

Alabama Code Title 3. Animals. § 3-7A-9

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(a) Whenever the rabies officer or the health officer receives information that a human being has been bitten or exposed by a dog, cat, or ferret required by this chapter to be immunized against rabies, the officer or his or her authorized agent shall cause the dog, cat, or ferret to be placed in quarantine under the direct supervision of a duly licensed veterinarian for rabies observation as prescribed in Section 3-7A-1. It shall be unlawful for any person having knowledge that a human being has been bitten or exposed by a dog, cat, or ferret to fail to notify one or more of the aforementioned officers. Vaccinated dogs, cats, and ferrets may be authorized to be quarantined in the home of the owner of the animal by the appropriate health officer.

(b) When a dog, cat, or ferret has no owner as determined by the rabies officer or the health officer after reasonable investigation, or if the owner of a dog, cat, or ferret agrees in writing, or if ordered by the health officer, the animal shall be humanely destroyed immediately after the exposure and the head shall be submitted for rabies examination to the state health department laboratory.

(c) The period of quarantine for animals other than domesticated dogs, cats, and ferrets which have bitten or exposed a human being shall be determined by the Alabama Department of Public Health upon consultation with the U.S. Public Health Service. If reliable epidemiologic data is lacking for an animal species regarding duration of rabies virus secretion from the salivary glands, the animals shall be humanely destroyed and the head submitted for rabies examination to the state health department laboratory.

(d) It shall be a violation of this chapter for the owner of such an animal to refuse to comply with the lawful order of the health officer in any particular case. It is unlawful for the owner to sell, give away, transfer to another location, or otherwise dispose of any animal that is known to have bitten or exposed a human being until it is released from quarantine by the rabies officer, duly licensed veterinarian, or by the appropriate health officer.

(e) Instructions for the quarantine of the offending animal shall be delivered in person or by telephone or facsimile to the owner by the health officer or his or her authorized agent. If the instructions cannot be delivered in such a manner, they shall be mailed by regular mail, postage prepaid and addressed to the owner of the animal. The affidavit or testimony of the health officer or his or her authorized agent, who delivers or mails the instructions, shall be prima facie evidence of the receipt of such instructions by the owner of the animal. Any expenses incurred in the quarantine of the offending animal under this section and Section 3-7A-8 shall be borne by the owner.

(f) The veterinarian under whose care the offending animal has been committed for quarantine shall promptly report the results of his or her observation of the animal to the attending physician of the human being bitten or exposed and the appropriate health officer.

(g) Canine corps dogs and seeing eye dogs shall be exempt from the quarantine period if the exposure occurs in the line of duty and evidence of proper immunization against rabies is presented, but shall be examined immediately at the end of 10 days by a licensed veterinarian, who shall report the results of his or her examination to the appropriate health officer as previously authorized.

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