

§3916. Rabies vaccinations

1. Required for cats. Except as provided in subsection 4, an owner or keeper of a cat over 3 months of age must have that cat vaccinated against rabies. Rabies vaccine must be administered by a licensed veterinarian or under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian. Upon receiving an initial vaccination, a cat is considered protected for one year and an owner or keeper of that cat must get a booster vaccination for that cat one year after the initial vaccination and subsequent booster vaccinations at intervals that do not exceed the intervals recommended by a national association of state public health veterinarians for the type of vaccine administered.

[PL 1997, c. 704, §3 (AMD).]

1-A. Required for dogs. Except as provided in subsection 4, an owner or keeper of a dog, within 30 days after the dog attains the age of 3 months, shall have that dog vaccinated against rabies. The rabies vaccine must be administered by a licensed veterinarian or under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian. Upon receiving an initial vaccination, a dog is considered protected for one year and an owner or keeper of that dog shall get a booster vaccination for that dog one year after the initial vaccination and subsequent booster vaccinations at intervals that do not exceed the intervals recommended by a national association of state public health veterinarians for the type of vaccine administered. A wolf hybrid is required to be vaccinated in accordance with this subsection. The procedure prescribed under Title 22, chapter 251, subchapter 5 for a wolf hybrid suspected of having rabies does not change based on proof that the wolf hybrid has received a rabies vaccination.

[PL 2021, c. 99, §6 (RPR).]

2. Certificate. A licensed veterinarian who vaccinates or supervises the vaccination of a cat or dog shall issue to the owner or keeper a certificate of rabies vaccination approved by the State and shall indicate on the certificate the date by which a booster vaccination is required pursuant to subsection 1 or 1-A.

[PL 2005, c. 422, §4 (AMD).]

2-A. Notice to department. A veterinarian who issues a certificate of rabies vaccination for a dog pursuant to subsection 2 shall, within 30 days of issuing the certificate, forward by mail, e-mail or fax a copy of that certificate to the department. The department shall send a copy of the certificate by mail, e-mail or fax to the clerk of the municipality in which the owner resides. If the owner resides in the unorganized territory, the department shall send a copy of the certificate to the dog recorder in that unorganized territory or, in the absence of a duly authorized dog recorder, to the dog recorder in the nearest municipality or unorganized territory in the same county in which the owner resides. The department may retain a copy or electronic record of the rabies certificate. The department may accumulate certificates received and distribute them periodically to the appropriate municipalities and dog recorders. Distributions must be made no fewer than 4 times a year.

[PL 2007, c. 119, §1 (NEW).]

3. Enforcement. A humane agent, an animal control officer or a law enforcement officer may ask an owner or keeper of a cat or dog to present proof of a certificate of rabies vaccination from the State.

[PL 2005, c. 422, §5 (AMD).]

4. Exception. Notwithstanding any provision of this chapter, an animal shelter operated by a nonprofit organization is not required to vaccinate an abandoned or stray cat or dog received by the shelter.

An owner or keeper of a cat or dog is exempt from the requirements of subsection 1 if a medical reason exists that precludes the vaccination of the cat or dog. To qualify for this exemption, the owner or keeper must have a written statement signed by a licensed veterinarian that includes a description of the cat or dog and the medical reason that precludes the vaccination.

[PL 2021, c. 99, §7 (AMD).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1991, c. 779, §26 (NEW). PL 1993, c. 468, §9 (AMD). PL 1995, c. 490, §7 (AMD). PL 1997, c. 704, §§3-5 (AMD). PL 2005, c. 422, §§3-6 (AMD). PL 2007, c. 119, §1 (AMD). PL 2007, c. 439, §8 (AMD). PL 2021, c. 99, §§6, 7 (AMD).

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