



Memo to Incoming Students:

Implementation/Start Date: Fall 2022

The Veterinary Technology Program will be requiring all students in the Associates of Applied Science Veterinary Technician program receive the pre-exposure rabies vaccine. This requirement does not apply to the Veterinary Assistant certificate students.

Reasoning/Justification:

- There has been an increase in the number of terrestrial mammals with rabies in the state of Colorado since 2007. Rabies is often a fatal disease and our students are at higher risk for coming into contact with rabies-infected animals than the general public. This policy reflects a top priority in the college, to provide our students an excellent and safe education.
- According to the CDC guidelines veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and other staff members are at frequent risk and should receive the rabies pre-exposure series as well as serologic testing every 2 years to ensure antibody titers are maintained.
- The AVMA (CVTEA) accrediting body requires that students are vaccinated against rabies and the program must have robust mitigation plan in place. This requirement is effective as of January 1, 2022.
- By receiving the vaccine while in the program, students will be more ready for the workforce and to gain employment.

What is expected at the beginning of the semester?

- All students entering the VET TECH Program (AAS Veterinary Technology) will be required to receive the pre-exposure rabies series. Students will need to show proof of completed vaccine series by the start of the VET 116 class.
- Failure to complete the vaccination series or secure approval for exemption before the start of the VET 116 class will prevent the student from continuing in the program.

What does the vaccine series look like?

- The two shot series is given on days 0 and 7. The two products available are RabAvert[®], chick embryo origin or Imovax[®], human diploid origin.

What if I am already vaccinated?

- Students will need to provide documentation of previous vaccinations. This must include dates and physician signatures and location vaccine was administered.
- According to the CDC guidelines veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and other staff members are at frequent risk and should receive the rabies pre-exposure series as well as serologic testing every 2 years to ensure antibody titers are maintained. If titers are lower than WHO and CDC recommendations (≥ 0.5 IU/mL) a booster is recommended.

What is the associated cost with this requirement?

- The approximate cost of each vaccination is between \$280 to \$450 per dose, resulting in an overall cost of \$560 to \$900.

Where can I go to receive the vaccines?

- **If you currently have health insurance or a relationship with a doctor, we recommend starting here. Important things to clarify with your provider.**
 - This is required for entry into the program
 - You are entering a high risk profession
 - This is considered preventative care
 - Provide the attached letter showing the requirement for program entry
- **Medicare Coverage** for the Rabies Vaccine. When administered by a healthcare professional as an outpatient service, a rabies vaccine is determined to be medically necessary because a credible risk of exposure would qualify for Medicare coverage under Part B benefits. Medicare Part B has a monthly premium that must be paid in order for its coverage to activate, and you may be responsible for a copayment or coinsurance. The Part B deductible will apply. Vaccines can be obtained at the Larimer Health Department (see contact info below).
- **Self- Pay options-** (you can try for reimbursement from your insurance as well, but we recommend working with them first)
 - **Larimer County Health Departments**
 - **Fort Collins office 1525 Blue Spruce Drive Fort Collins, CO 80524 (970) 498-6700**
 - **Loveland office 200 Peridot Avenue Loveland, CO 80537 (970) 619-4580**
 - **Walgreens 2268 E Harmony Rd, Fort Collins, CO 80528 (970) 530-2692** Students can request to receive the vaccine at a designated Walgreens location. You can also reach out to other locations.
 - **Passport Health 3711 John F. Kennedy Parkway Suite 330, Fort Collins, CO 80525 970-484-2148**

What if I cannot receive the vaccine due to health concerns or religious beliefs?

- The CDC recommends that certain individuals not receive the rabies vaccine: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/should-not-vacc.html>. Students wishing to be exempted from vaccination must provide the completed medical or religious exemption form signed by a physician containing a statement of justification, along with supporting documentation, to the Program Director. Exemptions may be allowed for religious or medical purposes only. Religious exemptions may be appropriate if the student is an adherent to a religious belief whose teachings are opposed to all immunizations. Medical exemptions may be appropriate if the student provides documentation establishing that the vaccination would endanger his or her life or health or is medically contraindicated due to other medical conditions.
- If a medical or religious waiver is requested, the student must meet one on one with the program director. Please contact kimberly.schmidt@frontrange.edu.
- Unvaccinated students will not be able to handle any unvaccinated animal population either on campus or at off-campus locations, including laboratory session, internships, clinicals, or practicums. This may delay or inhibit the student from graduation.
- Technician students are required to meet all program and clinical site requirements prior to entering an internship/clinical/practicum with our community partners. As part of this requirement all technician students must complete the prophylactic rabies vaccine series before live animal handling occurs. Acceptance of a student for internship/clinical/practicum placement is determined by the program and clinical site. If a student fails to meet the rabies vaccination requirement or other requirements determined by the clinical site the student will not be allowed to participate in or continue in an assigned rotation because of non-compliance, an additional placement site may not be made available to the student.

More information regarding rabies in the U.S. can be obtained from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention website:

- <http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/index.html>
- https://www.who.int/health-topics/rabies#tab=tab_1
- <https://www.cdc.gov/rabies/location/usa/surveillance/index.html>