

Sec. 14-61. - Rabies vaccinations and licensing.

- (a) Every person possessing, harboring, keeping, or having control or custody of a Dog or Cat over the age of four (4) months within the County shall secure a County license from a Veterinarian or from the Department of Animal Services and, as a part of such license, shall show proof of a current rabies vaccination which shall have been administered by, or under the supervision of, a Veterinarian. Evidence of circulating rabies virus antibodies shall not be used as a substitute for obtaining a license, current vaccination in managing rabies exposure or the need for a booster vaccination.
  - (1) The duration of immunity of the vaccine shall be recognized in accordance with the current Compendium of Rabies Prevention and Control in Florida and F.S. § 828.30, as may be amended.
  - (2) Veterinarians or authorized entities shall distribute the County license tags and rabies vaccination certificates to Dog or Cat Owners according to the most recent procedure promulgated by the Department. Veterinarians and authorized entities must return required documentation related to licensure and rabies vaccination certificates to the Department within thirty (30) days.
  - (3) Licenses may be issued without the administration of a rabies vaccination provided a Veterinarian has examined the Dog or Cat and has certified in writing that a rabies vaccination could endanger its health because of infirmity, debility, illness, or other medical consideration. The Dog or Cat must be vaccinated as soon as its health improves sufficiently to tolerate the vaccine. An exemption that extends beyond twelve (12) months must be renewed annually through submission of a new exemption letter. No exemption letter shall be deemed valid after one (1) year from the date it was written.
  - (4) The certificate shall be approved and supplied by the Board of County Commissioners. The Department will establish, from time to time, an official tag for licensed Animals. No other license and rabies certificate or tag shall be valid in the County, except as otherwise provided under this Article. The certificate shall provide space for pertinent data for identification of the Animal. The license tag shall consist of a serially numbered piece of metal or other material bearing the same number as the certificate. All Dogs and Cats shall be required to wear a tag, except as otherwise provided under this Section. The person to whom a Dog or Cat license has been issued shall cause the tag to be securely fastened by a substantial device about the Animal's neck so as to be clearly visible at all times. If a license tag is lost or destroyed, a duplicate shall be issued by the Department upon presentation of the certificate and upon payment of a fee as established by the Board of County Commissioners. In lieu of the tag, Owners of Cats may choose a breakaway collar or an alternate form of identification, as approved by the Department.
  - (5) Failure to comply with the provisions of subsections (a)(1) through (4) above or the current procedures promulgated by the Department may result in loss of licensing and tag issuing authority.
- (b) Licenses, either certificate or tag, shall not be transferable from one Dog or Cat to another.
- (c) Licenses under this Article expire in accordance with the following schedule:
  - (1) If a one (1) year license is issued for a one (1) year rabies vaccination or a three (3) year license is issued for a three (3) year rabies vaccination, licenses expires when the rabies vaccination expire.

- (2) If a one (1) year license is issued for a (3) year rabies vaccination, the license expires one (1) year from the date of issuance. The expiration date of licenses for year three (3) shall expire on the date the rabies vaccination expire.
  - (3) All licenses shall be renewed on or before the date of expiration.
- (d) Those persons who relocate their Dogs or Cats, which are over the age of four (4) months, to the County shall secure a license within thirty (30) days of relocation.
  - (e) When ownership of a Dog or Cat is transferred from one party to another, the transferor shall report the change of ownership to the Department on such form as provided by the Department, whether such change is effectuated by sale, barter, gift, or otherwise, within thirty (30) days of such transfer. The new Owner shall maintain a record of the date of transfer, the name and address of the transferor, and proof of previous vaccination and license. Such records shall be maintained by the new Owner for a minimum period of one (1) year from the date of transfer. All Owners of Dogs or Cats over (four) 4 months shall obtain a County license within thirty (30) days of the date that they became the Owner as defined in this Article.
  - (f) Every person selling or transferring ownership of a Dog or Cat shall keep records of the most recent proof of vaccination, license, and, when applicable pursuant to F.S. ch. 828, as may be amended, certificate of veterinary inspection. The previous Owner shall maintain such records for a minimum period of one (1) year from the date of transfer. All Dogs and Cats offered for sale, and copies of vaccination or license records, or certificates of veterinary inspection, held by the seller and Veterinarian shall be subject to inspection by any Animal Control Code Enforcement Officer.
  - (g) Every person owning, possessing, harboring, keeping or having control or custody of a Dog or a Cat shall keep records of proof of vaccination, license, and when applicable pursuant to F.S. ch. 828, as may be amended, certificates of veterinary inspection. Every person owning, possessing, harboring, keeping or having control or custody of a ferret, shall keep records of proof of vaccination.
  - (h) The Board of County Commissioners are authorized to establish reasonable fees for the issuance and renewal of Dog or Cat licenses. License fees shall be waived for the following:
    - (1) Dogs owned by a law enforcement agency and used for law enforcement purposes.
    - (2) The initial license issued to Dogs or Cats adopted from state chartered nonprofit humane organizations.
  - (i) The provisions of this Section shall not apply to active racing greyhounds licensed and regulated by the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation.