

RABIES CONTROL PROGRAM – DUTY TO REPORT

To: Veterinarians – London and Middlesex County
London Police Services
Strathroy-Caradoc Police Service
Ontario Provincial Police – London/Middlesex County Detachments
Humane Society London Middlesex
Animal Care & Control

Date: 18 February 2025

Re: Duty to Report Animal Bite/Animal Contact

This letter is being sent in accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Health, Rabies Prevention and Control Protocol, and the Tuberculosis Prevention and Control Protocol.

It is your notification and reminder to report animal bites and/or other animal contact incidents to the Middlesex-London Health Unit (MLHU) Rabies Prevention and Control Program, and the new requirement for veterinarians and laboratories to report known or suspected animals infected with **Mycobacterium tuberculosis complex (TB)**.

Reporting incidents is mandated under Regulation 557 of the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*. Attached you will find the required paperwork which is to be completed and forwarded to the MLHU Rabies Fax Line (519-663-0107) or emailed to zzFax.RabiesLine@mlhu.on.ca whenever an animal incident has been reported.

DUTY TO REPORT

Ontario Regulation 557, Sections 2(1) and 2(2) under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* state:

- 2(1) *A physician, registered nurse in the extended class, veterinarian, police officer or any other person who has information concerning either or both of the following shall, as soon as possible, notify the medical officer of health and provide the medical officer with the information, including the name and contact information of the exposed person:*
1. *Any bite from a mammal*
 2. *Any contact with a mammal that is conducive to the potential transmission of rabies to persons. O. Reg. 501/17 s. 1.*
- 2(2) *The owner or the person having the care and custody of an animal,*
- (a) that has bitten or is suspected of having bitten a person; or*
 - (b) that is suspected by the medical officer of health of having rabies,*
- shall provide the medical officer of health with such information and assistance with respect to the animal as the medical officer of health requires. R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 557, s. 2(2).*

Each year, the Health Unit investigates approximately 1500 human exposures to animals that can potentially transmit the rabies virus. Positive cases of animal rabies, specifically bat rabies, occur in the City of London and Middlesex County every year. All animal exposure incidents (i.e., a bite,

www.healthunit.com

scratch, saliva contact with a mucous membrane or fresh, open cut/scratch) are investigated by the Health Unit.

NEW: Duty to Report; known or suspected animals infected with *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* complex

Regulation 557, under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*, has been updated to reflect the inclusion of animal TB as a reportable disease of public health significance.

6.2 (1) *A veterinarian or director of a laboratory who knows or suspects that one or more animals is infected with Mycobacterium tuberculosis complex shall notify immediately the Ministry, in the case of a director of a laboratory, or notify the medical officer of health, in the case of a veterinarian, and shall provide the Ministry or medical officer of health with such information and assistance with respect to the animal or animals as the Ministry and medical officer of health require, including, but not limited to,*

- (a) the location of the animal or animals; and*
- (b) contact information for the owner or the person having the care and custody of the animal or animals. O. Reg. 495/24, s. 4.*

PROCESS TO REPORT

All incidents must be reported by fax to the Middlesex-London Health Unit at 519-663-0107 or by email at zzFax.RabiesLine@mlhu.on.ca. Please use the attached report, or in the case of police involvement, the occurrence report can be attached.

The Health Unit is available to receive all communications 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- **Business Hours:**
 - Monday to Friday - 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.
 - **Fax reports** to 519-663-0107 or **email to** zzFax.RabiesLine@mlhu.on.ca
 - If you need to speak with the Rabies Coordinator, please call 519-663-5317 extension 8010.
- **After Hours/Weekends/Holidays:**
 - Please call the Health Unit at 519-663-5317 and the answering service will direct your call to the appropriate individual.

Thank you for your support as we work together to protect the health of Middlesex-London residents.

Sincerely,



Dr. Alexander Summers, MD, MPH, CCFP, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health
Middlesex-London Health Unit

Attachment: Exposure report

www.healthunit.com