Chapter 1. Anti-Rabies Vaccination Requirements for Dogs and Cats

§101. Definitions

A. Unless otherwise specifically provided herein, the following words and terms used in this Part of the Sanitary Code and all other Parts which are adopted or may be adopted are defined for the purposes thereof as follows.

Local Health Authority—any parish or municipal health officer, department or other agency charged with the responsibility of preserving the public health.

Owner—any person who keeps in his care or who harbors or has custody of a dog or other animal.

Prairie Dogs—any burrowing rodents of the genus Cynomys. Prairie dogs can harbor monkeypox. Prairie dogs are also known to be a host for fleas, which carry the causative agent of Plague, the bacteria Yersinia pestis. These fleas have the potential to infect other wild animals, as well as domestic animals and humans. Prairie dogs are not indigenous to Louisiana.

Vaccination—the injection, by a licensed veterinarian, of an animal using anti-rabies vaccine approved by the state health officer.

Wild Animal—any animal species wherein the majority of its members are not maintained by humans for recreational, commercial food production, agricultural, research, or industrial purposes. Other than possibly endangered species, the majority of the members of such a species live primarily in a natural or non-domestic environment. Wolves, wolf hybrids, and feline species other than Felis felis/domestic cat hybrids, in circumstances involving rabies vaccination or rabies exposure, will be regarded as wild animals.

Zoonotic disease—a disease in humans caused by an infectious agent transmitted from animals to humans. Zoonotic diseases include, but are not limited to, anthrax (caused by Bacillus anthracis) and plague (caused by Yersinia pestis).

AUTHORITY NOTE: The first source of authority for promulgation of the sanitary code is in R.S. 36:258(B), with more particular provisions throughout Chapters 1 and 4 of Title 40 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes. This Part is promulgated in accordance with the provisions of R.S. 40:5(2), (3) and (10) together with the specific provisions of R.S. 40:4A(2)(a) and R.S. 40:1277.

§107. Domestic Animals Bitten by Rabid Animals

A. When bitten by a rabid animal, unvaccinated dogs, cats, or ferrets shall be destroyed immediately unless the owner is unwilling to have this done, in which case, the unvaccinated animal shall be confined (as described in §111) for four months for dogs and cats and six months for ferrets being released. A rabies vaccine shall be administered at the time of entry into quarantine (confinement) to bring the animal up to current rabies vaccination status. Administration of the vaccine shall be done as soon as possible. It is recommended that the period from exposure to vaccination not exceed 96 hours. If vaccination is delayed the official state public health veterinarian may consider increasing the quarantine period for dogs and cats from four to six months. Dogs, cats, or ferrets that are currently vaccinated shall be re-vaccinated immediately and confined (as described in §111) for 45 days.

1. Overdue dogs and cats. Dogs and cats that are overdue for a booster vaccination and that have appropriate documentation of having received a USDA-licensed rabies vaccine at least once previously shall immediately receive a booster vaccination and shall—be kept under the owner’s control and observed for 45 days. Dogs and cats that are overdue for a booster and without appropriate documentation of having received a USDA-licensed rabies vaccine at least once previously shall be:

   a. treated as unvaccinated, immediately given a booster vaccination and placed in strict quarantine; or

   b. the official state public health veterinarian may consider use of prospective serological monitoring (PSM) of the animal to document prior vaccination by providing evidence of an anamnestic response to booster vaccination. If the official state public health veterinarian authorizes PSM, the animal shall be strictly quarantined while PSM is performed. If the official state public health veterinarian confirms that PSM provides evidence of an anamnestic response, the period of strict quarantine may be ended, and the animal may be kept under the owner’s control and observed for 45 days. If there is inadequate evidence of an anamnestic response, the animal is considered to have never been vaccinated and shall be placed in strict quarantine for 4 to 6 months.

2. Overdue ferrets. Ferrets that are overdue for a booster shall be considered unvaccinated and shall be immediately vaccinated for rabies and strictly quarantined for 6 months.

B. All species of livestock exposed to a rabid animal and currently vaccinated with a vaccine approved for that species by the United States Department of Agriculture should be re-vaccinated immediately and observed for 45 days. Unvaccinated livestock should be slaughtered immediately.

C. Other mammals, including wild animals, exposed to a rabid animal should be euthanized immediately.

D. Animals maintained in a United States Department of Agriculture licensed research facility or accredited zoological parks will be evaluated on a case by case basis by the official state public health veterinarian.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with the provisions of R.S. 40:4A(2)(a), and R.S. 40:1269.3.

infect other wild animals, as well as domestic animals and humans. *Prairie dogs* are not indigenous to Louisiana.

**AUTHORITY NOTE:** Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 40:4(A)(9) and R.S. 40:5(2)(3)(17).

**HISTORICAL NOTE:** Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of Public Health, LR 29:1098 (July 2003).

§303. **Prohibition on Importation/Sale of Prairie Dogs**

A. [formerly paragraph 3:010] The importation and/or sale of prairie dogs in Louisiana is prohibited.

B. [formerly paragraph 3:011] This Section shall not apply to zoos approved by the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums.

**AUTHORITY NOTE:** Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 40:4(A)(9) and R.S. 40:5(2)(3)(17).

**HISTORICAL NOTE:** Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of Public Health, LR 29:1098 (July 2003), amended LR 33:651 (April 2007).