County of San Diego
Department of Animal Services

INSTRUCTIONS FOR RABIES VACCINATION EXEMPTION REQUESTS

GENERAL INFORMATION

We accept rabies vaccination exemption requests only when signed by both the veterinarian and dog owner. The form may be submitted along with appropriate dog license payment to the Department by the veterinarian and/or dog owner.

Rabies vaccination exemptions **will only be approved** for serious medical conditions. Examples include serious immune mediated disease (MHA), conditions requiring immune-suppressive therapy (cancer treatment), or previously documented serious adverse reactions to rabies vaccination. Exemptions **will not be approved** in cases of: old age, weakness, pregnancy, minor reactions to the rabies vaccination (facial angioedema), reactions to non-rabies vaccinations and positive rabies titers as they are not conditions that warrant an exemption.

FORM COMPLETION

The **attached form is required** to apply for exemption from canine rabies vaccination. This form can be accessed via our website at www.sddac.com (under Forms).

- To avoid processing delays, please ensure all information is complete, and that the form is signed by *both* Veterinarian and dog Owner. **Incomplete requests will not be processed and will be returned for completion.**
- Processing may take up to 15-business days from date of receipt.

DOG OWNER: Dog License Application (new/renewal) with Rabies Exemption Request

- **DOG LICENSING**: The owner of every dog three months of age and older is required by law to ensure his or her pet is currently vaccinated against rabies and licensed. Dog owners who fail to comply with rabies vaccination or licensing requirements are subject to costly penalties. *San Diego Code: vaccinated against rabies (SDCC Section 62.610) and licensed (SDCC Section 62.620[a].*
- **RABIES EXEMPTION REQUEST**: If your dog requires a rabies exemption due to serious medical conditions determined by your veterinarian, you are still required to license your dog. **Rabies Exemption does not exempt your dog from the license requirement. Payment for Dog License Application (new/renewal) is required. Request(s) received without payment will not be processed.**
- **LICENSE FEES (required)**: $20.00 (Spayed/Neutered) • $60.00 (Unaltered) • **Excludes** two and three year licensing. • If you are past due, an additional $25 late fee charge applies.
- **EXPIRATION**: Dog License and Rabies Exemptions expire simultaneously and are both valid for a maximum of one (1) year. If your dog's condition persistently precludes rabies immunization, a new request must be submitted along with the renewal of his/her Dog License Application.
- The **"Certification of Valid Dog License"** notification card will be mailed upon completion of transactions. Please allow 4-6 weeks.

FORM SUBMITTAL

Mail form and dog license application along with check or money order to:

County Animal Services
452 Riverview Parkway
Santee, CA 92071
Attention: Rabies Exemption

- Do Not Fax or Email
- Rabies Vaccination Exemption Request(s) is not available online. Please apply in person if paying with debit/credit card.

County of San Diego
Department of Animal Services

FAQs for Canine Rabies Vaccination Exemption

For Unincorporated communities in San Diego County

1. **Why is Supplemental Medical Information needed?**
   Cooperative efforts have resulted in rabies being eradicated from the San Diego County pet populations. However, to ensure that the rabies vaccination exemption program does not result in a resurgence of rabies infections in San Diego County, supplemental medical information is deemed necessary for the evaluation of a request.

   In addition, it establishes an official request specifically to San Diego County and allows for internal tracking. The medical reason serves as supportive information for the condition for which exemption is sought. This information will be reviewed by County veterinarians to assess the medical justification for exemption. Every year large numbers of dogs are imported into San Diego County from other countries, further increasing the risk of rabies exposure to both human and pet populations. Our goal is to make every effort to protect public health.

2. **Which medical conditions are accepted for approval of exemption?**
   A list of diseases/conditions has not been defined for this process. However, veterinarians advocating for clients and veterinarians protecting the public should use professional judgment when assessing the risk of rabies vaccination to that of a dog's health status. Examples of serious medical conditions that may warrant exemption include, but are not limited to, immune-mediated diseases (e.g., IMHA), cancer therapy, and severe adverse reactions to rabies vaccination. Old age, weakness, pregnancy, minor reactions to rabies vaccination (e.g., facial angioedoema), reactions to non-rabies vaccinations and positive rabies titers are not conditions that warrant an exemption.

   The law states that an exemption may be granted for the rabies vaccine if “a rabies vaccination would endanger the dog’s life.” It also requires that the condition warranting the exemption be documented. The entire law is available to view at http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes.xhtml. Click on the Health and Safety Code; then enter for Code: HSC and Section: 121690.

3. **Who will be notified of approval/denial?**
   Notification will be distributed by the Department of Animal Services to the State Public Health Department, County Public Health Department, and requesting Veterinarian. Veterinarian may provide a copy to dog owner. This distribution will allow the veterinarian to maintain a copy in the dog's medical record, as well as facilitate a veterinarian-client discussion about issues concerning dogs not vaccinated for rabies.

4. **For how long are approved exemptions valid?**
   Exemptions are valid for a maximum of one (1) year only. If the animal's condition persistently precludes rabies immunization, a new request must be submitted annually. **Request for permanent exemption do not exist.**

5. **Is dog licensing required with a rabies exemption request?**
   Yes, you are still required to license your dog. Rabies Exemption does not exempt your dog from the license requirement. The owner of every dog three months of age and older is required by law to ensure his or her pet is currently vaccinated against rabies and licensed. Dog owners who fail to comply with rabies vaccination or licensing requirements are subject to costly penalties. *San Diego Code: vaccinated against rabies (SDCC Section 62.610) and licensed (SDCC Section 62.620[a].* Rabies exemption requests received without license payment ***will not*** be processed. Exemption Requests are **not available online**. Please apply in person if paying with debit/credit card.

6. **What happens if the exempted dog is exposed to a rabid (or untested, potentially rabid) wild animal such as a bat, skunk, fox, raccoon, coyote, or opossum?**
   A rabies vaccination exemption may be used only for the purposes of obtaining a license for the indicated dog. The unvaccinated dog will be subjected to the same dispositions as other unvaccinated dogs as outlined in the California Code of Regulations. For example, *vaccinated* dogs exposed to rabid or potentially rabid animals (i.e., most wildlife, rabies reservoirs) are quarantined for 30 days, while *unvaccinated* dogs would be subject to six (6) months quarantine and/or euthanasia.

7. **What restrictions are imposed on the client/dog for not being rabies-vaccinated?**
   The dog must be confined to the premises indicated on the form, or else on a six-foot (6') leash and under the direct physical control of an adult. Additionally, the dog cannot have contact with any animal that is not current with rabies vaccination.

Rabies Vaccination Certificate

This completed form, signed and approved by the local health officer in the county in which the dog resides, may be submitted in lieu of proof of rabies vaccination for purposes of securing a license for the indicated dog, as required by California law (17 CCR § 2606.4).

DEPT USE ONLY

PID#:_____

AID#:_____

LIC#:_____

EXP:_____

OJ Loc:_____

Exemption from Canine Rabies Vaccination

Owner Information

Owner Name:_____

Street Address:_____

City:_____

County:_____ Zip:_____

Phone:_____

Dog Information

Dog Name:_____ Lic#:_____

Breed:_____ Color:_____

Markings:_____

Male ☐ Female ☐ Altered ☐ Age:_____

Microchip#:_____

I affirm that I am the owner of the dog indicated above. If this exemption request is approved by the local health officer, I understand that the dog:

a) will not receive the antirabies vaccine and will be at risk for contracting rabies;
b) will be considered unvaccinated and subject to disposition as outlined in the California Code of Regulations Title 17, §2606, including isolation and/or euthanasia, if it bites a person or has contact with a known or suspected rabid animal;
c) may be licensed for a period up to one year, at which time the dog must be vaccinated against rabies or a request for vaccination exemption must be resubmitted to and approved by the local health officer;
d) must be confined to the premises indicated above and, when off premises, on a leash not exceeding six feet in length and under the direct physical control of an adult;
e) shall have no contact with any dog or cat that is not currently vaccinated against rabies.

I understand the consequences and accept all liability associated with owning a dog that has not received the canine antirabies vaccine. I hereby request an exemption from rabies vaccination for the dog indicated above.

Owner's signature (required):_____

Owner's email:_____ Date:_____

Veterinarian Information

Veterinarian Name:_____ Address:_____

Clinic Name:_____ City:_____

Phone:_____ County:_____ Zip:_____

Supplemental Medical Information: Please indicate below the medical reason for exemption:

Unacceptable medical conditions: Veterinarians advocating for clients and veterinarians protecting the public should use professional judgement when assessing the risk of rabies vaccination to that of a dog's health status. Old age, weakness, pregnancy, minor reactions to rabies vaccination (e.g., facial angioedema), reactions to non-rabies vaccinations and positive rabies titers are not conditions that warrant an exemption. **Exemptions are valid for a maximum of one (1) year only. Request for permanent exemptions do not exist.**

☐ Auto Immune Disease ☐ Severe Reaction ☐ Other_____

I have examined the dog indicated above and have determined that vaccination against the rabies virus would endanger this dog's life because of disease or other considerations. I hereby request an exemption from rabies vaccination for the dog indicated above.

Veterinarian's signature (required):_____

Veterinarian's email:_____ CA Lic#:_____ Date:_____

MAIL **WITH CHECK OR MONEY ORDER ONLY TO:**
County Animal Services
452 Riverview Parkway, Santee, CA 92071
Attention: Rabies Exemptions
DO NOT FAX OR EMAIL

License Payment Required with Exemption Request:

☐ $20.00 (Spayed/Neutered) ☐ $60.00 (Unaltered)
Excludes two and three year licensing

☐ $25.00 (If you are past due, an additional late fee charge applies)

Rabies Exemption Request is NOT AVAILABLE ONLINE. TO APPLY IN PERSON, bring completed form with payment (check/cash/credit card) to the nearest County Animal Services during business hours to: 452 Riverview Parkway, Santee, CA 92071◆ 2481 Palomar Airport Rd., Carlsbad, CA Business Hours: Thursday through Tuesday, 9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m., Closed Wednesdays and Holidays) ✆619-767-2675◆ www.sddac.com

☐ Approved ☐ Not Approved Local Health Officer's signature:_____ Date:_____

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