

## House Bill No. 255

An act relating to rabies vaccination; amending s. 828.30, F.S.; revising requirements for the frequency of rabies vaccination for specified animals; revising rabies vaccination certificate requirements; deleting an obsolete provision; prohibiting local governments from mandating revaccination of currently vaccinated animals except in specified instances; providing legislative findings; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Subsections (1), (3), (4), and (7) of section 828.30, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

828.30 Rabies vaccination of dogs, cats, and ferrets.—

(1) All dogs, cats, and ferrets 4 months of age or older must be vaccinated by a licensed veterinarian against rabies with a vaccine that is licensed by the United States Department of Agriculture for use in those species. The owner of every dog, cat, and ferret shall have the animal revaccinated 12 months after the initial vaccination. Thereafter, the interval between vaccinations shall conform to the vaccine manufacturer's directions ~~Government-approved vaccine~~. The cost of vaccination must be borne by the animal's owner. Evidence of circulating rabies virus neutralizing antibodies shall not be used as a substitute for current vaccination in managing rabies exposure or determining the need for booster vaccinations.

(3) Upon vaccination against rabies, the licensed veterinarian shall provide the animal's owner and the animal control authority with a rabies vaccination certificate. Each animal control authority and veterinarian shall use Form 51, "Rabies Vaccination Certificate," of the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians (NASPHV) or an equivalent form approved by the local government that contains all the information required by NASPHV Form 51. The veterinarian who administers the rabies vaccine to an animal as required under this section may affix his or her signature stamp in lieu of an actual signature, which must contain at least the following information:

- (a) ~~The license number of the administering veterinarian.~~
- (b) ~~The name, address, and phone number of the veterinarian and owner.~~
- (c) ~~The date of vaccination.~~
- (d) ~~The expiration date of the vaccination.~~
- (e) ~~The species, age, sex, color, breed, weight, and name of the animal vaccinated.~~
- (f) ~~The rabies vaccine manufacturer.~~

- ~~(g) The vaccine lot number and expiration date.~~
- ~~(h) The type and brand of vaccine used.~~
- ~~(i) The route of administration of the vaccine.~~
- ~~(j) the signature or signature stamp of the licensed veterinarian.~~

(4) ~~Beginning March 1, 1999,~~ Each ferret vaccinated according to this section must be quarantined, when necessary, according to rules of the Department of Health.

(7) This section does not prohibit or limit municipalities or counties from ~~establishing enacting~~ requirements similar to or more stringent than the provisions of this section for the implementation and enforcement of rabies-control ordinances. However, local governments shall not mandate revaccination of currently vaccinated animals except in instances involving post-exposure treatment for rabies.

Section 2. The Legislature finds that it is necessary to require that dogs, cats, and ferrets be currently vaccinated against rabies in order to protect the public from this deadly disease. The Legislature also finds that the present statute does not clearly specify requirements to revaccinate these animals which has led to unnecessary revaccination of currently vaccinated animals in local jurisdictions which enact requirements that are more stringent. The Legislature finds that in order to maximize protection and minimize risks to the animals, revaccination guidelines outlined in the Department of Health's Florida Rabies Prevention and Control guidebook must be incorporated in s. 828.30, Florida Statutes, the governing statute; however, this approach does not interfere with a veterinarian's discretion to use a rabies vaccine of either 1 or 3 years' duration of immunity. The Legislature also determines a need to standardize the rabies certificate form in order to permit easier use by veterinarians and public health officials by adopting the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians' NASPHV Form 51 or an equivalent form approved by the local government. The Legislature finds that since rabies vaccination programs are administered on a calendar year basis, an implementation date of January 1, 2006, will provide for an orderly transition.

Section 3. This act shall take effect January 1, 2006.

Approved by the Governor May 26, 2005.

Filed in Office Secretary of State May 26, 2005.