



Bulletin No. 12

June 14, 1991

Rabies Control Program - Lay Vaccinator Program

The purpose of the Rabies Control Program (RCP) is to ensure availability of rabies vaccination for dogs and cats throughout Alaska.

Authority

The Rabies program has operated successfully since its establishment in 1978. The Program was developed in response to concerns about epidemic rabies in wildlife and the absence at that time of a consistent program by the state to reduce human exposures to rabid animals through the adequate provision of rabies vaccination to dogs and cats. In 1978, after seeking broad input, the Department of Health and Social Services revised its regulations pertaining to the control of animal diseases transmissible to humans (7 AAC 27.020 - .040). Contained within the regulations [7 AAC 27.020 (b) (4)] were provisions for the department to establish its lay vaccinator program.

(b) (4) "A rabies vaccination is valid only when performed by or under the direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian, or by an individual approved by the Department of Health and Social Services as qualified to administer the vaccine and for whom the approval is in the best interest of the State in carrying out the purposes of this section and section 30 of this chapter. The availability of a licensed veterinarian will not of itself preclude this approval."

Policies for the Lay Vaccinator Program

The Rabies Control Program does not exist to provide equal access to lay vaccinators. The program exists to ensure equal access to rabies vaccination. In many communities, access to rabies vaccination is provided by existing animal control programs or by the private veterinarian community. In many urban communities, periodic, low cost or free, rabies vaccination clinics are sponsored by the veterinarians and/or local governments. Where rabies vaccination is provided, there is no need for certification of lay vaccinators. Where rabies vaccination is not available and there exists a local agency that potentially could provide a person to be certified, the Rabies Control Program has provided training and certification so that rabies vaccination is available.

The Rabies Control Program provides rabies vaccine that is distributed free-of-charge, along with tags and standard vaccination certificates, to all lay vaccinators and to all private veterinarians. No charge may be made rabies vaccine that is obtained from our state program. Because the program relies totally upon contributed time by field staff from various agencies, it has been the practice for a low fee to be charged to help support the costs of administration of rabies vaccination clinics and to support the sponsoring agencies' involvement in rabies vaccination clinics and in animal control efforts. Private veterinarians may not charge for vaccine provided by the state but may charge for administration of the vaccine. No funds may be personally accepted by a lay vaccinator.

Lay vaccinators must be trained in the handling, administration, and reporting of rabies vaccine in order to participate in the Program. The lay vaccinator program is involved only in rabies vaccination efforts and in rabies control. No other animal vaccines are included or covered by our program. Lay vaccinators are certified by the State Program to provide vaccinations in their local communities or local geographic areas only.

Lay vaccinators receive supervision through their sponsoring agency or organization. Individuals who are employed by or supervised by licensed veterinarians are encouraged to attend courses provided to lay vaccinators but are not certified as lay vaccinators. We certify only individuals who are employed by a public agency or organization such as the Indian Health Service, Municipalities, Police, Animal Control Programs, and Military. No private individual has been certified as a lay vaccinator.

The program exists only by using existing staff and other agencies. We provide specialized training to assure supervision, accountability, and a high quality standard of practice.

Requirements for Lay Vaccinators

- Lay vaccinators must be employed by a public service agency or government organization: for example, Alaska Native Corporations, municipal animal control agencies, health agencies, Federal (IHS) and State Sanitarians, Bureau of Indian Affairs, State and/or U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Village Public Safety Officers, Police Departments, Military, Humane Societies.
- Delegation of Appointments - IHS sanitarians who have regional supervision of several villages are empowered by the State of Alaska to select, train and administer, under their administration/supervision, a second tier of lay vaccinators, who in their judgment meet the unique needs within villages .
- Proof of Service - An initial supply of vaccine, syringes and needles, certificates, and tags are provided at no cost to certified lay vaccinators. Subsequent resupply vaccine and continuation of certification is contingent upon receipt of completed certificates.
- Area of Activity - IHS Sanitarians and other waived individuals may be appointed as lay vaccinators at large. All other lay vaccinators are limited to specific villages. Furthermore, lay vaccinators may work in concert with other coordinated immunization clinics. However, they may not compete in such ventures.
- The Rabies Control Program certifies individuals through official organizations and governmental agencies.
- Lay vaccinators are certified and authorized to provide only rabies vaccine by the Rabies Control Program. The Rabies Control Program does not approve, certify, or authorize any use of vaccines other than rabies vaccine and does not

approve, certify, or authorize provision of animal health care.

- Lay vaccinators may not charge for providing rabies vaccine.
- Lay vaccinators are trained and certified by the Rabies Control Program to provide only the specific rabies vaccine selected by the Rabies Control Program
- Lay vaccinators are certified by the Rabies Control Program to provide rabies vaccine only in specific geographic areas.
- Participation in the Rabies Control Program is voluntary. The Rabies Control Program pays no compensation to any participant.
- Appointments are for one (1) calendar year. A request must be received from the sponsoring agency to renew. In the event no renewal request is received, certificates expire one year from issue.
- Any unprofessional action(s) or violation(s) of program policies by a lay vaccinator which results in a negative impact for the state rabies program are subject to review. Subsequent to review, the Rabies Coordinator/State Epidemiologist may revoke certificates issued to that person or persons. Revocation is not subject to further appeal.
- A nominal fee may be assessed to defray administrative costs. No monies may be personally accepted by the lay vaccinator, nor may any charge be made for vaccine, syringes and needles, certificates or tags. In the event an infraction occurs, an investigation will be conducted; if verified, revocation of certification will occur.
- Return of Supplies - In the event that expiration or revocation of certification occurs, all unused vaccine, syringes and needles, certificates and tags shall be returned to the state.