

Indian Health Service Albuquerque Area Lay Vaccinator Program

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Lay Vaccinator Program

Purpose:

- To reduce the risk of rabies exposure to tribal members by increasing access to rabies vaccination services
- Developed as a public health intervention in areas where access to a veterinarian may be limited
- To increase knowledge, professionalism, and expertise of persons who may already be providing rabies vaccinations
- To provide the highest level of service to tribal members and increase their confidence in the services that are being provided

Eligibility

- **Who is eligible to become a Lay Vaccinator (LV)?**
 - **Tribal employees/members who are American Indians/Alaska Natives who are eligible to receive services from IHS and are authorized by the Governor's/President's office or their designee to administer rabies vaccinations**
 - **Indian Health Service Division of Environmental Health Services employees**

Why Would Tribes Want to have Lay Vaccinators?

- Increased ability to serve the Tribe
- Able to provide the best service possible
- It's a best practice
- Demonstrates professionalism
- Provides the most up-to-date information
- Access to expert trainings
- Provides increased networking opportunities as well as opportunities to share ideas, challenges, and success stories

Will the Role of IHS Change?

- No, the IHS will continue to conduct rabies vaccination clinics in tribal communities
- IHS views rabies clinics not only as an important public health intervention service, but it is a good chance to meet and connect with community members
- IHS wants to maintain the good relationships that currently exist and forge new partnerships

Lay Vaccinator Program Overview Flowchart

Tribal community chooses to participate in the Lay Vaccinator Program and designates a sponsor to oversee the Lay Vaccinator Program



Sponsor sends a letter to the DEHS Director indicating the need for Lay Vaccinators (LV) in the community, the name of the LV candidate, their position description, experience and training



The Lay Vaccinator takes the Environmental Health Support Center online course and passes the exam with a 70%, the Candidate successfully completes a hands-on training, and initial certification is for one year



The Sponsor ensures the LV has completed all required trainings; ensures proper maintenance of certificates; provides vaccine from an approved source; syringes, certificate books, tags and PPE; ensures vaccine is stored, handled and used according to manufacturer's instructions



Lay Vaccinator will competently administer rabies vaccine to tribal members' dogs and cats on tribal lands only; complete required forms; completely fill out rabies certificates and give a copy to pets' owners; retain certificates for at least 3 years; return Veterinarian's copy of certificate to IHS; not receive any money, goods or services in exchange for providing the vaccine; never provide vaccine to an animal's owner for administration; never provide any other vaccines or provide animal care; never engage in any unprofessional actions or conduct; assist with animal bite investigations



After the initial one year certification, the Sponsor will send a letter to the DEHS Director confirming the need for continued LV services in the community, that the LV is competently providing those services, and the LV is operating within the scope of the program; the LV will pass the online course with a 70%; repeat of the hands-on training is not required; the renewal certification is good for three years; the process then repeats

Lay Vaccinator Program Forms Flowchart

Tribal community receives a copy of the *Animal Rabies Lay Vaccinator Program guide*, chooses to participate, and sends the *Participation form letter* designating a Sponsor to the DEHS Director



Sponsor sends the *Lay Vaccinator Designation form letter* to the DEHS Director indicating the name of the LV candidate, their position title and description, training and experience



After successfully completing the Lay Vaccinator exam and hands-on training, the Lay Vaccinator receives a certificate, a copy of *Instructions for Lay Vaccinators*, and signs and returns to the DEHS Director the *Lay Vaccinator Certification form*



The Sponsor will then receive the *Animal Rabies Usage form*, which summarizes annual vaccine use, the *Rabies Vaccine Distribution and Use Guidelines*, and the fillable *Rabies Vaccine and Supplies order form*



Additional forms, such as the *Vaccination Clinic Consent form* and the *Refrigeration Temperature Logging form* can also be obtained from DEHS

How Will the Program Work?

- **Component 1 – Sponsorship**
 - Lay Vaccinator candidates must be nominated in writing by either the Governor's/President's office or their designee for eligible tribal members/employees, or the IHS DEHS Director for Environmental Health employees
 - Individuals associated with non-tribal organizations that may provide vaccinations on tribal lands, such as animal welfare and rescue groups, are not eligible for certification

How Will the Program Work?

- **Component 2 – Expectations**
 - Competently administer rabies vaccine to tribal members' dogs and cats on tribal lands only, vaccinations may not be offered to other species of animals
 - Vaccinations must be offered to all eligible animals unless the animal does not meet age requirements or is anticipated to cause injury
 - Vaccination certificates must be completely filled out and copies retained by the Lay Vaccinator and the IHS District Health Office
 - Lay Vaccinators should be involved in animal bite investigations whenever possible

How Will the Program Work?

- **Component 3 – Region of Service**
 - **May only provide services on tribal lands to tribal members or to tribal members in IHS facilities (IHS staff)**
 - **Most Lay Vaccinators will be certified to only vaccinate in a single tribal community**
 - **Lay Vaccinator certified IHS Environmental Health Officers and other waived individuals may be considered as LV's at large**

How Will the Program Work?

- **Component 4 – Training and Supplies and**
- **Component 5 – Term of Service**
 - **The sponsor is required to ensure that all LVs under their supervision have:**
 - **Training on appropriate methods of vaccine administration, storage and handling**
 - **Training on the safe use and disposal of syringes**
 - **Record keeping training**

How Will the Program Work?

- Component 4 – Training and Supplies and
- Component 5 – Term of Service
 - LV candidates will complete the online course offered through the IHS Environmental Health Support Center or attend an in-person training and pass the quiz with a 70% or greater
 - Candidates must attend a hands-on training on proper vaccination administration techniques given by a veterinarian, IHS LV staff, or at a class where a certificate of training is issued
 - LV's are initially certified for one year, after that they must take and pass the online LV training every 3 years but do not need to repeat the hands-on training

How Will the Program Work?

- **Component 4 – Training and Supplies and**
- **Component 5 – Term of Service**
 - Additionally, the Sponsor must verify that there is an ongoing need for LVs in the community
 - The LV is competently providing those services and
 - The LV is operating within the scope of the LV program
- **The Sponsor will provide:**
 - Rabies vaccine, syringes, certificate books, metal tags, PPE
 - Certain of these supplies can be obtained through IHS

How Will the Program Work?

- **Component 6 – Guidelines**
 - No personally purchased vaccine may be used
 - Vaccine is to be stored, handled and used according to the manufacturer's instructions, including the vaccine booster or re-vaccination interval
 - Vaccines, certificates and tags are given free-of-charge and no remuneration of any kind, including money, goods or services may be accepted from the pet owner.

How Will the Program Work?

- **Component 6 – Guidelines**
 - Only certified LVs may administer the rabies vaccine to animals, vaccine is never to be provided to an animal's owner or other third party for administration at some time in the future
 - LVs may work in concert with other coordinated immunization clinics
 - LVs may not administer any other vaccines or deliver any animal care that could be construed as “practicing veterinary medicine”

Questions?



"Relax. I just had a cappuccino."

FAQ's

- As a tribal Lay Vaccinator, can I vaccinate livestock since the vaccine is approved for livestock?
 - As a Lay Vaccinator, you are to only vaccinate dogs and cats. Livestock require specialized handling and restraint planning that is not covered in the Lay Vaccinator training.



FAQ's

- How do I access the course?
 - Following receipt and concurrence with the nomination letter from the sponsor, IHS will send the individual a code to access the course.
 - The individual will go to the Environmental Health Support Center site and will be able to access the training.

FAQ's

- Will I take the test and receive my certificate immediately upon completing the training?
 - At this time, the Environmental Health Support Center web site is under construction, so you will not be able to take the test and receive a certificate immediately upon completing the training. After the training, there will be a link to survey monkey, and that is where you will take the exam. Upon passing with at least a score of 70%, and completing an approved hands-on training, you will be eligible to receive a certificate.

FAQ's

- Can someone take the training who is not going to become a lay vaccinator?
 - Yes, and it is encouraged. This individual will still need to get a letter from a sponsor indicating that they want to take the training but not become a lay vaccinator. They will get a code to take the training, but will not take the test or receive hands-on training.

FAQ's

- Why can't someone go directly to the training? Why do they need to have a sponsor letter?
 - First, the sponsor letter indicates that the person is authorized by the tribe, is involved in rabies vaccinations, and that these activities are acknowledged and supported by the tribe.
 - Second, Federal regulations govern access to the website trainings that are offered. In its current format, the training may be given by invitation only. This may change in the future.

FAQ's

- Why is the initial certification period only for one year?
- The initial one year certification period will allow the Lay Vaccinator to become familiar with the information and the duties of a Lay Vaccinator. Going through the renewal process will indicate a commitment to the program and demonstrate continued active participation.

FAQ's

- As a Lay Vaccinator, how do I acquire rabies vaccine?
- Rabies vaccine can be obtained in two ways:
- First -
 - IHS will provide vaccine to tribes with Lay Vaccinators upon request. Requests can be made on the fillable Rabies Vaccine and Supplies Order form. The vaccine and supplies will be given to the sponsor for distribution.
 - IHS will calculate the historic vaccine usage of each tribe, including that provided at IHS rabies clinics as well as the tribe itself. Should the amount requested by each tribe significantly exceed this amount, IHS may have to evaluate setting limits on the amount that can be provided at no charge.

FAQ's

- Second –
 - The tribe can establish a relationship with a veterinarian and make arrangements to order through the veterinarian.
 - One purpose of the Lay Vaccinator program is to provide training to individuals who may be giving vaccines in addition to or in conjunction with the IHS rabies vaccination clinics

FAQ's

- What about sharps containers and needle disposal?
 - At this point, we recommend working with your IHS health care facility to obtain sharps containers and arrange for disposal of the full containers.
 - If you encounter difficulties, please contact IHS and we will work with you to evaluate other possibilities.

FAQ's

- Why must copies of the certificates be sent to IHS?
 - It is important that the certificates be kept in the event of a dog bite . The certificate will provide valuable information concerning the vaccination status of the animal. IHS, the tribe and the State would coordinate on an investigation and having quick access to all pertinent information is important.
 - As the provider of the vaccine, IHS has a responsibility to ensure the correct and timely usage of the vaccine, certificates and tags.

FAQ's

- As a Lay Vaccinator, will the certificate I sign be recognized if someone wants to use it to travel with their animal, use it if required by a groomer, etc.?
- Currently, in accordance with New Mexico State Statute 77-1-3, the certificates that are required by these entities must be signed by a veterinarian.

FAQ's

- You indicate that LVs should be involved in bite investigations. What does this mean?
- Bite reports can involve the Lay Vaccinator, IHS, and the State of New Mexico. Depending on the scope of the investigation, there may be a need to interview people, identify and ensure quarantine of animals, submit specimens to the lab, search for other possible contacts, etc.

FAQ's

- Do any other tribes have Lay Vaccinator programs?
 - Alaska has a robust Lay Vaccinator program in order to provide vaccination services in the remote villages. Many aspects of the Albuquerque Area program were modeled on their program.
 - It is hoped that in the future the program may be expanded to other IHS Areas in order to ensure tribes are provided the best service possible for the vaccination of their dogs and cats.

FAQ's

- What if I have questions or ideas for improvements?
- IHS always welcomes questions or suggestions for improvement. Please contact anyone in IHS Environmental Health Services - your Service Unit Environmental Health Officer, the District supervisors, or the Director with any comments you may have.