



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE  
Alister F. Martin, MD, MPP  
*Commissioner*

## 2026 Veterinary Advisory #1 Summary of 2025 Animal Rabies Surveillance

- In 2025, 22 animals tested positive for rabies in Brooklyn (2 raccoons), Queens (1 bat, 12 raccoons), and Staten Island (1 cat, 6 raccoons).
- Veterinarians should ensure that their clients' pets are up to date for rabies vaccination and educate pet owners regarding rabies prevention.
- Consider rabies in the differential diagnosis for any animal presenting with progressive neurological illness particularly if the animal is stray, has history of a bite wound of unknown origin, known exposure to a rabid animal or rabies reservoir species, or a dog imported from a country where the [canine rabies](#) variant circulates.
- For current information on rabies and animals testing positive for rabies in NYC, visit [nyc.gov/health/rabies](https://nyc.gov/health/rabies).

*Please share with your colleagues in Veterinary Medicine and your staff.*

April 8, 2026

Dear Colleagues,

This advisory is a summary of New York City (NYC) animal rabies testing data (Appendix) and rabies activity for 2025. The most up-to-date rabies information is on the NYC Health Department [website](#).

In 2025, 22 animals in NYC tested positive for rabies at the NYC Public Health Laboratory (n=20) or New York State Wadsworth Center (n=2): 2 raccoons from Brooklyn, 1 bat and 12 raccoons from Queens, and 1 cat and 6 raccoons from Staten Island (Table 1). The number of rabid raccoons in Queens and Brooklyn increased compared to the previous 2 years; most were identified in southern Queens, including 3 near the Queens-Nassau county border ([Map](#)). A similar elevated number of rabid raccoons last occurred in 2022, mostly in central Queens near the Brooklyn border.

In 2025, neighboring [Nassau County](#) reported 21 rabid raccoons and 1 cat; the increase in rabid animals began in summer 2024. [Suffolk County](#) reported 19 rabid animals (18 raccoons and 1 cat) in 2025. Nassau and Suffolk Counties had previously been free of raccoon rabies since 2007 and 2009 respectively, except for a raccoon in 2016 and cat in 2017 in Nassau believed to have originated from outside the state/county. Nassau and Suffolk Counties, New York State, and NYC Health Departments continue to collaborate on surveillance and control measures including the use of oral rabies vaccine (ORV). In NYC, ORV was conducted in April and October 2025 in affected areas of Brooklyn, Queens, and previously affected areas of northern Manhattan. ORV was not conducted in NYC in 2024 because programmatic funding could not be identified.

In 2025, two people received rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) for exposure to a rabid NYC bat: a person who was bitten in their home and an animal shelter staff member who was possibly exposed

during collection of the bat. Three people received PEP following exposures to a rabid kitten in Staten Island: two people in the home of the rescued stray kitten and a staff member at the veterinary hospital where the kitten was brought for care. There were no pets exposed to rabid animals.

**Rabies Vaccination for Dogs and Cats**

As a reminder, maintaining vaccination against rabies is required for all dogs and cats in New York City. The New York City Health Code requires that all puppies and kittens receive their first rabies shot(s) by 4 months of age. Revaccination is required no later than one year after the primary vaccination and revaccinations administered at intervals thereafter, in accordance with the recommendations of the manufacturer of the U.S.D.A. approved rabies vaccine intended to maintain active immunization. Veterinarians should educate their clients that even indoor dogs and cats are at risk if they escape outside or if a rabid bat enters the home.

View additional information about rabies, including NYC summary data at [nyc.gov/health/rabies](http://nyc.gov/health/rabies). The following free resources are available for download or by calling 311.

- [Rabies: Protecting Your Pet](#) Brochure (PDF)  
Other Languages: [Español](#) | [Русский](#) | [繁體中文](#)
- [Information for Veterinarians: Rabies Prevention Poster](#) (PDF)
- [Rabies Exposure and Biting Animals Management Flowcharts, Poster for Veterinarians](#) (PDF)

**What All Veterinarians Can Do**

**EDUCATE** clients to:

- Avoid contact with wild animals and stray animals.
- Make sure their dog or cat is up to date on its rabies vaccinations.
- Avoid leaving their pets outdoors unattended and to feed them indoors.
- Avoid trying to separate animals that are fighting.
- Contact their veterinarian if their pet has been in contact with a raccoon, skunk, bat or any animal that might be rabid.

**Report** animal bites and suspect animal rabies cases to the NYC Health Department’s Veterinary Public Health Services (VPHS) Animal Bite Unit

During business hours	VPHS Animal Bite Unit (ABU)	646-364-1799
After business hours	NYC Poison Control Center	212-POISONS (212-764-7667)

**Questions?** Call the NYC Health Department

Questions on rabies exposures in pets, animal bites, and other animal-related issues	Veterinary Public Health Services	646-364-1783
Questions on rabies exposures in people, PEP, and other human-related rabies issues	Bureau of Communicable Disease	347-396-2600
After business hours	NYC Poison Control Center	212-764-7667

As always, we appreciate your continued collaboration with our efforts to monitor public health issues in New York City.

Sincerely,

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Zoonotic and Vector-borne Disease

Bureau of Communicable Disease

[ZIVDU@health.nyc.gov](mailto:ZIVDU@health.nyc.gov)

347-396-2600

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Visit our webpage for information and resources for veterinarians: [Zoonotic and Vector-borne Diseases: Information for Providers](#)

If you do not receive these alerts via email and would like to be added to the distribution list, email [zivdu@health.nyc.gov](mailto:zivdu@health.nyc.gov)

**Report animal diseases to the NYC Health Department:**

- Online through a [secure web-based reporting platform](#)
- Call 347-396-2600
- Fax the [Animal Disease Case Report form](#) to 347-396-2753

**Report upon suspicion:** Anthrax, brucellosis, glanders, influenza (novel with pandemic potential), mpox, plague, Q fever, rabies, SARS, tularemia

**Report upon laboratory diagnosis:** Arboviral encephalitides, carbapenem-resistant organism (CRO), leptospirosis, psittacosis, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, salmonellosis, tuberculosis

**Report within 24 hours any outbreak or suspected outbreak of any disease, condition, or syndrome, of known or unknown etiology, which may pose a danger to public health.**

## Appendix

**Table 1. NYC Rabies Testing\* by Animal and Borough, 2025**

ANIMAL	BRONX		BROOKLYN		MANHATTAN		QUEENS		STATEN ISLAND		NYC TOTAL	
	Tested	Positive	Tested	Positive	Tested	Positive	Tested	Positive	Tested	Positive	Tested	Positive
BAT	2	0	7	0	11	0	7	1	4	0	31	1
CAT	10	0	25	0	28	0	24	0	19	1	106	1
DOG	5	0	5	0	14	0	8	0	3	0	35	0
OPOSSUM	2	0	0	0	1	0	4	0	2	0	9	0
RACCOON	7	0	27	2	14	0	82	12	23	6	153	20
SKUNK	3	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	4	0	11	0
OTHER**	2	0	0	0	5	0	1	0	5	0	13	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>22</b>

\*Tested at NYC DOHMH Public Health Lab (PHL) (n=335) or New York State Wadsworth Center (n=23). Excludes 6 animals (4 cats, 2 dogs) from outside NYC tested at NYC PHL and 5 animals unfit for testing (4 bats, 1 raccoon).

\*\*Other = 6 groundhogs, 4 squirrels, 1 each cattle, fox, and vole

**Table 2. NYC Rabies Testing by Animal and Year, 2021-2025**

ANIMAL	2021		2022		2023		2024		2025	
	Tested	Positive	Tested	Positive	Tested	Positive	Tested	Positive	Tested	Positive
BAT	18	0	22	2	30	1	22	2	31	1
CAT	70	3	88	3	70	1	92	2	106	1
DOG	30	0	24	0	36	0	28	0	35	0
GROUNDHOG	7	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	6	0
OPOSSUM	26	0	17	0	8	0	3	0	9	0
RACCOON	224	15	257	30	207	8	203	4	153	20
SKUNK	6	1	18	3	19	2	41	0	11	0
OTHER**	27	0	29	0	31	0	8	0	7	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>22</b>

Includes 2 inconclusive tests: 1 bat and cat in 2022

\*\*Other = 35 squirrels, 35 rats, 12 mice, 3 chipmunks, 3 foxes, 2 cattle, 2 deer, 2 ferrets, 1 each bear, beaver, chinchilla, coyote, goat, horse, rabbit, sheep, and vole

**Table 3. NYC Animal Rabies Testing by Borough and Year, 2021-2025**

BOROUGH	2021		2022		2023		2024		2025	
	Tested	Positive	Tested	Positive	Tested	Positive	Tested	Positive	Tested	Positive
BRONX	45	4	75	13	102	1	59	3	31	0
BROOKLYN	60	0	152	2	87	1	70	0	65	2
MANHATTAN	68	1	58	0	83	1	60	0	74	0
QUEENS	180	3	132	17	101	4	147	3	128	13
STATEN ISLAND	55	11	40	6	30	5	63	2	60	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>22</b>

Includes 2 inconclusive tests: 1 Brooklyn and 1 Manhattan in 2022