

Canine Rabies Vaccination Exemptions

Background

On January 1, 2012 California State Law began allowing rabies vaccination exemptions if approved by the Local Health Officer (LHO). In some counties, the LHO has delegated the responsibility to an animal control agency. However, in most of Los Angeles County (except Pasadena, Long Beach and Vernon) requests are reviewed by our program.

The law states that an exemption may be granted for the rabies vaccine, if “a rabies vaccination would endanger the dog’s life.” It also requires that the condition warranting the exemption be documented. The entire law is available to view at: <http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes.xhtml>. Click on the Health and Safety Code. Then enter for Code: HSC and Section: 121690.

Veterinarians can contact our office to get a copy of the exemption form at: **213-989-7060**.

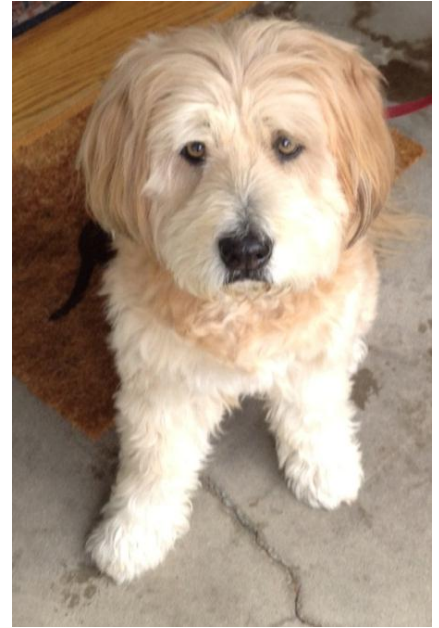


Photo: Emily Beeler

What You Need To KNOW

- In the first year this law came into effect, our office worked to develop consistent standards for reviewing requests, referring to published literature on adverse reactions to rabies vaccinations in dogs.
- In 2012, we received 124 requests. We approved 43% and did not approve 57%.
- The exemption is valid for one year, after which the dog must either be vaccinated for rabies or another request must be submitted and approved.
- The dog must be confined to the owner’s premises or must be on a leash not exceeding six feet in length and under the direct control of an adult. The dog should have no contact with any dog or cat that is not currently vaccinated against rabies.
- For dogs living in Los Angeles County (except Pasadena, Long Beach, or Vernon), canine rabies vaccination exemption requests are submitted to our program. See below for details.
 - For dogs living in Pasadena, contact the Pasadena Humane Society at 626-792-7151.
 - For dogs living in Long Beach, contact Long Beach Animal Care Services, at 562-570-7387, or visit: http://www.longbeach.gov/acs/pet_license/canine_rabies_exemption.asp.
 - For dogs living in Vernon, contact the Southeast Area Animal control authority (SEAACA) at 562-803-3301
- We accept rabies vaccination exemption request only from veterinarians, not from dog owners.
- There is no California law addressing rabies vaccination exemption for cats. Cat owners should contact their city to inquire about procedures for getting an exemption.



- Cases where an exemption **may be approved** include:
 - Life-threatening anaphylactic reaction after administration of a rabies vaccine, specifically. Facial angioedema and hives do not qualify as life-threatening.
 - Immune-Mediated Hemolytic Anemia (IMHA), if:
 - Onset was within 1 month of a rabies vaccination, or
 - More than one episode (i.e. relapses)
 - Dog currently on immunosuppressive therapy for cancer or immune-mediated disease (low dose prednisone is not considered immunosuppressive therapy).
- Exemptions **will NOT be approved** in the following cases:
 - Old age
 - Minor reactions to rabies or other vaccinations
 - Positive rabies titers
 - Severe reaction to vaccinations other than rabies
 - Medical condition not documented or no documentation submitted.
 - Short-term exemptions (e.g. 1 month exemption for recovery from acute illness). In such cases, work with the Animal Control or other licensing agency to request a temporary delay.
 - Illegible requests
- We strive to respond to the request within 5 working days.

What You Need To DO

- Inform your clients that, if their exemption request is approved,
 - Their dog will be considered at higher risk for contracting rabies and will be considered legally unvaccinated. This means the animal will be subject to a California state-mandated 180 day quarantine if exposed to a wild animal rather than just 30 days.
 - Their dog must be kept at home, or on a 6 foot long leash controlled by an adult.
 - Their dog cannot live with other unvaccinated animals.
- In order to apply for an exemption, fill out the **exemption form in your Veterinary Public Health Manual** or call us at: 213-989-7060 to get a copy of the form.
- Submit the forms with up to 5 pages of the medical records documenting the dog's condition.
- Respond to any requests from us for additional information (usually sent by fax).
- Provide copies of the final document (Approved or Not Approved) to your client.



Cat Rabies Vaccination & Licensing Requirements

Background

Although California State Law does not require rabies vaccination of cats, it is highly recommended. Additionally, the County of Los Angeles has an ordinance requiring rabies vaccination and licensing of cats. This ordinance is upheld in certain cities of the county, and cats residing in these cities (based on owner address, not address of veterinary hospital or clinic) must be vaccinated for rabies and licensed. Information regarding licensing in certain cities can be obtained by calling local shelters or animal control services divisions.



Cities of Los Angeles that **do NOT** require cat rabies vaccination and licensing:

Arcadia, Avalon, Bell Gardens, Bellflower, Beverly Hills, Cerritos, Commerce, Covina, Culver City, Downey, Duarte, El Segundo, Glendale, Glendora, Hawthorne, Hermosa Beach, Huntington Park, La Canada Flintridge, Lakewood, Lawndale, Los Angeles, Manhattan Beach, Monrovia, Montebello, Norwalk, Palos Verdes Estates, Paramount, Pasadena, Pico Rivera, Redondo Beach, Rosemead, San Dimas, San Gabriel, San Marino, Santa Fe Springs, Santa Monica, Sierra Madre, Signal Hill, South El Monte, South Gate, South Pasadena, Temple City, Torrance, Whittier

Cities of Los Angeles that **do require** cat rabies vaccination and licensing:

*Agoura Hills, Alhambra, Artesia, Azusa, Baldwin Park, Bell, Bradbury, Calabasas, Carson, Claremont, Compton, Cudahy, Diamond Bar, El Monte, Gardena, Hawaiian Gardens, Hidden Hills, City of Industry, Inglewood, Irwindale, La Habra Heights, La Mirada, La Puente, La Verne, Lancaster, Lomita, Long Beach, Lynwood, Malibu, Maywood, Monterey Park, Palmdale, Pomona, Rancho Palos Verdes, Rolling Hills, Rolling Hills Estates, San Fernando, Santa Clarita, Walnut, West Covina, West Hollywood, Westlake Village, Unincorporated Areas**

***Unincorporated Areas/Communities in Los Angeles County**

Acton, Agua Dulce, Alondra Park, Altadena, Avocado Heights, Castaic, Charter Oak, Citrus, Del Aire, Desert View Highlands, East Rancho Dominguez, East La Mirada, East Los Angeles, East Pasadena, East San Gabriel, Elizabeth Lake, Florence-Graham, Green Valley, Hacienda Heights, Hasley Canyon, La Crescenta-Montrose, Ladera Heights, Lake Hughes, Lake Los Angeles, Lennox, Leona Valley, Littlerock, Marina del Rey, Mayflower Village, North El Monte, Quartz Hill, Rose Hills, Rowland Heights, San Pasqual, South Monrovia Island, South San Gabriel, South San Jose Hills, South Whittier, Stevenson Ranch, Sun Village, Topanga, Val Verde, Valinda, View Park-Windsor Hills, Vincent, Walnut Park, West Athens, West Carson, West Rancho Dominguez, West Puente Valley, West Whittier-Los Nietos, Westmont, Willowbrook

Burbank does not require cats to be vaccinated for rabies, but licensing is required.

Note: Information is based on phone and email inquiries in May 2013. City laws are subject to change. Cat owners are encouraged to contact their city for the latest regulations.

