

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Ron DeSantis
Governor

Joseph A. Ladapo, MD, PhD
State Surgeon General

Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

RABIES ALERT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 20, 2022

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT
Sandy K. Martin, Administrator
Jackson County Health Department
(850) 526-2412

Marianna, FL: Sandy Martin, Administrator, Jackson County Health Department, has issued a rabies alert for the Southern half of Jackson County.

This is in response to multiple exposure incidents involving foxes that have either tested positive for rabies or have exhibited behavior consistent with rabies.

All residents of Jackson County should be aware that rabies is present in the wild animal population and domestic animals are at risk if not vaccinated.

The public is asked to maintain a heightened awareness that rabies is active in Jackson County.

Alerts are designed to increase awareness to the public, but they should not give a false sense of security to areas that have not been named as under an alert.

This rabies alert is for 60 days and includes the Southern half of Jackson County.

An animal with rabies could infect other wild animals or domestic animals that have not been vaccinated against rabies. All domestic animals should be vaccinated against rabies and all wildlife contact should be avoided, particularly raccoons, bats, foxes, skunks, otters, bobcats and coyotes. Rabies is a disease of the nervous system and is fatal to warm blooded animals and humans. The only treatment for human exposure to rabies is rabies specific immune globulin and rabies immunization.

Appropriate treatment started soon after the exposure will protect an exposed person from the disease.

The following advice is issued:

Keep rabies vaccinations up to date for all pets.

If your pet is bitten by a wild animal, seek veterinary assistance for the animal immediately and contact the Jackson County Health Department at 850-526-2412.

Call your local animal control agency to remove stray animals from your neighborhood. **DO NOT** handle, feed or unintentionally attract wild animals by leaving pet food outside or garbage cans open.

NEVER adopt wild animals or bring them into your home.

Teach children **NEVER** to handle unfamiliar animals, wild or domestic, even if they appear to be friendly.

Prevent bats from entering living quarters or occupied spaces in homes, churches, schools or other similar areas.

Persons who have been bitten or scratched by wild or domestic animals should seek medical attention and report the injury to the Jackson County Health Department by calling 850-526-2412.

For further information on rabies, go to the Florida Department of Health website: <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseasesand-conditions/rabies/index.html> or contact Jackson County Health Department at 850-526-2412.