

**TITLE 64  
LEGISLATIVE RULE  
BUREAU FOR PUBLIC HEALTH  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES**

**SERIES 7 EXCERPT  
REPORTABLE DISEASES, EVENTS AND CONDITIONS**

**§64-7-5. Other Reportable Events: Potentially Rabid Animal Bites, Rabid Animals, Rabies Pre-Exposure Vaccinations and Post-Exposure Prophylaxis.**

5.1. If a person is bitten, scratched, or otherwise exposed (gets saliva, neural tissue, or other potentially infectious fluid into an open cut, wound, or mucous membrane) to a terrestrial mammal or bat, then the incident, including the person's full name, date of birth, and address, shall be reported to the local health officer within 24 hours, by phone, or other rapid means of communication, by the following individuals:

5.1.a. The physician or other health care provider caring for or observing the person;

5.1.b. The veterinarian or animal health care provider;

5.1.c. The humane or animal control officer;

5.1.d. The person bitten, scratched, or otherwise exposed, if no physician or other health care provider is in attendance and the person bitten, scratched or otherwise exposed is an adult;

5.1.e. Whoever is caring for the person, if no physician or other health care provider is in attendance and the person bitten, scratched, or otherwise exposed is incapacitated; or

5.1.f. The parent or guardian, if no physician or other health care provider is in attendance and the person bitten, scratched or otherwise exposed is a child.

5.2. The local health officer shall report within 24 hours or one working day to the commissioner the name, date of birth, address, circumstances of the exposure, and action taken for every person bitten, scratched, or otherwise exposed to an animal which has or is suspected of having rabies.

5.3. If the animal is a domestic dog, cat or ferret, the local health officer shall make a reasonable attempt to determine the animal's owner, and, if successful, shall direct the owner to confine the animal for a period of ten days. The owner of the dog cat or ferret, county humane officer, dog warden or sheriff shall notify the local health officer immediately if the animal shows symptoms compatible with rabies or dies, and the local health officer, county humane officer, dog warden or sheriff shall arrange for appropriate examination of the animal's brain at the office of laboratory services. If the bite is on the head, face, or neck or is unusually severe or results in hospitalization or death or if the animal is unlikely to have an owner, at the end of the 10 day observation period, the local health officer may request that the animal be humanely destroyed and arrange for appropriate examination of the animal's brain at the OLS.

5.4. After a reasonable attempt to identify the owner of the animal, if the local health officer cannot determine the owner of the domestic dog cat or ferret, he or she shall direct the county humane officer, dog warden or sheriff to pick up the suspect dog cat or ferret, that has bitten a person and confine it in isolation for a period of ten days. If the animal shows symptoms compatible with rabies, including if the animal bit someone without provocation, or if the animal demonstrates aggressive behavior toward human beings such that the animal may pose a continuing risk to other people, the local health officer shall direct the county humane officer, dog warden, sheriff, or other designee to humanely destroy the animal and arrange for appropriate examination of the animal's brain. If the animal dies, the local health officer shall arrange for appropriate examination of the animal's brain at the office of laboratory services. If the bite is on the head, face, or neck or is unusually severe or results in hospitalization or death or if the animal is unlikely to have an owner, at the end of the 10 day observation period, the local health officer may request that the animal be humanely destroyed and arrange for appropriate examination of the animal's brain at the OLS.

5.5. If a person is reported bitten by any mammal other than a domestic dog cat or ferret, especially a terrestrial mammalian carnivore, such as a raccoon, fox, skunk, coyote, bobcat, or other similar species or hybrid, the local health officer may direct the county humane officer, dog warden, sheriff, or other designee to have the animal humanely destroyed immediately and to arrange for appropriate examination of the animal's brain at the OLS.

5.6. Any person who becomes aware of the existence of an animal apparently afflicted with rabies shall report the existence of the animal, the place where it was last seen, the owner's name, if known, and the symptoms suggesting rabies to the local health officer immediately.

5.7. Health care providers, health care facilities, and other facilities administering rabies post-exposure prophylaxis shall report vaccinations and treatment administered to the local health department. The local health officer shall report animal bites and rabies post-exposure prophylaxis in WVEDSS.