State Veterinarian within seven (7) days of issuance. Off-premises quarantine must only occur at a quarantine facility approved for that purpose by the State Veterinarian or his/her agent.

B. Suspect Rabid Animal

1. Any suspect rabid animal which cannot safely be maintained in a secure off-premise quarantine, and which does not meet the criteria of § 2.11(D)

of this Part for strict confinement, may be euthanized and tested for rabies.

C. Quarantine Not Maintained

1. If, in the opinion of the State Veterinarian, the quarantined animal cannot humanely be maintained for the required quarantine period, the animal may be euthanized and tested for rabies prior to the completion of the quarantine period.

D. Strict Confinement

1. An ACO may allow strict confinement for any suspect rabid dog, cat or ferret if the following criteria can be met:

   a. The suspect animal is currently vaccinated against rabies and;

   b. The ACO or a licensed veterinarian shall, at the owner's expense, observe and certify in writing that the animal is free of signs of rabies on at least the first and last day of the quarantine period. If the animal becomes ill, escapes, exposes a person or other domestic animal, or has an additional rabies exposure during the quarantine or strict confinement period, the local ACO shall immediately be notified by the person having possession of the animal. At the end of the strict confinement period, the release from quarantine must be accomplished in writing by the ACO or licensed veterinarian examining the animal at the close of the quarantine period.

E. Refusal of Strict Confinement

1. The ACO may refuse Strict Confinement based on but not limited to the following factors:

   a. The owner's history of non-compliance with regard to animal control ordinances/regulations/statutes;

   b. If upon inspection by the ACO of the proposed home confinement area, it is determined to be unsatisfactory;

   c. Evidence of non-compliance (intentional or otherwise) to an order of quarantine;

2. If, in the opinion of the ACO, a suspect rabid animal cannot be safely quarantined off premise, the ACO may allow strict confinement after concurrence with the State Veterinarian, the conditions of § 2.11(D)(2) of this Part notwithstanding.

F. Owner or Guardian Strict Confinement

1. If the suspect rabid dog, cat or ferret with a known owner or guardian is ordered by the ACO to be held in strict confinement:

   a. The owner/ guardian must strictly abide by the order of strict confinement as issued by the ACO;

   b. Such order of strict confinement must include specific instructions regarding manner of confinement and frequency of observation of the suspect rabid animal, characteristics to be aware of as well as what to do in the event of illness, behavioral change, escape, if the animal exposes a person or other domestic animal, or if the animal has an additional rabies exposure.

   c. Said animal must be examined by a veterinarian or ACO on the last day of strict confinement and certified in writing to be free of signs of rabies.

   d. Failure by the owner to abide by the specific instructions of strict confinement will result in seizure of the animal and euthanasia and rabies testing or completion of the quarantine off premise at the owner's expense.

G. Off Premises Quarantine

1. In the event that the owner/guardian of a suspect rabid dog, cat or ferret chooses to quarantine their animal instead of euthanizing said animal for rabies testing, and the conditions of § 2.11(D) of this Part cannot be met with the result that the animal is quarantined away from the owner/guardian's premises, the owner or guardian shall be responsible for all costs resulting from such ordered quarantine, including, but not limited to, a specified amount per day for the care and feeding of the quarantined animal as specified by the quarantine facility, and any and all additional fees required by the quarantining veterinarian, animal hospital, pound and/or kennel arising out of the quarantine. In order to be released from quarantine, any suspect rabid animal quarantined on or off premises must be examined by an ACO or Veterinarian on or promptly after the last day of quarantine and certified in writing to be free from signs of rabies.

H. Illness or Behavioral Change

1. If the suspect rabid dog, cat or ferret quarantined off premises becomes ill or displays a behavioral change during the quarantine period, the ACO shall ensure that the animal be examined by a licensed veterinarian. If the veterinarian concludes that the animal shows signs compatible with a diagnosis of rabies, the animal shall be immediately euthanized and tested for rabies.

I. Strays

1. If the suspect rabid dog, cat or ferret has no apparent owner and the ACO orders quarantine, said animal shall be held in accordance with state law. Feral and stray dogs must be held in compliance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 4-13-15. Feral and stray cats must be held in compliance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 4-22-5.

   a. To allow the owner/guardian an opportunity to claim the animal, a reasonable attempt to notify the owner/keeper of the seizure and quarantine of the animal shall be made. Such notice may be limited to posting the animal's description at the place of quarantine and/or the office of the city or town clerk.

   b. After the minimum holding period, the animal may be euthanized by a licensed veterinarian.

   c. If euthanasia of said animal is performed prior to the conclusion of the holding period and if the animal euthanized is known to have exposed an animal or human, the animal shall be decapitated and the head shall be submitted for examination and rabies testing.

   d. If the dog, cat or ferret with no apparent owner or guardian dies at any time during the quarantine and said animal is known to have exposed an animal or a human, the animal shall be decapitated and the head shall be submitted for examination and rabies testing.

   e. If the dog, cat or ferret with no apparent owner or guardian becomes ill at any time during the quarantine and said animal is known to have exposed an animal or a human, the animal shall be examined by a licensed veterinarian.

   f. If the veterinarian determines that said animal shows signs compatible with a diagnosis of rabies, the animal shall be euthanized and the head submitted for examination and rabies testing.

J. Ferrets

1. Due to the lack of an established incubation period, if the suspect rabid animal is a ferret, the ACO shall issue an order of quarantine or strict confinement for a duration sufficient to control rabies as determined by the ACO. The ACO may seek the recommendations of the RI Rabies Control Board as published in the State of Rhode Island Manual for Rabies Management and Protocols l. The ACO shall also make an order concerning euthanasia, restraint, quarantine or disposal of a ferret as deemed necessary to mitigate the risk of rabies transmission. The ACO shall send a copy of any order he/she issues to the State Veterinarian.

K. Livestock and Wild Mammals

1. If the suspect rabid animal is domestic and other than a dog, cat or ferret, the ACO shall issue an order of quarantine or strict confinement for a duration sufficient to control rabies as determined by the ACO in concurrence with the State Veterinarian.

2. If the suspect rabid animal is a wild mammal, the ACO shall issue an order of quarantine or strict confinement for a duration sufficient to control rabies as determined by the ACO in concurrence with the State Veterinarian.

3. For wild and livestock species, euthanasia should be considered for animals involved in high risk exposures as determined by the State Veterinarian in consultation with the RI Department of Health.

L. Any owner of an animal who is aggrieved by any order of quarantine, strict confinement, or euthanasia may appeal that order pursuant to the provisions set forth in R.I. Gen. Laws § 4-13-29(b).

2.12 Record Keeping

A. All ACO's shall maintain a record of all animals placed under an Order of Quarantine and the final disposition of the animal following the termination of the quarantine or rabies examination;

B. Any Order of Quarantine shall be made on forms provided by the DEM, Division of Agriculture. A copy of any order of quarantine so issued shall be sent to the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, Division of Agriculture, State Veterinarian, Animal Health Program;

C. In the event that any ACO orders a dog, cat, or ferret euthanized for the purpose of Rabies diagnosis, the head shall be examined and tested for rabies by the RI State Health Laboratory or a State approved laboratory;

D. The ACO will inform the Rhode Island Department of Health of such a submission.

2.13 Violations

A. Any person, who violates any provision of these regulations may be subject to fines not to exceed five hundred dollars ($500) per offense, and/or, if applicable criminal prosecution under R.I. Gen. Laws § 4-13-29.3.

2.14 Enforcement

A. Any ACO with authority in the jurisdiction where a violation occurred, any Officer of a municipal or state police department, the Rhode Island State Veterinarian, or

any Officer of DEM Environmental Police has the authority to enforce any of the provisions of these regulations.

2.15 Applicability

A. These Regulations shall apply to any owner, or guardian of a domestic or non-domestic animal kept or housed within the State of Rhode Island.

2.16 Severability

A. If any section or provision of these Regulations is held invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining sections or provisions of the Regulations shall not be affected thereby.

2.17 Consistency

A. No provision of these regulations shall be construed to prevent enforcement of any other state, federal or local laws and regulations duly adopted for the purpose of protecting the public health.