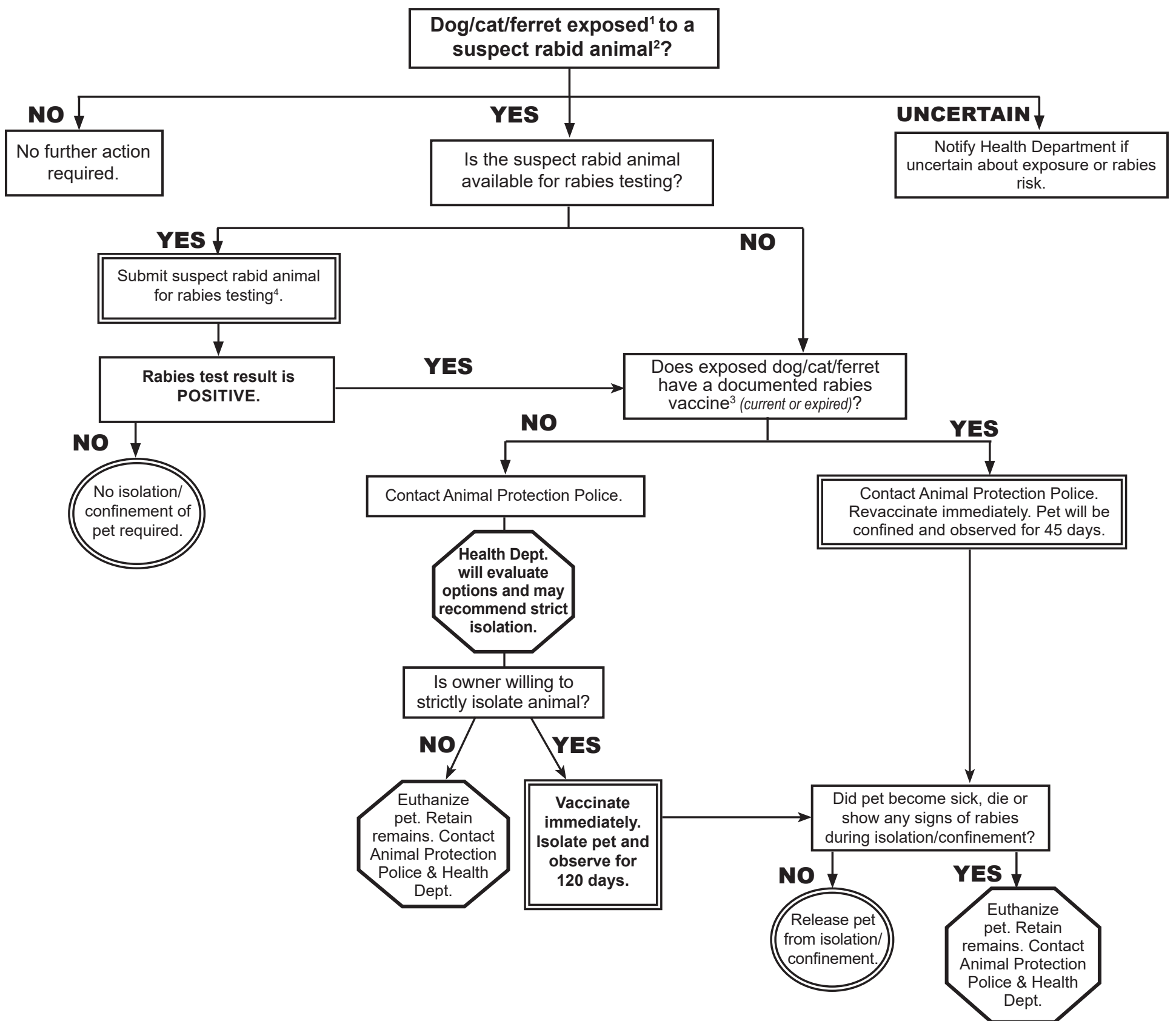




# Fairfax County Health Department Management of Animal-to-Animal Rabies Exposures



1. Exposure definition: Any circumstance where wet saliva or CNS tissue from a rabid or suspect rabid animal did have or may have had direct contact with mucous membranes or a break in the skin of a domestic animal is considered an exposure. The actual witnessing of a bite or attack by a rabid or suspect rabid (see definition below) animal is not necessary to define an exposure. However, a suspect or rabid animal needs to have been witnessed in close proximity to the exposed animal where, in the judgment of the health director or his designee, contact with the suspected rabid or rabid animal likely occurred. Any high risk or suspect rabid animal that has exposed a domestic animal and is not available for laboratory testing should be presumed to be rabid. Domestic animals that bite other domestic animals are not usually considered rabies suspects unless showing signs compatible with the disease.

- 2. Suspect rabid animals include high risk animals and low risk animals that are behaving as if rabid. High risk animals include bats, raccoons, foxes, skunks, bobcats, coyotes, bears, otters, groundhogs, beavers and opossums.
- 3. For initial vaccination, the animal must be vaccinated at least 28 days prior to the exposure to be considered current.
- 4. For rabies testing, contact Fairfax County Animal Protection Police or the Health Department for instructions or postmortem head submission.

*Livestock, hybrids and other animals susceptible to rabies: these animals are handled on a case-by-case basis. Contact the Health Department for guidance*

**Fairfax County Health Department:**  
**703-246-2433 or 571-274-2296**  
 TTY 711

**Fairfax County Animal Protection Police:**  
**703-691-2131 TTY 711**

Fairfax County Health Department  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health)