

# Your Pet's 45-Day Confinement



## Why is my pet confined for 45 days?

Very rarely, a wild animal that bites another animal will have a disease called rabies. The 45-day confinement is a watch period for your pet to be sure it does not develop rabies. The 45-day confinement is required by law, even if your pet has had a rabies vaccine and/or was recently boosted.

If your pet is fine for the full 45-days, your pet does not have rabies. If your pet does become ill during confinement, it might have rabies. Experts from the health department will provide information on what to do in this situation.

Knowing if an animal has rabies is very important. Anyone bit by an animal with rabies must be vaccinated to prevent illness and death. So, even though the chance that your pet has rabies is very small, confinement is critical to protect public health. For more information on rabies visit: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/rabies](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/rabies).

## What do I need to do during the next 45 days?

You will need to visit a vet so your pet can receive a rabies booster. Keep your dog, cat or ferret at the address you listed on the confinement contract that you filled out with the Animal Protection Police officer until the end date on your contract. You can take your animal for walks on a leash near this property (e.g., around the block), until you have reported that your animal is well to the Fairfax County Health Department and have been told that the confinement is over.

Call **571-274-2296 IMMEDIATELY** (24/7/365) to contact the Fairfax County Health Department Emergency On-Call Rabies Program staff if:

- Your animal becomes sick, dies or runs away, or
- You would like to euthanize your animal, or
- You would like to give your animal to another person or shelter

## What should I look for while my pet is confined?

**If your pet has any signs of illness during the 45-day confinement, call the Health Department at 571-274-2296 immediately to talk with an expert.** An animal with rabies will become more and more sick, may not eat or drink, and could become aggressive. The health department expert will talk with you and tell you what to do next if your animal does become ill.

## We made it to day 45. Now what?

Great news! Your pet did NOT develop rabies. To release your animal from confinement, contact the Fairfax County Health Department at (703) 246-2433. Rabies Program staff will work with you to show proof of life of your pet either through an in-person visit, a video call, or a dated picture.

## Thank you for your cooperation to help keep Fairfax County a safe place to live, work and play!

If you have any additional questions about your pet's confinement, please call the Fairfax County Health Department Rabies Program at 703-246-2433 during regular business hours.

