Chapter 6.08

RABIES CONTROL

Sections:
6.08.010 Definitions.
6.08.020 Duty of Owner, Custodian and Health Officer.
6.08.030 Quarantine - Notice to Owner.
6.08.040 Quarantine - Duties of Owner.
6.08.050 Handling of an Animal Bitten by Rabid Animal.
6.08.060 Publication of Notice of Outbreak of Rabies.
6.08.070 Procedures.
6.08.080 Violation - Penalty.
6.08.090 Severability.

6.08.010 Definitions.

Unless specifically indicated otherwise, the following definitions shall apply throughout this Chapter:
A. "Animal shelter" means the facilities for the temporary containment of animals, operated by the Tacoma-Pierce County Humane Society.
B. "Health Officer" means the Director of the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department and/or his authorized representatives.
C. "Quarantine" means the detention or isolation of an animal on account of suspected exposure or affliction with rabies.
D. "Unvaccinated animal" means an animal which has either never been vaccinated against rabies or whose vaccination has expired according to the current Compendium of Animal Rabies Vaccines published by the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians, Inc., and which has been bitten by a known rabid animal.
E. "Vaccinated animal" means an animal which has been vaccinated in accordance with the Compendium of Animal Rabies Vaccines published by the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians, Inc., and which has been bitten by a known rabid animal.

(Ord. 84-24 § 1 (part), 1984; prior Code § 36.09.010)

6.08.020 Duty of Owner, Custodian and Health Officer.
A. It shall be the duty of the owner and/or custodian of any dog or cat within the County to quarantine any dog or cat within the County which he has grounds to suspect of being infected with the disease of rabies or hydrophobia.
B. If the Health Officer:
   1. Has grounds to suspect that any dog or cat running at large in the County is infected with rabies or hydrophobia; and
   2. Has notice that said dog or cat's owner or custodian cannot be determined; and
   3. Is able to locate and confine said animal; the Health Officer shall quarantine the animal as provided in this Chapter.
C. The biting of a human being by a dog or cat causing penetration of the skin by the animal's teeth is specifically declared a ground for suspecting that such animal is so infected.

(Ord. 84-24 § 1 (part), 1984; prior Code § 36.09.020)
6.08.030 Quarantine - Notice to Owner.

The Health Officer may initiate a quarantine by delivering to the owner or custodian of such suspected animal, by either certified mail or by hand delivering to a responsible person present on the premises, a written notice of such quarantine which shall prescribe the duration of the quarantine period; provided, that the period of the quarantine shall not exceed ten days, unless it is determined that the animal is infected with rabies. The delivery of the notice of quarantine to a responsible person present upon the premises where such animal is kept shall be considered service of a notice upon the owner or custodian. Any such animals so quarantined shall be impounded in the Pierce County Animal Shelter or a local veterinary clinic's kennel. In the discretion of the Health Officer, the animal may be quarantined upon the premises of the owner or any other person so long as the requirements of the quarantine are strictly fulfilled. (Ord. 84-24 § 1 (part), 1984; prior Code § 36.09.030)

6.08.040 Quarantine - Duties of Owner.

A. During the period of any quarantine, the owner or custodian of a quarantined animal shall not allow the animal to come in contact with any other animal or person or permit such animal to run at large outside of the premises where quarantined or upon the premises itself, unless the premises is enclosed by a secure fence from which the animal cannot escape. When the fence encloses the access to the premises, the animal must be restricted to leave free access to those persons lawfully entering the premises.

B. The owner or custodian shall not remove or cause the animal to be removed from the premises without the prior consent of the Health Officer. These restrictions shall continue until the animal is released from quarantine. If any animal is found running at large after the commencement of the quarantine period or is removed from the premises where quarantined, it shall be impounded and unless claimed and redeemed by its owner or custodian within two days after the expiration of the quarantine period, may be destroyed by the proper authorities.

C. Upon redemption of a dog, cat or other animal released from quarantine from the Pierce County Animal Shelter the owner or custodian shall pay the same impound fee and board fee for any dog, cat or other animal quarantined in the Animal Shelter, as provided for in Section 6.02.070 of the Pierce County Code; provided, however, if the animal is brought to the Animal Shelter by the owner or custodian, the service fee shall be waived.

(Ord. 91-52 § 1, 1991; Ord. 84-24 § 1 (part), 1984; prior Code § 36.09.040)

6.08.050 Handling of an Animal Bitten by Rabid Animal.

When an animal is known to have been bitten by a rabid animal, the following procedures shall be followed:

A. Unvaccinated Animal. An unvaccinated animal shall be immediately destroyed; provided, that upon the election of the owner, the animal may be kept, at its owner's expense, in strict isolation in a kennel under veterinary supervision for a minimum period of six months following the bite.

B. Vaccinated Animal. A vaccinated animal shall be handled as follows:
   1. The animal shall be immediately revaccinated with an approved rabies vaccine and confined under the supervision of a veterinarian for a period of thirty days following revaccination; or
   2. If the animal is not immediately revaccinated, it shall be confined in strict isolation in a kennel for six months under the supervision of a veterinarian; or
3. The animal shall be destroyed if the owner or custodian does not comply with subsections 1. or 2. above.
(Ord. 84-24 § 1 (part), 1984; prior Code § 36.09.050)

6.08.060 Publication of Notice of Outbreak of Rabies.
Upon any outbreak of rabies or when rabies has been diagnosed within the County, and when in the judgment of the Health Officer there is imminent danger of the spread of the disease, the Health Officer shall publish a notice to that effect in the official newspaper of the County for three successive days. For a period of six weeks following the final publication of the notice, the owner or custodian of a dog shall keep the dog securely confined at all times by leash or in a tight enclosure from which the dog cannot escape. During said period any dog found running at large in the County shall be impounded and unless claimed and redeemed by its owner within two days following such impounding, may be destroyed by the proper authorities. Any person charged with the enforcement of this Chapter may destroy any dog found running at large within the County when, after reasonable effort, he is unable to impound the dog or after reasonable investigation, is unable to locate the owner or custodian thereof. The Health Officer shall have authority to extend the six-week time period for additional six-week periods by notice given in the manner provided above until, in his judgment, the imminent danger of the spread of the disease is no longer present. (Ord. 84-24 § 1 (part), 1984; prior Code § 36.09.060)

6.08.070 Procedures.
The Health Officer is authorized and directed to develop a quarantine program for dogs, cats, and other household pets and otherwise to develop procedures for the enforcement of this Chapter. (Ord. 84-24 § 1 (part), 1984; prior Code § 36.09.090)

6.08.080 Violation - Penalty.
Any person, firm or corporation violating any of the provisions of this Chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be penalized by a fine. (Ord. 84-24 § 1 (part), 1984; prior Code § 36.09.070)

6.08.090 Severability.
If any provision of this Chapter or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the Chapter or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected. (Ord. 89-155 § 9, 1989)