

Rabies Law: Implementing Recent Changes



Panelists

Gibbie Harris,

- Health Director, Mecklenburg County

Jennifer Patterson,

- Sr. Associate Attorney, Mecklenburg County

Carl Williams

- State Public Health Veterinarian



Plan

■ Recent changes

- Review the changes to G.S. 130A-197
- Discuss implementation of the changes
- Identify issues that may require coordination

■ Appeals (if time allows)



Overview of Changes

§ 130A-197. Infected animals to be destroyed; protection of vaccinated animals. Management of dogs, cats, and ferrets exposed to rabies.

When the local health director reasonably suspects that an animal required to be vaccinated under this Part has been exposed to the saliva or nervous tissue of a proven rabid animal or animal reasonably suspected of having rabies that is not available for laboratory diagnosis, the animal shall be considered to have been exposed to rabies. ~~An animal exposed to rabies shall be destroyed immediately by its owner, the county Animal Control Officer or a peace officer unless the animal has been vaccinated against rabies in accordance with this Part and the rules of the Commission more than 28 days prior to being exposed, and is given a booster dose of rabies vaccine within five days of the exposure. As an alternative to destruction, the animal may be quarantined at a facility approved by the local health director for a period up to six months, and under reasonable conditions imposed by the local health director.~~ The recommendations and guidelines for rabies post-exposure management specified by the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians in the most current edition of the Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control shall be the required control measures."



Overview of Changes

Old Law

- Currently vaccinated
- Not currently vaccinated

Revised Law

- Currently vaccinated (CV)
- Overdue with documentation (OD)
- Overdue without documentation (OND)
- Never vaccinated (NV)

Overview of Changes

CV and OD

- Booster + animal kept under owner's control and observed for 45 days

OND

- Euthanize or
- Booster + strict quarantine or
- Prospective serologic monitoring

NV

- Euthanize or
- Booster + strict quarantine

Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean for an animal to be under the owner's control and observation? How are LHDs monitoring this?
2. When should an LHD allow PSM?
3. How should LHDs interpret and use PSM?
4. Where should NV animals be quarantined?

Owner's Control and Observation

- **What does this mean?**
 - DPH guidance explains that there should be no contact with animals or people other than the caretaker(s) until the local health director has released the animal from the 45 day observation period.
 - YES: leash walks; supervised, fenced yard
 - NO: boarding, outings to public venues, dog parks, etc.; travel in or out of state
 - Notify LHD of illness/behavior change/bite

LHD Discretion

- What kind of guidance/direction are you providing animal owners?
- Have/will you authorize travel or outings?
- How are depts. monitoring the observation?

When to allow PSM?

- **What is it?**
 - “paired blood samples to document prior vaccination”
- **Why?**
 - If an adequate anamnestic response is documented, the animal can be considered vaccinated (booster + 45 days observation)

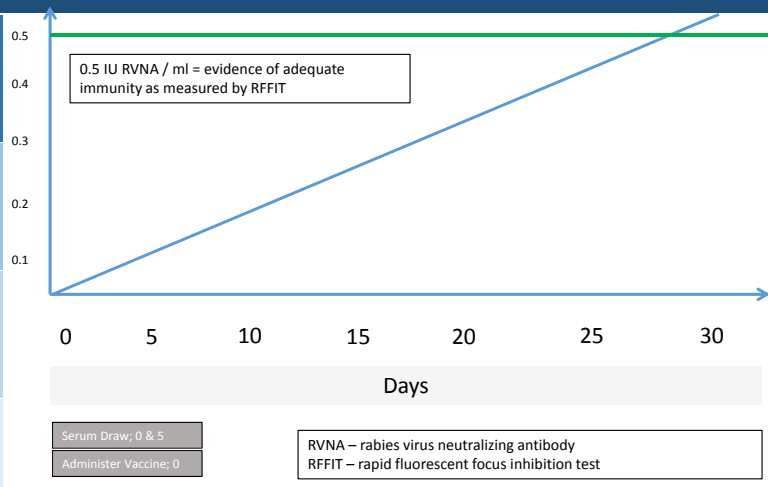
Indications for PSM

- **Evidence the animal has...**
 - Microchip
 - Tattoo
 - Rabies tag
 - Shelter papers
 - Evidence of spay or neuter
 - Ear-tipped cat
- **Owner provides strong anecdotal evidence of animal's prior rabies vaccination**

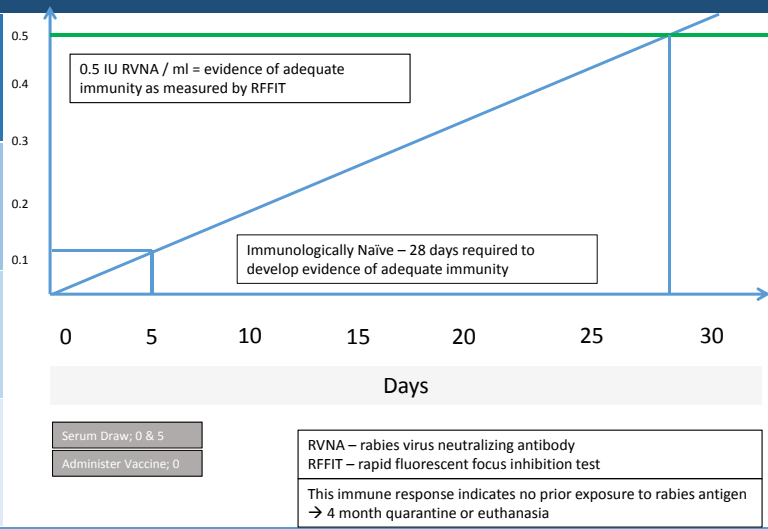
How to use PSM?

- **BEFORE Booster**
 - LHD decides if PSM allowed
- **If allowed by LHD**
 - Strict quarantine
 - 5-7 day process, owner pays
 - Day 0: Vet collects sample, stores sample, then administers booster
 - Day 5: Vet collects sample, submits both to lab
- **Interpret results**

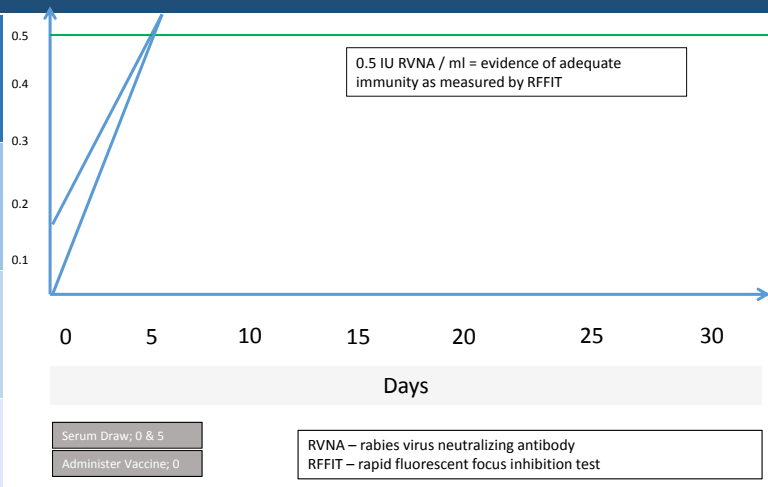
Prospective Serologic Monitoring



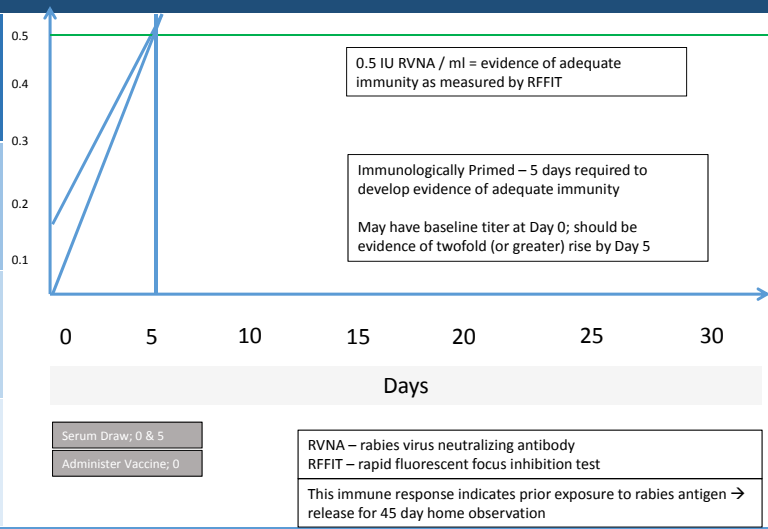
Prospective Serologic Monitoring



Prospective Serologic Monitoring



Prospective Serologic Monitoring



LHD Discretion

- What is the LHD's policy on allowing PSM?
- How will the LHD evaluate the evidence supporting use of PSM?
- How will the quarantine during PSM be managed?
- How will LHD work with lab and others to interpret and apply results?



Luna, a puppy belonging to a Huntersville couple, has been quarantined for the past two months due to the threat of rabies contamination. Now her owners will ask a judge to free her. The photo was shot a week into her quarantine, when Luna was 8 weeks old. - Courtesy of Angela Munson

LOCAL

A bat in the kitchen put their puppy in lockup. Now they want a judge to give her back.

BY MICHAEL GORDON
mgon@charlotteobserver.com
August 15, 2017 05:06 PM
Updated August 15, 2017 06:29 PM

Source: Charlotte Observer

Luna = NV

NC couple spends \$20,000, but still on losing end of fight to free their dog

BY MICHAEL GORDON
mgon@charlotteobserver.com
September 08, 2017 11:53 AM
Updated September 09, 2017 05:04 PM

Parole for Luna? Denied.

A Mecklenburg County judge ruled this week that the puppy of Tim and Angela Munson must serve out her full six months of rabies quarantine due to possible exposure with a bat.

In her order, Administrative Law Judge Kalina Mathias said the county Health Department

Overview of Changes

§ 130A-197. Infected animals to be destroyed; protection of vaccinated animals. Management of dogs, cats, and ferrets exposed to rabies.

When the local health director reasonably suspects that an animal required to be vaccinated under this Part has been exposed to the saliva or nervous tissue of a proven rabid animal or animal reasonably suspected of having rabies that is not available for laboratory diagnosis, the animal shall be considered to have been exposed to rabies. ~~An animal exposed to rabies shall be destroyed immediately by its owner, the county Animal Control Officer or a peace officer unless the animal has been vaccinated against rabies in accordance with this Part and the rules of the Commission more than 28 days prior to being exposed, and is given a booster dose of rabies vaccine within five days of the exposure. As an alternative to destruction, the animal may be quarantined~~ **at a facility approved by the local health director** for a period up to six months, and under reasonable conditions imposed by the local health director. The recommendations and guidelines for rabies post-exposure management specified by the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians in the most current edition of the Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control shall be the required control measures."

Where to quarantine?

Old law

- “at a facility approved by the health director”

Revised law

- (silent)

LHD Discretion

- If quarantine required, will you allow home quarantine?
 - If so, under what circumstances?
- How will the dept. monitor the quarantine?

Appeals

- **What to appeal?**
 - Reasonableness of determination of exposure
 - “required to be vaccinated” (puppy?)
 - Notice
 - Visitation
- **Proper forum**
 - Office of Administrative Hearings?
 - Superior Court?
- **Expediting appeals**

Questions?

