



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

For immediate release

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LDARD and SAVA CVC intensify Rabies Awareness and Vaccination Drive following confirmed cases in domestic dogs.

The Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (LDARD), in collaboration with the South African Veterinary Association Community Vet Clinics (SAVA CVC), intensify an annual awareness on Rabies and Vaccination Drive following four confirmed cases of Rabies in domestic dogs in the Phalaborwa area.

Rabies is a deadly viral disease, but it is 100% preventable through community action and responsible pet ownership.

In partnership with local veterinarians, vaccination of dogs and cats in the affected areas will be conducted house-to-house, as part of the LDARD and SAVA CVC's commitment to protect public health. The department encourages all pet owners to take action to protect their furry family members.

Vaccinations will be done as follows:

- **20 to 24 October 2025:** Impala Park Stadium, Namakgale and Lulekani
- **3 to 7 November 2025:** Mashishimale, Maseke, Boelang, Makhushane, Selwane, Humulani and Benfarm
- Pet owners unable to present their dogs during the house-to-house visits are urged to schedule a vaccination appointment with their veterinarian or take their dogs to the department's office in Lulekani, Phalaborwa.

Vaccination of pets is the single most effective way to protect both family and the community from rabies.

Mopani District is regarded as one of the Rabies high-risk areas. Though the cases are rare, community are advised to always be vigilant. The LDARD is working closely with health and veterinary professionals to monitor the situation and implement control measures in the affected area.

The LDARD is further committed to a "One Health" approach, recognizing that the health of people is connected to the health of animals and shared environment.

The public should take note of these key health information:

- **Vaccinate Your Pets:** Regular vaccinations are the most effective way to eliminate dog-mediated human rabies. It is the legal responsibility of every pet owner to ensure their dogs and cats are vaccinated against rabies.
- **Practice Vigilance:** Report any stray, sick, or unfamiliar animals exhibiting unusual behaviour to the local state veterinary office, the SPCA, the private veterinarian, or community leaders. Signs of rabies can include abnormal aggression, excessive drooling, paralysis, or appearing weak and uncoordinated.
- **Do Not Touch or Approach Strays:** Do not touch or handle unfamiliar animals, as it is impossible to know their health status. This is especially important for children, who account for a large percentage of bite victims worldwide.

In the event of an animal bite or scratch, it is crucial to take immediate action:

1. **Wash the wound:** Immediately wash the bite or scratch thoroughly with soap and running water for at least 15 minutes to reduce the risk of infection.
2. **Seek immediate medical attention:** Go straight to a clinic or hospital for assessment and potential Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP), which is most effective when administered right away.
3. **Report the incident:** Notify the veterinary services office so they can investigate the animal involved.

Rabies Quick Facts:

- Rabies is nearly always fatal once symptoms appear, making prevention through vaccination essential.
- Most human rabies cases come from exposure to infected domestic dogs.
- In addition to vaccinations, pet owners can prevent rabies by keeping their animals under control when outdoors and avoiding contact with wildlife. //END

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