
Bureau of Animal Health and Welfare

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Memorandum

To: WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

From: ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, BUREAU OF ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE

Date: 3/24/2020

Subject: Rabies Exam Guidance During COVID-19

Under the Illinois Animal Control Act (510 ILCS 5), animals which have bitten a person must be confined for 10 days and be examined by a veterinarian at the beginning and the end of the confinement period. Furthermore, animals which have not been inoculated against rabies and/or are not microchipped must receive these services at the end of the 10-day confinement. The Illinois Department of Agriculture recognizes that veterinary offices and animal controls are facing unique challenges during this COVID-19 event. They are forced to make decisions to protect their staff and the public while also providing essential services for the animals and community at large. To that end, the Illinois Department of Agriculture will recognize videoconferencing as a possibility for some rabies observation exams for purposes of the requirements of Animal Control Act. This will be acceptable only if the veterinarian conducting the exam determines that the information required under 510 ICLS 5/13(a-5) and (a-10) can be obtained and if a valid client-patient relationship (as defined in the Veterinary Medicine and Surgery Practice Act of 2004 (225 ILCS 115/3)) already exists which ensures the veterinarian is able to verify the identity of the animal. If an animal requires vaccination or microchipping under the law, a physical exam must be completed in person. Furthermore, the county animal control responsible for the confinement period must be willing to accept this option. Any specific questions concerning licensing requirements for veterinarians should be directed to the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation.