



## World Rabies Day

Date: September 28, 2023

**Public Health Message Type:**  Alert  Advisory  Update  Information

**Intended Audience:**  All public health partners  Healthcare providers  Infection preventionists  
 Local health departments  Schools/child care centers  ACOs  
 Animal health professionals  Other: Municipal government

### Key Points:

- (1) September 28<sup>th</sup> is World Rabies Day- this global health observance was started in 2007 and is an opportunity to reflect on how rabies impacts New Jersey and other communities around the world. While rabies is a 100% preventable disease, nearly 60,000 people die from rabies around the world each year.
- (2) Human rabies cases in the United States are rare, however human exposures to suspect or confirmed rabid animals continue to occur in New Jersey and require prompt public health action to prevent human disease.
- (3) On average, 200-300 animals test positive for rabies annually in New Jersey. It is important to continue education about rabies and to promote actions to prevent rabies, such as vaccinating pets, avoiding contact with wildlife, ensuring access to animal control, and seeking prompt medical care and post-exposure prophylaxis for rabies exposures.

### Action Items:

- (1) Local health departments:
  - a. Conduct a prompt and thorough public health investigation in response to all reports of animal bites/rabies exposures in people and domestic animals.
  - b. Maintain relationships with healthcare providers and veterinarians in your jurisdiction and ensure they have access to resources on rabies.
  - c. Forward a copy of completed CDC-2 forms (Report of Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis) to NJDOH CDS by encrypted email or fax after confirming the patient received all doses.
- (2) Municipalities:
  - a. Promote rabies vaccine clinics being held in your municipality to provide residents free rabies vaccines for their dogs and cats.
- (3) Healthcare providers:
  - a. Report animal bites and rabies post-exposure prophylaxis administration to the local health department where the person resides. Local health department contact information can be found at <https://www.nj.gov/health/lh/community/>
- (4) Veterinarians:
  - a. Report suspect rabid animals or domestic animal exposures to suspect/confirmed rabid animals to the local health department where the animal is located.

- b. Work with local health departments to coordinate animal rabies testing at the NJ Public Health and Environmental Laboratories Rabies lab.
- c. Local health department contact information can be found at <https://www.nj.gov/health/lh/community/>

**Contact Information:**

- NJDOH Communicable Disease Service, Zoonotic Disease Team
  - Email: [zoonoticrn@doh.nj.gov](mailto:zoonoticrn@doh.nj.gov)
  - Phone: (609) 826-4872
  - Fax: (609) 826-4874

**Resources:**

- Communicable Disease Service Rabies Webpage: <https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/rabies.shtml>
  - NJ Rabies Lab Webpage: <https://www.nj.gov/health/phel/public-health-lab-testing/rabies/>
  - New Jersey Guide to Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis: [https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/rabies/pep\\_healthcare\\_professionals.pdf](https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/rabies/pep_healthcare_professionals.pdf)
  - CDC-2 Form: Report of Rabies PEP: <https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/rabies/cdc-2.PDF>
  - Management of Domestic Animal Rabies Exposures: [https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/rabies/appxIII\\_animal\\_confine.pdf](https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/rabies/appxIII_animal_confine.pdf)
  - CDC Rabies Webpage: <https://www.cdc.gov/rabies/index.html>
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