



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

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Date: September 1, 2026

From: Zack Moore, MD, MPH
State Epidemiologist and Epidemiology Section Chief

To: NC Clinicians

Subject: Rabies Exposure to Petting Zoo Goats

On August 28, 2026, NCDHHS confirmed multiple rabies cases in baby goats owned by a mobile petting zoo in Iredell County. Based on an assessment by NCDHHS and the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, these goats could have been infectious as early as July 28, 2026. While infectious, the goats were exhibited at [multiple events](#) in at least seven NC counties.

Rabies has been established in NC wildlife since the early 1990s. Raccoons are the primary wildlife reservoir species in the state. In general, the risk of rabies transmission to people from livestock is low. However, exposure to the virus is still possible if infectious saliva from livestock enters an open wound or contacts a mucous membrane.

Actions for NC Clinicians:

1. Evaluate Potential Exposure

- Review patient history for contact with baby goats from the **Farm Adventures mobile petting zoo** between **July 28 and August 27, 2026**.
- Determine if infectious saliva might have come into contact with an open wound, broken skin, or mucous membranes. Use the [Rabies Risk Assessment](#) to determine if rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) is needed.

2. Administer Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP)

- If indicated based on the risk assessment, initiate PEP immediately. Refer to the [NC DHHS PEP Guidance](#) for clinical recommendations.
- For individuals who have not previously been vaccinated for rabies:
 - **Human Rabies Immune Globulin (HRIG):** Administer on Day 0 (dose is weight-based: 20 IU/kg).
 - **Rabies Vaccine:** Administer 1.0 mL IM (Day 0, 3, 7, and 14). *Note: There is no reduced vaccine dosage for pediatric patients; both adults and children receive 1.0 mL IM.*
- Never administer the first vaccine dose in the same syringe or in the same anatomical site as human rabies immune globulin (HRIG).

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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3. Document PEP & Educate Patients

- Record all rabies PEP vaccine doses in the North Carolina Immunization Registry (**NCIR**).
 - All doses should be recorded in the NCIR at the time of administration or by the close of business on the day of administration.
 - In NCIR, the client comment “**Client has been exposed to rabies**” must be added to a client record to switch the tracking schedule from pre-exposure to post-exposure prophylaxis. For instructions on adding a client comment, please refer to the “How to Add a Client Comment” section on page 4 of the [NCIR Quick Reference Guide](#).
- Provide the patient (or parent/guardian) with a vaccination reminder schedule. This should be done in addition to recording doses in the NCIR.
 - Use the [Rabies PEP Schedule Generator](#) to calculate follow-up dosing dates.
 - While every effort should be made to adhere to the PEP schedule, delays of a few days for individual doses are typically acceptable, while longer lapses may have unpredictable outcomes. The PEP Schedule Generator can be used to determine if a deviation requires follow-up with public health officials.
 - Patient documentation options include:
 - Print NCIR Patient Record.
 - For instructions, please refer to the “How to Print Immunization Records” section on page 4 of the [NCIR Quick Reference Guide](#). Note: this record only includes a due date for the next vaccine in the PEP series and not all subsequent dose dates. The client comment “Client has been exposed to rabies” must be added for subsequent PEP doses to forecast correctly.
 - Provide EHR generated visit summary that includes PEP administration documentation.

How to contact us:

For questions regarding rabies risk assessment, clinical guidance, or access to rabies vaccine or HRIG, contact your [local health department](#) or the **State Communicable Disease Branch at 919-733-3419 (available 24/7)**.