



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, JOINT READINESS TRAINING CENTER AND FORT POLK  
6661 WARRIOR TRAIL, BUILDING 350  
FORT POLK, LOUISIANA 71459-5339

SEP 16 2016

MCHB-RS-HBP

MEMORANDUM FOR Privately Owned Animal (POA) Owners, Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) and Fort Polk, Fort Polk, LA 71459

SUBJECT: Command Policy Memorandum PH-01 – Privately Owned Animal Rabies Vaccination and Exposure at the JRTC and Fort Polk

1. References.

- a. Army Regulation (AR) 40-905, Veterinary Health Services, dated 29 August 2006.
- b. JRTC and Fort Polk Regulation 40-3, Medical Services, Animal and Animal Disease Control, Chapter 6, 11 July 2003.
- c. Fort Polk Garrison Policy #4 – Control of Animals on Fort Polk, dated 13 July 2016.
- d. Louisiana Administrative Code – Title 51. Public Health – Sanitary Code – Part III. The Control of Rabies and Other Zoonotic Diseases – Chapter 1. Anti-rabies Vaccination Requirements for Dogs and Cats, May 2015.
- e. Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control, 2016, National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control Committee, dated 1 March 2016.

2. Purpose. This memorandum applies to all privately owned animal (POA) owners, whether residing in Corvias Housing on JRTC and Fort Polk, or bringing a POA on the installation for any reason. The memorandum is intended to make a policy exception for a three-year rabies vaccination in place of the prior requirement for a one-year rabies vaccination and to inform about rabies control and prevention.

3. Mandatory Rabies Vaccination of Dogs and Cats:

- a. All POA dogs and cats over three months of age must be vaccinated against rabies by a licensed veterinarian.
- b. The initial rabies vaccination must be administered at three months of age followed by a subsequent rabies vaccination administered no later than one year later.

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c. Upon the administration of the second rabies vaccination (must be given no more than 365 days after the initial vaccine) the vaccination will confer a period of three-year immunity.

d. If a dog or cat is older than three months of age at the time of initial rabies vaccination, the animal will receive a subsequent rabies vaccination one year after the initial (no later than 365 days) in order to confer a three-year period of immunity.

e. If more than 365 days elapses between the initial rabies vaccination and the second rabies vaccination, then the second rabies vaccination will be viable for one year only. The animal may receive a third rabies vaccination within 365 days of the second rabies vaccination that will confer three-year immunity.

4. Privately Owned Animals PCSing overseas. Foreign countries, Hawaii, and the USDA have strict requirements pertaining to rabies vaccinations and pet importation from the United States. These requirements may take up to eight months to complete in order to avoid pet quarantine. All POA owners will contact the Fort Polk Veterinary Treatment Facility immediately upon receiving orders for foreign country PCS to begin the process of preparing their pets for travel. Failure to do so may result in up to six months of quarantine at the owner's expense.

5. Post exposure Management of Rabies in accordance with the Rabies Compendium:

a. Dogs and cats that have never been vaccinated and are exposed to a rabid animal should be euthanized immediately. If the owner is unwilling to have this done, the animal should be placed in strict quarantine for 6 months. Strict quarantine in this context refers to confinement in an enclosure that precludes direct contact with people and other animals. There are currently no USDA licensed biologics for post exposure prophylaxis of previously unvaccinated domestic animals, and there is evidence that the use of vaccine alone will not reliably prevent the disease in these animals. A rabies vaccine should be administered at the time of entry into quarantine to bring the animal up to current rabies vaccination status. Administration of vaccine should be done as soon as possible. It is recommended that the period from exposure to vaccination not exceed 96 hours.

b. Animals overdue for a booster vaccination should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis based upon severity of exposure, time elapsed since last vaccination,

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number of previous vaccinations, current health status, and local rabies epidemiology to determine need for euthanasia or immediate revaccination and observation/isolation.

c. Dogs and cats that are currently vaccinated should be revaccinated immediately, kept under the owner's control, and observed for 45 days. The rationale for an observation period is based in part on the potential for: overwhelming viral challenge, incomplete vaccine efficacy, improper vaccine administration, variable host immunocompetence, and immune-mediated fatality (i.e., early death phenomenon).

6. Management of Animals that Bite Humans. In accordance with the Rabies Compendium:

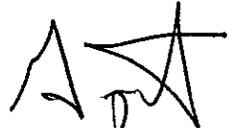
a. Dogs and cats. Rabies virus is excreted in the saliva of infected dogs, cats, and ferrets during illness and/or for only a few days before illness or death. Regardless of rabies vaccination status, a healthy dog, cat, or ferret that bites or otherwise exposes a person should be confined at the Fort Polk Veterinary Services Impoundment Facility or a private veterinary establishment (at the owner's expense) and observed daily for 10 days from the time of the exposure; administration of rabies vaccine to the animal is not recommended during the observation period to avoid confusing signs of rabies with rare adverse reactions. A Veterinary Corps Officer (VCO) can authorize home confinement on or off post provided that the animal is confined in a cage or other manner such that the animal cannot contact any person or other animal. Any illness in the animal should be reported immediately to the local health department. Such animals should be evaluated by a veterinarian at the first sign of illness during confinement. If signs suggestive of rabies develop, the animal should be euthanized and the appropriate specimens submitted for laboratory examination to the VETCOM Food Analysis and Diagnostic Laboratory, Fort Sam Houston, TX, or another reliable laboratory, if appropriate. Any stray or unwanted dog, cat, or ferret that exposes a person may be euthanized immediately and appropriate specimens submitted for laboratory examination as previously indicated.

b. Other Animals. Other animals that might have exposed a person to rabies should be reported immediately to the local health department. Management of animals other than dogs, cats, and ferrets depends on the species, the circumstances of the exposure, the epidemiology of rabies in the area, the exposing animal's history, current health status, and the animal's potential for exposure to rabies. The shedding period for rabies virus is undetermined for most species. Previous vaccination of these animals might not preclude the necessity for euthanasia and testing.

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7. The point of contact for this memorandum is the JRTC and Fort Polk Public Health Command Branch Chief at (337) 531-2132.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'GARY M. BRITO', written over a faint, stylized graphic that resembles a mountain range or a set of peaks.

GARY M. BRITO  
Brigadier General, USA  
Commanding