



Oklahoma State Department of Health
Creating a State of Health

May 26, 2011

William Brogden
Executive Director
Oklahoma State Board of Commercial Pet Breeders

Dear Mr. Brogden:

Thank you for your inquiry regarding the public health law concerning animal rabies vaccinations. The Oklahoma requirements for immunization of dogs, cats, and ferrets are contained within Oklahoma Administrative Code Title 310, Chapter 599, Zoonotic Disease Control Rules. By these rules, all pet owners or animal custodians must have their dogs, cats, and ferrets vaccinated against rabies beginning at 4 months of age, and then ensure that these animals remain current on their rabies vaccination status. The required interval between rabies vaccinations to keep a dog, cat, or ferret currently vaccinated depends upon the animal's age and the type of animal rabies vaccine that is administered. Oklahoma's Zoonotic Disease Control Rules recognize 3-year rabies vaccines as well as 1-year vaccines. According to label directions of the 3-year rabies vaccines, a rabies booster must be given 1 year after a pet's first vaccination; then after the second or subsequent vaccination with a 3-year vaccine, the time period between boosters is expanded to three years.

Only rabies vaccinations administered by or under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian are recognized as lawful immunizations. The supervising veterinarian is required to maintain a record of rabies vaccination for at least three years. This veterinary record is what public health officials and animal control officers consider as the official vaccination record and it should contain sufficient information to link back to an individual animal and provide specific details about the brand and type of rabies vaccine used.

The Oklahoma State Department of Health provides rabies resources, including a reference copy of Chapter 599, a Rabies Prevention Guide, and current statistics on animal rabies incidence on our website accessible at:

http://www.ok.gov/health/Disease_Prevention_Preparedness/Acute_Disease_Service/Disease_Information/Rabies.html

Sincerely,

Kristy K. Bradley, DVM, MPH
State Epidemiologist & State Public Health Veterinarian