

**February 28, 2019**

## **Saturday rabies clinics planned in March for dogs, cats and ferrets**

MOBILE, Ala. — The Mobile County Health Department provides low cost rabies shots for dogs, cats and ferrets during weekend clinics that are good for one year. Here is a list of the rabies clinics planned for Saturdays during March in Mobile County:

- March 9, 1:30 to 4 p.m., Pet Supplies Plus, 803 Hillcrest Road
- March 16, 12:30 to 2:30 p.m., City of Mobile Animal Shelter, 855 Owens Streets
- March 23, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., B&B Pet Stop, 5035 Cottage Hill Road
- March 30, 10 a.m. to noon, Mobile County Animal Shelter, 7665 Howell's Ferry Road

The cost of the rabies vaccine per pet is \$8 at Pet Supplies Plus. The cost of the rabies vaccine per pet is \$10 at City of Mobile Animal Shelter, B&B Pet Stop and Mobile County Animal Shelter. All rabies shots are payable in cash.

In addition to MCHD events, Town and Country Animal Hospital will conduct a rabies clinic on March 16 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Semmes Middle School (4566 Ed George Road). The cost of the rabies vaccine is \$10 payable in cash.

Each month, MCHD's Rabies Officer provides residents with low-cost vaccines for their pet dogs, cats and ferrets at a variety of locations. The state of Alabama tasks local health departments with providing affordable rabies vaccinations to pet owners. MCHD's Rabies Officer vaccinated 174 household pets during January's rabies clinics.

Rabies is a virus that attacks the central nervous system. It is transmitted from infected mammals to humans and is fatal once symptoms appear. Symptoms of rabies include unusual behavior, irritability, headache, fever, inability to eat or drink, balance problems, circling, seizures, coma, and, finally, death. All warm-blooded mammals, including humans, are susceptible to rabies.

Exposure to rabies may be minimized by eliminating all stray cats and dogs; having pet dogs, cats and ferrets vaccinated; staying away from wild animals, especially those acting abnormally; and not keeping exotic or wild animals as pets, health officials said.

So what happens if an animal is displaying symptoms? Under state law, the owners are required to quarantine their animal for 10 days. The quarantine period is necessary for observation of any clinical signs of rabies infection in the animal.

In 2018, the Mobile County Health Department investigated 579 animal bite cases. To learn more about our program, visit <http://mchd.org>, go to "Services," find "Disease Control" and go to "Rabies Control."

A Rabies Quarantine Fact Sheet is available through the Alabama Department of Public Health at [www.alabamapublichealth.gov/infectiousdiseases/assets/RabiesQuarantineFactSheet.pdf](http://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/infectiousdiseases/assets/RabiesQuarantineFactSheet.pdf).