



## **Instructions for Rabies Specimen Submission** v051619

1. Contact the Section of Epidemiology for authorization before you send a specimen to ASVL for testing.
  - Work hours: 907-269-8000
  - After hours: 800-478-0084
2. Specimens can be submitted by health care providers, veterinarians, environmental health officers, wildlife agents, law officers or other individuals designated by the Section of Epidemiology.
3. Call ASVL before you ship an authorized specimen; tell us how you shipped it and when to expect it.
  - Work hours: 907-371-1000
  - After hours emergency contact: 855-371-1001 option #6

## **Conditions of Shipment**

4. No living animal will be accepted for rabies testing at ASVL.
5. Small animals; whole carcasses should be submitted: (Example: cats, ferrets, mink, voles, hares and bats)
6. Large animals; only the intact head of a large animal will be accepted. (Example: dogs, wolves, bears)
  - Do not send a whole body
  - Do not attempt to remove the brain

## **Prepare and Pack the Specimen**

7. Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) when processing the specimen.
  - If you have any questions about how to safely handle the specimen, consult the Section of Epidemiology.
8. You must surgically separate the head from the body of larger animals at the upper neck.
9. Put the specimen in 2 heavy, waterproof bags.
10. Tie each bag separately to prevent leakage.
11. Appropriately dispose of your contaminated gloves:
  - Preferred – remove your gloves and place them in the 2<sup>nd</sup> plastic bag before you tie it up.
  - Alternative – incinerate them.
12. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
13. Put the bagged specimen in a leak-proof container and place refrigerant packs around the specimen.
14. Complete the Rabies Investigation Request, place it in a plastic bag and put it in the leak-proof container.
15. Close the container and seal it securely with fibrous packing tape.
16. Specimens should be kept cold (35-45°F = 2-8°C) prior to and during shipment.
  - Ship specimens with cold packs; DO NOT use ice; it will melt during transit and make an unsafe mess.
  - Frozen specimens are acceptable; freezing will not affect the rabies assay although testing may be delayed until the specimen has thawed.
17. The carcass of a potentially infectious animal should be incinerated.
  - ASVL will incinerate the remains of all pets tested for rabies; bodies will not be returned to the owner.

## Label the Container

18. All rabies specimen containers must bear the following label: You can download this label from the APHL website at [http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Labs/Documents/publications/Rabies\\_label.pdf](http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Labs/Documents/publications/Rabies_label.pdf)

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>URGENT EXPEDITE</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>BIOLOGICAL SUBSTANCE CATEGORY B: UN 3373</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Packaged in compliance with IATA packing (Instruction 650) This Package Contains an Animal Head <b>Keep Refrigerated</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Call the Alaska State Virology Laboratory Business Hours: 371-1000; After Hours: 855-371-1001 option #6</p>
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## Decide how you will ship the specimen and address it accordingly

19. We prefer you ship by Goldstreak, or other Air Special Package Service using the address below. ASVL will pick the specimen up at the designated airline location.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Alaska State Virology Laboratory</b> 1051 Sheenjok Dr. UAF Campus, Fairbanks, AK 99775</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Business Hours: 371-1000; After Hours: 855-371-1001 option #6</p>
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20. If you must ship via US Mail, please use Priority or Express Mail and the address below.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Alaska State Virology Laboratory</b> P.O. Box 60230 Fairbanks, AK 99706-0230</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Business Hours: 371-1000; After Hours: 855-371-1001 option #6</p>
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## Notes:

- Shipments must be **PREPAID** unless prior arrangements have been made with the Section of Epidemiology.
- ASVL will call results to the submitter and the Section of Epidemiology on all **POSITIVE** animal heads and on **ALL HUMAN EXPOSURE** cases within 24-48 hours of specimen receipt.
- A copy of the results will be mailed to the submitter as soon as possible.

**As usual, please feel free to contact ASVL if you have any questions about testing.**



ASVL Lab Manager  
1051 Sheenjok Dr.  
Fairbanks Alaska, 99775  
PH: 907-371-1000