

### **3 P.S. § 455.4**

Pa.C.S. documents are current through 2024 Regular Session Act 51; P.S. documents are current through 2024 Regular Session Act 51

***Pennsylvania Statutes, Annotated by LexisNexis® > Pennsylvania Statutes (§§ 1 — 2710) > Title 3. Agriculture (Chs. 1 — 32) > Chapter 7A. Rabies Prevention and Control in Domestic Animals and Wildlife Act (§§ 455.1 — 455.12)***

## **§ 455.4. Definitions**

The following words and phrases when used in this act shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

“CAT.” A carnivorous mammal scientifically known as *Felis Catus* which spends any part of any 24-hour day in a residence inhabited by a human being.

“CERTIFICATE OF VACCINATION.” A certificate verifying vaccination against rabies, containing information consistent with the current version of the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians Rabies Compendium.

“DEPARTMENT.” The Department of Agriculture of the Commonwealth.

“DIRECT VETERINARY SUPERVISION.” Occurs when a veterinarian is on the premises and has given either oral or written instructions to a certified veterinary technician or noncertified employee and is easily and quickly available to assist the certified veterinary technician or the noncertified employee.

“DOG LAW.” The act of December 7, 1982 (P.L. 784, No. 225),<sup>1</sup> known as the Dog Law.

“PERMANENT IDENTIFICATION.” As defined in section 102 of the act of December 7, 1982 (P.L. 784, No. 225), known as the Dog Law.

“RABIES.” A viral disease affecting the central nervous system of a mammal that is transmitted through contact with saliva or other potentially infectious material such as neural tissue from an infected animal, including, but not limited to, a bite, scratch and contact of saliva or other infectious material with broken skin, an eye or mucous membrane.

“RABIES VACCINE.” A product used to stimulate an immune response to rabies, licensed by the United States Department of Agriculture and listed in the current version of the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians Rabies Compendium.

“SECRETARY.” The Secretary of Agriculture of the Commonwealth.

“SUSPECTED RABID ANIMAL.” A mammal exhibiting behavior that is suggestive of infection with rabies in the opinion of a veterinarian, public health official or official representative of the department, the Department of Health or the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

“VACCINATED AGAINST RABIES.” The status of an animal that:

(1) has undergone administration of unexpired rabies vaccine in accordance with the specifications of the vaccine manufacturer:

- (i) by a licensed veterinarian; or
- (ii) under direct veterinary supervision; and

(2) is a member of an animal species for which the rabies vaccine has been approved for use.

§ 455.4. Definitions

## History

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Act 1986-181 (S.B. 562), P.L. 1610, § 4, approved Dec. 15, 1986, eff. in 60 days; [Act 2013-65](#) (S.B. 155), P.L. 466, § 2, approved July 9, 2013, eff. in 60 days.

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### **3 P.S. § 455.8**

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## **§ 455.8. Vaccination required; certificate and tag**

### **(a) VACCINATION AGAINST RABIES REQUIRED.**

(1) A person owning or keeping a dog or a cat in this Commonwealth shall have the dog or cat vaccinated against rabies within four weeks after the date the dog or cat attains 12 weeks of age.

(2) A person owning or keeping a dog or cat that is required to be vaccinated against rabies shall produce either proof of vaccination, or exemption status under subsection (f), within 48 hours after a police officer, State dog warden, department official or designated municipal animal control officer requests the proof. A dog or cat less than 12 weeks of age may be vaccinated against rabies according to vaccine manufacturer instructions if there is a rabies vaccine, licensed by the United States Department of Agriculture and listed in the current version of the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians Rabies Compendium, that is labeled for use in a dog or cat less than 12 weeks of age.

(3) Unless otherwise indicated by the directions of the vaccine manufacturer, a booster vaccination shall be administered between 12 and 14 months from the date of the initial vaccination regardless of the age of the animal at initial vaccination. The animal shall then be subsequently revaccinated on an ongoing basis in accordance with the directions of the vaccine manufacturer.

### **(b) LIMITED CERTIFICATE TO VACCINATE.**

(1) A person who holds any of the following types of kennel licenses under the Dog Law may apply to the department for a limited certificate authorizing the person to whom it is issued to vaccinate a dog or cat within the possession of the licensed kennel:

- (i) Commercial kennel, in compliance with section 207(i)(7) of the Dog Law.
- (ii) Dealer kennel.
- (iii) Nonprofit kennel.
- (iv) Private kennel.
- (v) Research kennel.

(2) The department shall develop, implement and administer a comprehensive rabies vaccination instruction program encompassing a written examination, which, if successfully completed, will lead to issuance of a limited certificate as described in paragraph (1). A person seeking a limited certificate shall provide the department written verification that was issued by a licensed veterinarian and confirms the applicant was provided a demonstration of rabies vaccination procedures by the licensed veterinarian, and the applicant demonstrated competence in administering the vaccine. The department may assess a fee for the program and examination. All fees received and all costs incurred shall be deposited in or expended from the Dog Law Restricted Account. The department shall promulgate all rules and regulations necessary to implement this subsection.

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(3) A person to whom a limited certificate under paragraph (1) is issued shall:

(i) Purchase and administer a rabies vaccine for vaccination of dogs and cats only from a licensed veterinarian or a source approved by the department.

(ii) Administer the vaccine in an approved manner so the dog or cat is properly vaccinated against rabies.

(iii) Maintain detailed records for at least three years which indicate:

(A) The name, type, lot number, date of purchase and date of administration of the rabies vaccine.

(B) A detailed description of the dog or cat vaccinated. The description shall include the breed, age, color, markings, sex and any permanent identification markers such as a microchip or tattoo.

(C) The full name, address, certification number and telephone number of the person who administered the vaccine.

(iv) Provide immediate access to the records described in subparagraph (iii) upon the request of the department.

(c) **CERTIFICATE AND TAG OF VACCINATION.** Every licensed veterinarian who vaccinates a dog or cat against rabies shall issue a certificate of vaccination and tag to the owner. Information contained in rabies vaccination records shall not be used for the purpose of licensing animals or for taxation of individuals for owning animals. For the purposes of this section, each licensed veterinarian may select a vaccine of his choice and use the procedures for administering it as are consistent with the recommendations of the Federal agency which licenses the vaccine.

(d) **ENFORCEMENT.** A police officer or State dog warden or the designated municipal animal control officer shall issue a citation to every person who owns a dog or cat which is not either:

(1) vaccinated against rabies pursuant to subsection (a) or (b); or

(2) exempt from the vaccination requirement pursuant to subsection (f).

(e) **ANIMALS RECEIVED BY NONPROFIT KENNELS.** Notwithstanding any provision of this act, a nonprofit kennel is not required to vaccinate an animal received by the kennel for a period of ten days.

(f) **EXEMPTION.**

(1) An exemption from vaccination against rabies for a dog or cat under subsection (a) may be granted if a licensed veterinarian examines the dog or cat and determines that it would be medically contraindicated to vaccinate.

(2) An exemption statement must be completed and signed by the veterinarian and dog or cat owner and must contain the following information in order to be valid:

(i) the signature of the veterinarian and the veterinarian's license number;

(ii) the date;

(iii) the name and address of the veterinary practice, office or clinic;

(iv) an explanation of the medical reason contraindicating vaccination against rabies;

(v) a description of the dog or cat that includes:

(A) breed;

(B) sex;

(C) age;

(D) color and markings;

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(E) whether the dog or cat is intact, neutered or spayed; and

(F) the current license number of the dog that includes any permanent identification, if applicable; and

(vi) the signature of the owner of the dog or cat and the address of the owner. If there is more than one owner and the owners are living at separate locations where the dog or cat may be housed, the signature and address of both owners is required.

(3) An exemption from vaccination against rabies is valid for a period of up to one calendar year, after which the dog or cat shall be reexamined. At the reexamination, the dog or cat shall either be vaccinated against rabies, or, if exemption status still applies, a new certificate of exemption shall be issued.

(4) The veterinarian shall maintain the signed exemption as part of the medical records and provide two copies to the owner. The owner of the dog or cat shall maintain one copy of the signed exemption for their records and forward one copy to the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Office of Dog Law Enforcement, 2301 North Cameron Street, Harrisburg, PA 17110.

(g) The owner or operator of a boarding kennel, as defined in section 102 of the Dog Law, shall require the owner of each dog for which the boarding kennel is taking control to provide proof of an up-to-date rabies vaccination at the time the dog enters the boarding kennel. The proof of vaccination shall be kept on file at the boarding kennel for seven days following the dog's departure from the boarding kennel. All rabies vaccination records and owner contact information for dogs involved in a dog attack at a boarding kennel shall be made available to the owners of all dogs that are injured in the dog attack.

## History

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Act 1986-181 (S.B. 562), P.L. 1610, § 8, approved Dec. 15, 1986, eff. in 60 days; Act 1987-23 (H.B. 483), P.L. 184, § 1, approved July 1, 1987, See section of this act for effective date information; [Act 2013-65](#) (S.B. 155), P.L. 466, § 4, approved July 9, 2013, See section of this act for effective date information.

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