

To: All Incoming Veterinary Technology Students

From: Mary O'Horo Loomis, DVM  
Veterinary Science Program Director

Re: Mandatory Rabies Vaccination Policy

Welcome to the Veterinary Science Technology Programs at SUNY Canton. We look forward to meeting you and working with you to achieve your academic goals.

We have worked with our Advisory Board to establish a policy whereby all Veterinary Technology students must be vaccinated against the rabies virus before they perform the first of their two mandatory 120 hour preceptorships and prior to taking courses in Radiology or Small Animal Medicine. We feel that the most appropriate time for students to complete the series is during their second semester in either the AAS (2 yr.) or BS (4 yr.) program.

We feel that requiring all students to be vaccinated against rabies is essential for several reasons. Rabies is a serious viral disease, there is close to a 100% mortality rate in people or animals that contract this disease. In many cases, Veterinary Technology students may come in contact with animals that may not have been vaccinated against rabies or that have unknown vaccination histories. This is often true in the case of animals from shelters. Many veterinary practices that allow students to perform their preceptorships with them require that students be vaccinated.

The rabies vaccination consists of a three shot series given during a three week time span. The SUNY Canton Davis Health Center will order and administer these vaccines to you for only the cost of the vaccine, if you would like. The cost of the vaccine series (all 3 shots) varies with the current market price from the manufacturer. In the past it has been between \$750 and \$1100. We have arranged to have this cost added to your student bill for the spring semester so that it can be covered by financial aid if you are eligible. Please note the student insurance plan, like many others, will not cover this vaccine series

You have other options to obtain the vaccination series but it will require some advance planning to determine what works best for you. If you are currently covered by health insurance you may want to look into whether your current insurance will cover the rabies vaccination. You may be able to complete the series through your own health care provider or your local county health department. If you have a private insurance plan that will cover the vaccination series, the school can provide an itemized bill for them for reimbursement to you. It is up to you to determine if your insurance covers the pre-exposure rabies vaccine cost and if they will accept reimbursement.

If you have already received the series or if you will be receiving them from a private provider, our health office will require proof of the completed vaccine series prior to **May 1** of your second semester in the program. This information must include product type, route of administration, dose, and dates of the series.

Failure to complete the vaccine series by **May 1 of the second semester**, prior to your preceptorship, may result in you being dropped from the program.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me by email at: loomism@canton.edu