

Utah Public Health Laboratory—Guide to rabies testing and fees

The Utah Public Health Laboratory (UPHL) provides free testing only for submissions which meet the recommendations listed in the 2016 Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control (<http://www.nasphv.org/Documents/NASPHVRabiesCompendium.pdf>) and in those circumstances where a significant risk of infection can be identified. Any animals received that do not clearly meet the criteria outlined below due to ambiguous information or incomplete paperwork accompanying the sample may lead to a \$180 fee. **Please fully complete and submit the [Rabies Testing Request form](#) with every specimen and refer to the [Rabies Specimen Preparation and Transport Guidance](#) prior to submission of samples.**

Reminders:

- The 2016 revision of the Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control is available here: <http://nasphv.org/Documents/NASPHVRabiesCompendium.pdf>
- Domestic pets (dogs, cats, and ferrets) that have bitten or otherwise exposed a person should be quarantined and observed for 10 days to rule out rabies infection in the biting animal. If no signs of rabies develop, that animal does not need to be tested and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) is not required for the exposed person.
 - If 10-day quarantine cannot be completed for any reason, the biting animal should be humanely euthanized and submitted for rabies testing. There will be a \$180 fee. If you want to talk about a fee waiver due to unusual circumstances which prevent a 10-day quarantine, contact the Utah Department of Health and Human Services zoonotic epidemiologist (801-538-6191).
- Unvaccinated domestic pets that have been exposed to a confirmed rabid animal should be held in a strict 4–6 month isolation in a professional setting (i.e., a veterinary clinic) at the owner's expense. If the strict 4–6 month isolation is not possible, the animal must be humanely euthanized.
- Domestic pets that have been exposed to a rabid animal and have proof of prior rabies vaccination should be revaccinated immediately, quarantined under the owner's control, and observed for 45 days. If no signs of rabies develop, that animal does not need to be euthanized and tested.
- If a domestic pet **does** develop documented signs of rabies at any time during a quarantine period, it should be euthanized immediately and submitted for rabies testing.
- When filling out the [specimen submission form](#), **all fields should be as complete as possible** to provide the lab with a description of the exposure/incident and explain why the specimen is being submitted for rabies testing. Without complete information to justify submission based on the recommendations in the Rabies Compendium, a charge of \$180 will be incurred.

- Heads received with signs of advanced decomposition are unable to be tested and will be canceled.
- Please refer to Utah Communicable Disease Rule Code [R386-702-12. Special Measures for Control of Rabies](#) for Utah Administrative rules in regard to rabies control.

Sample submission:

- Refrigerate the specimen as soon as possible after the death of the animal.
- Do not freeze (freezing may delay results).
- If the specimen cannot be submitted to the UPHL within 24 hours of the death of the animal, please call the rabies virology line (801-965-2400) for guidance.
- Submit 1 of the following, as appropriate:
 - For all domestic animals (dogs, cats, etc.), submit the head ONLY of the animal
 - For all large animals (e.g., cow or horse) submit an intact brain
 - If the animal is less than 12 inches long and exclusive of tail, submit the whole animal (e.g., bat, small mammal)
- **All specimens MUST be packaged appropriately prior to submission as outlined in the [Rabies specimen preparation and transport guidance](#).**
- Do not:
 - Fix specimen in formalin or other preservative
 - Euthanize the animal by clubbing or shooting in the head
 - If you need help with humane euthanasia or decapitation of the animal, please contact your [local animal control office](#) or the state health department zoonotic epidemiologist (801-538-6191) for assistance.
- Do not submit:
 - Live animals; except for bats that cannot be safely euthanized by a professional.
 - The container **must be labeled properly** to indicate the presence of a live bat.
 - Domestic pets raised/confined to a cage (hamsters, gerbils, mice, rats, rabbits, etc.)
 - Wild or domestic birds (including chickens), turtles, or other reptiles
 - Rodents/lagomorphs (mice, rats, rabbit, squirrel, etc.) without prior consultation with state health department zoonotic epidemiologist (801-538-6191)

- UPHL specimen receiving information:

Hours	Address	Phone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monday–Friday→ 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. • Saturday→ 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (hand delivery ONLY or upon special arrangement with the courier service and UPHL) • Closed on Sunday 	Utah Public Health Laboratory 4431 South 2700 West Taylorsville, UT 84129-8600	801-965-2522

Fee schedule:

Bats	Any bat where a person or animal has had an exposure or reasonable probability of exposure; including bites, exposure of saliva, a bat in the room with a sleeping person or unattended child, a bat near a child, or mentally impaired or intoxicated person, etc.	No fee
Dogs, cats, and ferrets	Regardless of rabies vaccination status, any animal that exposes a person if signs suggestive of rabies are documented.	No fee
	Any stray animal that exposes a person	No fee
	Regardless of rabies vaccination status, any animal that exposes a person if signs suggestive of rabies are NOT documented or animals have NOT been quarantined and observed for at least 10 days.	\$180
	Occupational or workman's compensation covered exposures (i.e., vet tech is bitten by a patient).	\$180
Wild mammals	Wild mammals and hybrids that expose persons, pets, or livestock (i.e., skunks, foxes, raccoons, coyotes, etc.)	No fee
	Small rodents (rats, mice, squirrels, chipmunks, voles, moles, etc.) and lagomorphs (rabbits and hares) submitted without prior consultation and approval from the Utah Department of Health & Human Services	Testing not offered without prior approval
Livestock	If signs suggestive of rabies are documented.	No fee
Non-mammals	Birds, fish, reptiles, etc.	Testing not offered

Other	Incomplete paperwork accompanying the sample. Please include the full story/situation behind the sample submission.	\$180
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For additional guidance on appropriate quarantine measures and whether to submit an animal for rabies testing, please review the other resources available on the [Utah Department of Health rabies webpage](#) or contact the Utah Department of Health & Human Services Bureau of Epidemiology at 1-888-EPI-UTAH.