

SAN DIEGO COUNTY
Public Health Laboratory
Rabies Testing
Instructions for Submitters

1. Deceased animals (specimens) that may be rabid are submitted by various entities, including veterinary hospitals, the public, and Partner Submitters (i.e., facilities who work closely with County of San Diego (COSD) Public Health Laboratory (PHL) to comply with the California Code of Regulations, Title 17, §2606) to the PHL for brain extraction and rabies testing.
2. Submitters check in at 5540 Overland Drive, San Diego, CA 92123. Please leave specimens (body, head, brain tissue, etc.) in vehicle (keep cold – not frozen).
3. PHL staff will confirm Submitter has filled out the Rabies Test Requisition Form and the Body Bag Tag completely. All necessary fields must be entered.
4. If Submitter has not previously submitted specimens for rabies testing, PHL staff will collect correct email contact information via a Client Agreement Form for reporting results. Please provide a single email address, as this is where the results will be forwarded once finalized.
5. ***If owner would like body returned after rabies testing has a confirmed negative result, it is the Submitter's responsibility to mark the correct box on the Rabies Requisition Form. Submitter will have provided owner with "San Diego County Public Health Laboratory Rabies Testing Body Return Instructions" sheet on how to provide payment and request body return.*** Please note that only bodies under 40 pounds can be returned. See below for more detailed instructions.
6. PHL staff will provide Submitter with the accessioned original Rabies Requisition Form (in a Transfer Folder), a copy of the Rabies Requisition Form (for the Submitter's own records), and the completed Body Bag Tag.
7. Submitter will need to attach the Body Bag Tag to the correct specimen for submission.
8. Submitter will then drive to PHL Receiving with completed Rabies Requisition Form and properly labeled specimen. PHL Receiving will collect the transfer folder containing the original Rabies Requisition Form and escort Submitter to the necropsy refrigerated room to deposit the specimen.

Final Results:

1. A formal report with results will be sent to the email address provided by Submitter for each case.
2. Results will only be communicated with Submitter. If any other party calls to request results, PHL will direct them to contact the original Submitter.

Returning Bodies:

1. Once final results are negative, PHL staff will call the provided pick-up agency for body collection. A total of 4 weekly calls will be performed. If the body has not been collected after 28 days from the negative final result, the body will be disposed of, and the payment will be voided.
2. Please note that the body must be picked up by a professional animal agency (veterinary clinic, pet cremation service, etc.) within 28 calendar days of final results. Owners are NOT allowed to pick up a body.
3. The cost for saving the body is \$25 (payable only by check or money order to County of San Diego) at the time of the submission. The name of the pet should be written on the memo line of the check or money order.