

REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9482 "Anti-Rabies Act of 2007"

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE CONTROL AND ELIMINATION OF HUMAN AND ANIMAL RABIES, PRESCRIBING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION THEREOF AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Begun and held in Metro Manila, on Monday, the Nineteenth day of February, Two Thousand Seven.

Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

Section 1.

Title. - This Act shall be known as the "Anti-Rabies Act of 2007".

Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is the declared policy of the State to protect and promote the right to health of the people.

Towards this end, a system for the control, prevention of the spread, and eventual eradication of human and animal Rabies shall be provided and the need for responsible pet ownership established.

Sec. 3. Definition of Terms. - For the purpose of this Act, the following terms shall mean:

(a) Bitten refers to an act by which a Dog seizes, cuts or grips with its teeth so that the skin of a person has been wounded, pierced or scratched.

(b) Concerned Officials refers to barangay officials, health workers, police officers or government veterinarians.

(c) Direct Supervision refers to range supervision where physical presence of the veterinarian within the barangay is necessary.

(d) Dog refers to a common quadruped domestic animal belonging to the order carnivora (male or female), scientifically known as *canis familiaris*.

(e) Euthanasia refers to the process of painless death to Dogs and other animals.

(f) Impound refers to seize and hold in the custody of the law.

(g) Owner refers to any person keeping, harboring or having charge, care or control of a Dog including his/her representative.

(h) Pound refers to a public enclosure for stray animals.

(i) Public Place refers to any place open to the public like parks, malls, markets, streets, etc.

(j) Rabies refers to a highly fatal disease caused by a lyssa virus, transmitted mainly through the bite of an infected animal and is characterized by muscle paralysis, hydrophobia and aerophobia, and other neurological manifestations.

(k) Rabies transmission refers to the transmission or passage of the Rabies virus through a bite by an infected animal, or through contamination with virus-laden saliva on breaks in the skin and of mucous membranes such as the eyes, the lips, the mouth, or the genital organs.

(l) Rabies Vaccination/Immunoprophylaxis of Humans refers to the inoculation of humans, with modern day rabies vaccines or Rabies immunoglobulin, by a trained doctor or nurse under the supervision of a qualified medical practitioner.

(m) Rabies Vaccination of Dogs refers to the inoculation of a Dog with a Rabies vaccine by a licensed government or private veterinarian or trained individual under the direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian. The services of the said trained individual shall be limited only to Rabies Vaccination Injection in Dogs and only during government mass vaccination campaigns.

(n) Post-exposure Treatment (P.E.T) refers to an anti-Rabies treatment administered after an exposure to Rabies, which include local wound care, Rabies vaccine, with or without anti-Rabies immunizing agent.

(o) Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (P.E.P.) refers to Rabies vaccination administered before an exposure to Rabies to those who are at high risk of getting Rabies.

(p) Stray Dog refers to any Dog leaving its Owner's place or premise and no longer under the effective control of the Owner.

(q) Veterinary or Human Barbiturates refer to drugs that depress the function of the central nervous system.

Sec. 4. National Rabies Prevention and Control Program. - It is hereby mandated that there shall be a National Rabies Prevention and Control Program to be implemented by a multi-agency/multi-sectoral committee chaired by the Bureau of Animal Industry of the Department of Agriculture. The program shall be a multi-agency effort in controlling and eliminating Rabies in the country. Among its component activities include:

(1) mass vaccination of Dogs;

(2) establishment of a central database system for registered and vaccinated Dogs;

(3) impounding, field control and disposition of unregistered, Stray and unvaccinated Dogs;

(4) conduct of information and education campaign on the prevention and control of Rabies;

(5) provision on pre-exposure treatment to high risk personnel and Post Exposure Treatment to animal bite victims;

(6) provision of free routine immunization or Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (P.E.P.) of schoolchildren aged five to fourteen in areas where there is high incidence of rabies as well as the encouragement of the practice of responsible pet ownership;

(7) The program shall be implemented by the Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Health (DOH), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and Department of Education (DepEd), as well as Local Government Units (LGUs) with the assistance of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and People's Organizations (POs).

Sec. 5. Responsibilities of Pet Owner. - All Pet Owners shall be required to:

(a) Have their Dog regularly vaccinated against Rabies and maintain a registration card which shall contain all vaccinations conducted on their Dog, for accurate record purposes.

(b) Submit their Dogs for mandatory registration.

(c) Maintain control over their Dog and not allow it to roam the streets or any Public Place without a leash.

(d) Be a responsible Owner by providing their Dog with proper grooming, adequate food and clean shelter.

(e) Within twenty-four (24) hours, report immediately any Dog biting incident to the Concerned Officials for investigation or for any appropriate action and place such Dog under observation by a government or private veterinarian.

(f) Assist the Dog bite victim immediately and shoulder the medical expenses incurred and other incidental expenses relative to the victim's injuries.

Sec. 6. Responsibilities of Government Agencies. - The following government agencies, which shall jointly implement the National Rabies Prevention and Control Program, shall be tasked to:

A. Department of Agriculture

(1) Improve and upgrade existing animal Rabies laboratory diagnostic capabilities to ensure better services to the people.

(2) Ensure the availability and adequate supply of animal anti-Rabies vaccine at all times.

(3) Undertake free anti-Rabies Vaccination of Dogs giving priority to high risk depressed areas.

(4) Maintain and improve animal Rabies surveillance system.

(5) Establish and maintain Rabies free zone in coordination with the LGUs.

(6) Immediately facilitate for the approval of the sale and use of Veterinary and Human Barbiturate drugs and veterinary euthanasia drugs by the DOH and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA).

(7) Strengthen the training of field personnel and the Information Education and Communication (IEC) activities on Rabies prevention and control and responsible pet ownership.

(8) Conduct research on Rabies and its control in coordination with other agencies.

(9) Formulate minimum standards and monitor the effective implementation of this Act.

(10) Encourage collaborative activities with the DOH, DepEd, DILG, DENR, NGOs, POs and other concerned sectors.

B. Department of Health

(1) Ensure the availability and adequate supply of DOH pre-qualified human Anti-Rabies vaccine in animal bite treatment centers at all times and shall coordinate with other implementing agencies and concerned NGOs for this purpose.

(2) Provide Post-Exposure Treatment at the minimum expense to individuals bitten by animals suspected of being rabid which will consist of the initial vaccine and immunoglobulin dose.

(3) Provide Pre-Exposure Treatment to high-risk personnel, such as, but not limited to, laboratory staff, veterinarians, animal handlers, vaccinators and other persons working with Rabies virus for free.

(4) Coordinate with the DA in the development of appropriate health education strategy to inform the public on Rabies prevention and control and responsible pet ownership.

(5) Develop and maintain a human Rabies surveillance system.

(6) Encourage collaborative activities with the DA, DepEd, DILG, DENR, NGOs, POs and other concerned sectors.

(7) Immediately approve the registration of Veterinary and Human Barbiturate drugs and veterinary euthanasia drugs in coordination with the PDEA.

C. Department of Education

(1) Strengthen Rabies education program through school health teaching/curriculum.

(2) Assist in the Dog mass immunization campaigns in the community.

(3) Encourage collaborative activities with the DA, DOH, DILG, DENR, NGOs, POs and other concerned sectors.

(4) Integrate proper information and education on responsible pet ownership in the relevant subjects in the Elementary and High School levels.

Sec. 7. Responsibilities of the LGUs. - LGUs, in their respective localities, shall:

(1) Ensure that all Dogs are properly immunized, registered and issued a corresponding Dog tag for every immunized and registered Dog.

(2) Strictly enforce Dog Impounding activities and field control to eliminate Stray Dogs.

(3) Ensure that Dogs are leashed or confined within the premises of the Owner's house or Owner's fenced surroundings.

(4) Allocate funds to augment the implementation of the National Rabies Prevention and Control Program, particularly on the financing of supplies and human and Dog vaccines needed for immunization.

(5) Ensure the enforcement of Section 6 of Republic Act No. 8485 or "The Animal Welfare Act of 1998".

(6) Enact additional local ordinances that will support the National Rabies Prevention and Control Program that should include the regulation of treatment locally known as "tandok."

(7) Prohibit the trade of Dogs for meat.

(8) With respect to cities and first class municipalities, establish and maintain a Dog Pound where Impounded Dogs shall be kept, in accordance with Section 9 herein: Provided, That the other municipalities, shall, on their own, establish a Dog Pound or opt to share the expense of establishing and maintaining a Dog Pound with other adjoining municipalities and/or with private animal shelters and control facilities.

(9) Prohibit the use of electrocution as a euthanasia procedure.

(10) Appoint a veterinarian and establish a veterinary office in every province, city and first-class municipality: Provided, That the other municipalities shall, on their own, opt to share the expense of having a veterinary office.

(11) Require pet shops to post information regarding Rabies and responsible pet ownership.

(12) For purposes of ensuring the administrative feasibility of implementing the provisions of this Act and subject to paragraph 8 of this Section, the LGU shall collect the fines imposed under Section 11 subparagraphs (1), (3), (4), (5) and (6) hereof.

Any and all fines collected pursuant to this Act shall be used for the enhancement of the National Rabies Prevention and Control Program within the locality concerned, as well as the achievement of the objectives envisioned in this Act.

The DILG shall ensure compliance of these responsibilities by the LGUs.

Sec. 8. Assistance of NGOs and the Academe. - The agencies tasked to implement the anti-Rabies program shall seek the assistance and participation of NGOs in any of the following activities:

(1) Community mobilization.

(2) Health education/information dissemination on Rabies and responsible pet ownership.

(3) Mass anti-Rabbies campaign

(4) Promotion of the anti-Rabbies campaign during pet or any animal shows.

(5) Surveillance/reporting of Rabies cases in animals and humans.

(6) Any other activities geared towards the prevention and complete eradication of Rabies.

Sec. 9. Impounding Field Control and Disposition of Unregistered, Stray and Unvaccinated Dogs. - Unregistered, Stray or unvaccinated Dogs shall be put in Dog Pounds and disposed of, taking into consideration the following guidelines:

(1) Unregistered, Stray or unvaccinated Dogs shall be impounded and kept in the LGU's designated Dog Pound.

(2) Impounded Dogs not claimed after three days from the Dog Pound shall be placed for adoption to qualified persons, with the assistance of an animal welfare NGO, when feasible, or otherwise disposed of in any manner authorized, subject to the pertinent provisions of Republic Act No. 8485, otherwise known as the "Animal Welfare Act of 1998".

(3) A fee shall be paid by Owners of Impounded Dogs to the LGU concerned, pursuant to Section 7 hereof.

Sec. 10. Dog Population Control. - In furtherance of the policy of this Act to eradicate Rabies, there is the need to control the Dog population and minimize the number of unwanted Stray Dogs. As such, it is hereby mandated:

(1) That the DA, DOH, DILG, DepEd, LGUs, with the assistance of NGOs and POs shall undertake an educational and promotional campaign on responsible Pet Ownership, including the option of spaying or neutering their Dogs.

(2) That the LGUs shall provide an incentive system whereby Owners of Dogs which have been spayed or neutered will be given a subsidized or discounted pet registration fee.

(3) That Dogs which have been impounded three times shall only be released after having been spayed or neutered, at the expense of the Pet's Owner.

Sec. 11. Penalties. -

(1) Pet Owners who fail or refuse to have their Dog registered and immunized against Rabies shall be punished by a fine of Two thousand pesos (P2,000.00).

(2) Pet Owners who refuse to have their Dog vaccinated against Rabies shall be liable to pay for the vaccination of both the Dog and the individuals Bitten by their Dog.

(3) Pet Owners who refuse to have their Dog put under observation after said Dog has Bitten an individual shall be meted a fine of Ten thousand pesos (P10,000.00).

(4) Pet Owners who refuse to have their Dog put under observation and do not shoulder the medical expenses of the person bitten by their Dog shall be meted a fine of Twenty-five thousand pesos (P25,000.00).

(5) Pet Owners who refuse to put leash on their Dogs when they are brought outside the house shall be meted a fine of Five hundred pesos (P500.00) for each incident.

(6) An impounded Dog shall be released to its Owner upon payment of a fine of not less than Five hundred pesos (P500.00) but not more than One thousand pesos (P1,000.00).

(7) Any person found guilty of trading Dog for meat shall be fined not less than Five thousand pesos, (P5,000.00) per Dog and subjected to imprisonment for one to four years.

(8) Any person found guilty of using electrocution as a method of euthanasia shall be fined not less than Five thousand pesos (P5,000.00) per act and subject to imprisonment for one to four years.

(9) If the violation is committed by an alien, he or she shall be immediately deported after service of sentence without any further proceedings.

Sec. 12. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - The DA, in coordination with the DOH, DILG, DepEd, DENR, NGOs and POs shall issue the necessary rules and regulations within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act.

Sec. 13. Appropriations. - The amount of One hundred million pesos (P100,000,000.00) necessary to implement the provisions of this Act shall be initially charged against the appropriations of the DOH, DA, DILG and DepEd under the General Appropriations Act. For the LGUs, the requirements shall be taken from their Internal Revenue Allotment and other local funds. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

Sec. 14. Separability Clause. - In case any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the other provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

Sec. 15. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two newspapers of general circulation, whichever comes earlier.

Approved:

(Sgd.) MANNY VILLAR
President of the Senate

(Sgd.) JOSE DE VENECIA, JR.
Speaker of the House of Representatives

This Act which is a consolidation of Senate Bill No. 2541 and House Bill No. 4654 was finally passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives on February 7, 2007 and February 20, 2007 respectively.

(Sgd.) OSCAR G. YABES
Secretary of the Senate

(Sgd.) ROBERTO P. NAZARENO
Secretary General
House of Representatives

Approved: May 25, 2007

(Sgd.) GLORIA MACAPAGAL - ARROYO
President of the Philippines