



INTER AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO
GUAYAMA CAMPUS
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL AND ANIMAL SCIENCES
VETERINARY TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM

Rabies Vaccination Policy

The Veterinary Technology Program (VTP) of Inter American University of Puerto Rico-Guayama Campus, has established a rabies vaccination policy in compliance with the recommendations of the accrediting agency *Committee on Veterinary Technician Education and Activities* (CVTEA). During the course of their education, students in the program provide hands-on care to a variety of animals, including animals with unknown medical and vaccination histories. According to the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), "veterinarians and veterinary technicians join animal control officers and wildlife biologists in risk category 3, defined as persons who interact or are at increased risk of interacting with mammals other than bats that may have rabies." Exposure to rabies occurs in veterinary practice and, because of this risk, it is recommended that the Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines and medical professional recommendations for post-exposure prophylaxis and management be followed.

In accordance with these guidelines, and in view of the fact that the Puerto Rico Department of Health establishes that rabies is endemic in Puerto Rico, Inter American University of Puerto Rico-Guayama Campus, requires active students of the Veterinary Technology Program to be vaccinated against rabies according to the 2-dose vaccine protocol series.

As part of the program, all students will be oriented and educated on the risks of animal handling and disease transmission that may occur in the different scenarios to which they will be exposed.

Rabies vaccination policy statement

The VTP does not offer a rabies mitigation plan. Therefore, students who are not fully vaccinated are prohibited from handling unvaccinated animals or animals of unknown history. This applies to companion animals and farm animals. If a student is fully vaccinated and presents proper evidence, he/she may handle non-vaccinated animals. An unvaccinated animal is one that has not received its rabies vaccination protocol or one whose vaccination has expired. Additionally, those students who are not fully vaccinated are not guaranteed they will be able to fulfill essential skills required in each course and in the Clinical Practice course. Given that practice centers are entities not controlled by the institution, the VTP cannot guarantee that all animals handled by students in this environment comply with their vaccination protocol. It is for this reason that all students must be fully vaccinated at the time of taking the course.

Standards and Procedures:

- Rabies vaccination is an admission requirement. For this reason, all students enrolled in the Veterinary Technology Program must present evidence of vaccination against the rabies virus on or before the beginning of their first academic semester.
- All students will be informed of the Rabies Policy at the beginning of their first academic semester and will complete the Veterinary Technology Program Policy Orientation and the corresponding Certification.
- Any student who has been previously vaccinated must provide evidence of two doses of the vaccine on or before the beginning of the first academic semester.
- All information about the rabies vaccination will be kept confidential and will remain in each student's academic file.

- Bachelor of Science in Veterinary Technology students should have rabies titers within three years of receiving two doses of vaccine.

Effectiveness: This policy is effective as of August 1, 2023.