

Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies Control of Rabies in Public Settings

(NEW) Section 22-359-1 Definitions.

As used in Sections 22-359-1 to 22-359-5, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies:

- (1) "Animal" means any warm blooded creatures, including bats.
- (2) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Agriculture or the Commissioner's designated agent.
- (3) "Controlled situation" means a public setting in which an animal is under the control of a handler and persons having direct physical contact with such animal can be readily identified and contacted if a rabies exposure incident occurs.
- (4) "Currently vaccinated" means an animal was vaccinated against rabies and is considered immunized based on administration of the primary vaccination at least 30 days previously or immediately after a booster vaccination and vaccinations have been administered in accordance with licensed rabies vaccine label directions.
- (5) "Licensed rabies vaccine" means a vaccine against rabies for certain species of animals licensed by the United States Department of Agriculture for use in such species and marketed in the United States.
- (6) "Not currently vaccinated" means an animal for which there is no licensed rabies vaccine or an animal for which there is a licensed rabies vaccine but such animal is under the minimum age to be vaccinated against rabies or does not satisfy the requirements of "currently vaccinated" as defined in subdivision (4) of this section.
- (7) "Public setting" means any event, facility or premise at which the public is invited and allowed to have direct physical contact with animals. Public settings include but are not limited to fairs, animal exhibitions, petting zoos, municipal pounds, animal shelters, nature centers, riding stables, pony rides, and educational programs.
- (8) "Rabies" means an infection of the central nervous system of mammals caused by viruses in the Rhabdovirus family that typically results in death.
- (9) "Uncontrolled situation" means a public setting at which persons have direct physical contact with an animal and such persons cannot be readily identified or contacted if a rabies exposure incident occurs.
- (10) "Vaccinated" means an animal was vaccinated against rabies in accordance with licensed rabies vaccine label directions.

(NEW) Section 22-359-2. Animals for which there is a licensed rabies vaccine. Exceptions.

- (1) No animal for which there is a licensed rabies vaccine may be in a public setting without being currently vaccinated for rabies.
- (2) Animals under the minimum age to be vaccinated, vaccinated animals offered for sale or adoption and animals residing in municipal pounds shall be exempt from the provisions of this section.

(NEW) Section 22-359-3. Animals not currently vaccinated.

- (1) Written records shall be kept by the owner, keeper, or handler of any animal not currently vaccinated for rabies that is present in a public setting in a controlled situation. The written records shall include contact information for all persons having direct physical contact with such animal, including the names, addresses and telephone numbers of such persons and the date of contact. Such records shall be maintained for a period of six months and shall be made immediately available to the Commissioner upon request.
- (2) Any animal not currently vaccinated for rabies that is present in a public setting in an uncontrolled situation shall be separated from the public by sufficient means to avoid direct contact between people and animals, such as a double fence, plexiglas, or other device to avoid direct contact between people and animals as determined by the Commissioner, or a conspicuous sign shall be posted near the animal enclosure stating "CONNECTICUT RABIES ADVISORY NOTICE – DO NOT FEED OR TOUCH ANIMALS".

(NEW) Section 22-359-4. Exemptions.

- (1) Mice, rats, gerbils, hamsters, guinea pigs, and rabbits and any other animal in a public setting considered low risk for rabies transmission by the Commissioner which can be documented as being born and exclusively raised and kept in a manner that prohibits direct physical contact with wildlife are exempt from the provisions of sections 22-359-2 and 22-359-3 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.
- (2) Birds, reptiles and amphibians shall be exempt from the provisions of sections 22-359-2 and 22-359-3 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.
- (3) Animals which were bred at facilities licensed by the United States Department of Agriculture, and which can be documented as being born and exclusively raised and kept in a manner that prohibits direct physical contact with wildlife, and have at no time been co-mingled with animals that may have had direct physical contact with wildlife, are exempt from the provisions of sections 22-359-2 and 22-359-3 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(NEW) Section 22-359-5. Penalty.

The Commissioner may impose civil penalties for any violation of the provisions of sections 22-359-2 and 22-359-3 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies in accordance with the provisions of Connecticut General Statutes section 22-7.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the proposed regulations is to protect public health by providing the Commissioner with the authority to institute such measures as he deems necessary to prevent the transmission of rabies associated with animals in public settings, including, but not limited to, fairs, shows, exhibitions, petting zoos, riding stables, farm tours, pet shops and educational exhibits.

(Effective August 4, 2009)