



Your Pet's 10-Day Confinement

Why is my pet confined for 10 days?

Very rarely, an animal that bites a person or another animal will have a disease called rabies. **The 10-day confinement is a legally required watch period to ensure that your pet (regardless of your pet's vaccination status) does not have rabies (rare but fatal viral infection).**

If your pet is fine for the full 10-days, your pet did 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.

More information on rabies can be found on the following website: [fairfaxcounty.gov/health/rabies](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/rabies)

What do I need to do during the next 10 days?

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 10-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 10. Now what?

Great news! Your dog, cat or ferret did NOT have rabies when the reported bite occurred. To release your animal from confinement, please follow the instructions in the email address you provided the Animal Protection Police with the subject "Fairfax County: 10-Day Animal Confinement Clearance Form." Once you have completed this, your animal is released from confinement. **Your pet will remain in legal confinement until you complete this form.**

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.

