



RICK SNYDER  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

JAMIE CLOVER ADAMS  
DIRECTOR

## **Rabies Vaccination of Dogs in Public and Private Settings**

Animal Industry Division Policy Effective July 6, 2016

### **Purpose**

To set forth expected protocols for rabies vaccination of dogs in both public (such as at animal shelters) and private settings, maximize the protection of public health, and assure rabies vaccinations are administered in accordance with the Animal Industry Act, the Michigan Public Health Code, and the Dog Law of 1919.

### **Background**

1. The Animal Industry Act, 1988 PA 466, MCL 287.701 *et seq.*, regulates the administration of biologics and Section 43(4) of the Animal Industry Act provides that:

*Veterinary biologicals shall be administered only by a licensed veterinarian or under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian unless used in compliance with section 18814 of the public health code, Act No. 368 of the Public Acts of 1978, being section 333.18814 of the Michigan Compiled Laws.*

2. The Animal Industry Act, 1988 PA 466, MCL 287.701 *et seq.*, regulates the administration of biologics and Section 6(32) defines "veterinary biological" to mean:

*all viruses, serums, toxins, and analogous products of natural or synthetic origin, or products prepared from any type of genetic engineering, such as diagnostics, antitoxins, vaccines, live microorganisms, killed microorganisms, and the antigenic or immunizing components of microorganisms intended for use in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of diseases in animals.*

3. The Dog Law of 1919, 1919 PA 339, MCL 287.261 *et seq.*, regulates rabies vaccination of dogs and Section 6(8) of the Dog Law of 1919 provides that:

*The owner of a dog that is required to be licensed under this section shall keep the dog currently vaccinated against rabies by an accredited veterinarian with a vaccine licensed by the United States department of agriculture.*

4. The Public Health Code, 1978 PA 368, MCL 333.1101 *et seq.*, regulates the practice of veterinary medicine and Section 18805(2) of the Code defines the practice of veterinary medicine to include:

*Prescribing or administering a drug, medicine, treatment, or method of procedure; performing an operation or manipulation; applying an apparatus or appliance; or giving an instruction or demonstration designed to alter an animal from its normal condition.*

5. The Public Health Code, 1978 PA 368, MCL 333.1101 *et seq.*, regulates practice as a veterinary technician and Section 18805(1) of the Code defines practice as a veterinary technician to mean:

*The practice of veterinary medicine based on less comprehensive knowledge and skill than that required of a veterinarian and performed under supervision of a veterinarian.*

6. The Public Health Code, 1978 PA 368, MCL 333.1101 *et seq.*, regulates the practice of veterinary medicine and Section 18802(4) provides that:

*"Supervision" includes that degree of close physical proximity necessary for the supervising veterinarian to observe and monitor the performance of a veterinary technician.*

7. The Public Health Code, 1978 PA 368, MCL 333.1101 *et seq.*, regulates the practice of veterinary medicine and Rules promulgated pursuant to the Public Health Code, R 338.4901 *et seq.*, and Rule 11 defines delegation and states:

*A Veterinarian shall not delegate the performance of acts, tasks, or functions that fall within the practice of veterinary medicine unless the veterinarian has first examined the patient on which the delegated procedures are to be performed and determined the need for such veterinary services. The delegating veterinarian shall observe and monitor the performance of the delegated procedures to the extent necessary to ensure that the activities of the delegatee are within the scope of the orders, assignments, or prescription of the veterinarian.*

8. The Dog Law of 1919, 1919 PA 339, MCL 287.261 *et seq.*, requires all dogs, with certain exceptions, to be licensed and vaccinated against rabies. In order to obtain a dog license, the Dog Law of 1919, Section 6(5) provides that:


*Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the application for a license shall be accompanied by a valid certificate of a current vaccination for rabies, with a vaccine licensed by the United States department of agriculture, signed by an accredited veterinarian.*

9. It is reasonable to expect that dogs offered for adoption in public settings, such as animal shelters, will need a dog license and proof of rabies vaccination provided by an accredited and Michigan licensed veterinarian once they are adopted. It is also reasonable to expect that most owned dogs vaccinated in the public or private sector settings will need a dog license and proof of rabies vaccination provided by an accredited and Michigan licensed veterinarian.

### **Policy**

Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Animal Industry Division recommends accredited and Michigan licensed veterinarians follow the "Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control, 2016" and manufacturers' label for administration of rabies vaccine. In addition, the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development considers the following protocol acceptable for administration of rabies vaccine to dogs in public and private settings:

1. An accredited and Michigan licensed veterinarian examines the dog to assure suitability for vaccination and to have knowledge of the dog in order to sign a rabies vaccination certificate for the dog.
2. The accredited and Michigan licensed veterinarian administers the rabies vaccination to the dog.
3. The accredited and Michigan licensed veterinarian may, in lieu of vaccinating the dog, direct a Michigan licensed veterinary technician to vaccinate the dog against rabies as long as the veterinarian is close enough to the veterinary technician and the dog to be able to observe and monitor the veterinary technician's activity.
4. The accredited and Michigan licensed veterinarian shall sign a rabies vaccination certificate for the dog.
5. The rabies vaccination for the dog shall be noted in the dog's medical record.
6. When rabies vaccination of dogs is not performed in accordance with this protocol, the dog will be considered to be unvaccinated.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
James Averill, DVM, PhD  
State Veterinarian and Division Director  
Animal Industry Division

7-6-16  
Date

