



Rabies Testing Notification Form

Date: April 1, 2022

Public Health Message Type: Alert Advisory Update Information

Intended Audience: All public health partners Healthcare providers Infection preventionists
 Local health departments Schools/Childcare centers ACOs
 Animal health professionals Other:

On January 18, 2022, the bill Assembly, No. 1219 was approved. A copy of the pamphlet law can be found [here](#). This requires that when it is necessary to test a domestic companion animal (this does not include domestic livestock) for rabies, the health official requiring the rabies testing or the veterinarian preparing and submitting the specimen for testing must first notify the owner of the animal, verbally and in writing, of:

- 1) The necessity and reason for rabies testing;
- 2) The rabies testing protocol to be followed;
- 3) The protocol for handling of the animal's body;
- 4) The protocol for disposal of the animal's body or return to the owner; and
- 5) The protocol of decapitation.

Once the owner receives the required notification, they shall immediately provide release of the animal to the health official or veterinarian for rabies testing and provide a signature to acknowledge notification of the protocols and procedures to be followed.

This law also required the New Jersey Department of Health to develop and provide a form to be used by health officials and veterinarians to provide the necessary notification to the owner. This form ([VPH-35](#)) is now available and posted on the New Jersey Department of Health [Rabies webpage](#) under "Laboratory Testing and Guidance." Health officials and veterinarians should use this form when an owned domestic animal needs to be tested for rabies.

In situations where a veterinarian or health official has made reasonable attempts to contact the owner to provide notification and the owner is unable to be contacted or does not provide a signature, rabies testing can proceed. The rabies testing notification form has a section for the health official or veterinarian to document date and time of notification attempts, and if notification was given but a signature was unable to be obtained. The health official or veterinarian should retain this form on file for at least six months.

Contact Information:

Health officials or veterinarians with questions about this rabies testing notification form should contact State Public Health Veterinarian Dr. Darby McDermott (Darby.McDermott@doh.nj.gov) or Deputy State Public Health Veterinarian Dr. Patricia Zinna (Patricia.Zinna@doh.nj.gov).