

§ 20-19-401.

Findings.

The General Assembly finds that:

- (1) Wolves and wolf-dog hybrids are now present in this state but remain unregulated;
- (2) The Compendium of Animal Rabies Control advises that no vaccination has been approved for use in wolves or wolf-dog hybrids;
- (3) However, wolves and dogs are scientifically classified as the same species;
- (4) "Off" and "Extra" label use of vaccines approved for use in dogs are widely used to vaccinate wolves and wolf-dog hybrids, even by the federal government, to prevent diseases such as rabies;
- (5) Failure to vaccinate wolves and wolf-dog hybrids raises the possibility of creating a large pool of animals that could serve as reservoirs for rabies; and
- (6) Due to the neglect and irresponsibility of their owners, some wolves and wolf-dog hybrids could pose a threat to public safety in this state.

History. Acts 2001, No. 1768, § 1.

§ 20-19-402.

Definition.

As used in this subchapter, "wolf-dog hybrid" means any animal which is publicly acknowledged by its owner as being the offspring of a wolf and domestic dog. No animal may be judged to be a wolf or wolf-dog hybrid based strictly on its appearance.

History. Acts 2001, No. 1768, § 2.

§20-19-403.

Records.

- (a) Owners of wolves and wolf-dog hybrids shall maintain all health records of each wolf and wolf-dog hybrid, including health certificates, records of immunization, and any other documentary evidence pertaining to the health and welfare of the animal.
- (b) The owner shall maintain records of acquisitions and disposals of wolf-dog hybrids, including the name and address of the person with whom a transaction is conducted, with entries being made on the day of the transaction.
- (c) Records shall be available for inspection by law enforcement personnel at reasonable hours.

History. Acts 2001, No. 1768, § 3.

§ 20-19-404.

Confinement - Care - Inspections.

(a) Wolves and wolf-dog hybrids shall be provided adequate confinement and adequate feeding.

(b) Adequate confinement shall include at least:

(1) A brick, concrete, or chain-link enclosure surrounded by two (2) layers of fencing as follows:

(A) For a single animal:

(i) Either an inner chain-link fence a minimum of fifteen feet by eight feet by ten feet (15' x 8' x 10') or an electric fence that prevents climbing over, and either extending two feet (2') underground or employing some other means that prevents digging under; and

(ii) An outer fence eight feet (8') high with at least four feet (4') between the two (2) fences unless the inner fence is an electric fence posted with warning signs and the gate is locked at all times;

(B) For a pair, double the cage length for a single animal; or

(C) For more than two (2) animals, add ten feet (10') to the single animal length and width for each additional animal;

(2) A secluded den four feet (4') square for each animal; and

(3) No more than four (4) total of wolves or wolf-dog hybrids, or both, per acre.

(c) Adequate confinement shall not include tethering of a wolf or wolf-dog hybrid not under the direct supervision and control of the owner or custodian.

(d) (1) Adequate feeding shall include daily feedings and provisions of water.

(2) The feed used shall consist of a minimum meat-based protein content of twenty-five percent (25%) and crude fat of fifteen percent (15%), with exceptions for geriatric and overweight animals or under the advice of a licensed veterinarian.

(e) Owners and custodians of wolves and wolf-dog hybrids shall allow inspections by law enforcement personnel at reasonable hours to ensure adequate confinement and adequate feeding.

(f) This section applies only to owners of four (4) or more adult wolf-dog hybrids or wolves, animals one (1) year of age or older.

History. Acts 2001, No. 1768, § 4.

§ 20-19-405.

Entry into the state.

- (a) Wolves and wolf-dog hybrids may enter into this state only if each animal is accompanied by a certificate of veterinary inspection indicating that the animal is free from disease or exposure to infectious or contagious disease.
- (b) No animals from rabies-quarantined areas shall be admitted into this state.

History. Acts 2001, No. 1768, § 5.

§ 20-19-406.

Vaccination.

- (a) Wolves and wolf-dog hybrids are required to be vaccinated against rabies by a licensed veterinarian with a vaccine approved for dog use, and a rabies certificate may be issued.
- (b) Veterinarians shall inform the owner of the wolf or wolf-dog hybrid, preferably in writing, that the vaccination is considered "off label" and that protection against rabies is not guaranteed.
- (c) If a wolf or wolf-dog hybrid bites a person, the following criteria shall be used by an official of the Division of Health of the Department of Health and Human Services in dealing with the animal:
 - (1) The decision shall consider, at least:
 - (A) The epidemiology and risk of rabies in the species of animal in question;
 - (B) Possible prior exposure to a rabies vector;
 - (C) Behavior of the animal at the time of the bite;
 - (D) Prior rabies vaccinations; and
 - (E) Other circumstances that may exist;
 - (2) In some situations, the division shall consider the initiative and willingness of the individual so exposed to submit to postexposure antirabies immunization after being adequately informed of all potential risks;
 - (3) Upon written order by the Director of the Division of Health of the Department of Health and Human Services or a specifically designated representative, any biting animal determined to be at significant risk for the transmission of rabies shall be humanely killed and the brain tissue submitted for testing; and
 - (4) The division has the authority to order the quarantine of an animal determined to be a very low risk for the transmission of rabies for a thirty-day observation period as an alternate method to euthanasia and testing.

(d) Owners shall be notified and given three (3) business days to provide proof to the division in their animal's defense before the animal can be euthanized.

(e) If in the future the United States Department of Agriculture approves the use of rabies vaccines in wolves or wolf-dog hybrids, or both, then wolves and wolf-dog hybrids will fall under the same regulations as dogs regarding biting humans and rabies control.

History. Acts 2001, No. 1768, § 6.

§ 20-19-407.

Penalties.

(a) If a wolf or wolf-dog hybrid bites a person or injures or destroys another animal while out of its confined area, the person responsible for the adequate confinement of the animal upon conviction shall be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

(b) If a wolf or wolf-dog hybrid is not adequately confined or fed, the person responsible for adequate confinement or adequate feeding of the animal, or both adequate feeding and adequate confinement upon conviction shall be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

(c) A person who abandons or releases a wolf or wolf-dog hybrid into the wild upon conviction shall be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

History. Acts 2001, No. 1768, § 7.

§ 20-19-408.

Local regulation.

Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed to prohibit local regulation of the ownership, breeding, confinement, or feeding of wolves or wolf-dog hybrids.

History. Acts 2001, No. 1768, § 8.