

RABIES POLICY FOR PRIMATES.

1. No USDA-approved rabies vaccine for primates

Rabies vaccines are licensed for specific species (dogs, cats, ferrets, livestock). There is **no vaccine officially approved or labeled for non-human primates** by the USDA.

- That means any use would be “**off-label**”
 - Off-label use does **not carry legal recognition** for bite/quarantine decisions
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2. Public health guidance (CDC stance)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention generally considers primates:

- **Low risk for rabies**
- Rarely implicated in transmission in the U.S.
- More commonly a **bite risk for other pathogens** (e.g., Herpes B virus in macaques)

Because of this, routine rabies vaccination is **not a standard recommendation**.

3. Legal reality (this is the critical part)

Even if a primate *is vaccinated*:

- **It is often treated as UNVACCINATED by law**
- If a bite occurs:
 - Public health authorities may require **strict quarantine**
 - In some jurisdictions, **ethanasia and testing** may still be mandated

This is very different from dogs/cats, where vaccination status changes the outcome.

4. State and local laws matter more than medicine

Primate ownership is regulated **state-by-state and sometimes county-level**.

- Some states **ban private ownership entirely**
- Others allow it but require:
 - Permits
 - Registration

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- Specific veterinary oversight

Rabies vaccination is **rarely listed as a requirement**, but liability protocols (bite reporting, quarantine) are strict.

5. Veterinary perspective (practical)

Exotic veterinarians may occasionally:

- Administer rabies vaccine **off-label** in high-risk situations
- Document it for **medical—not legal—purposes**

But they will typically advise:

“This does not legally count as rabies protection.”