

# Submitting Rabies Specimens to the DSHS Laboratory



Detail from the mosaics on Louis Pasteur's crypt that honor his major accomplishments. The detail shown here depicts the 15-year-old shepherd Jean-Baptiste Jupille (second person ever to be vaccinated against rabies) struggling against the rabid dog that attacked him while he protected six younger shepherds from being bitten. In October of 1885, Pasteur inoculated Jupille with a solution of attenuated rabies virus, which saved his life.

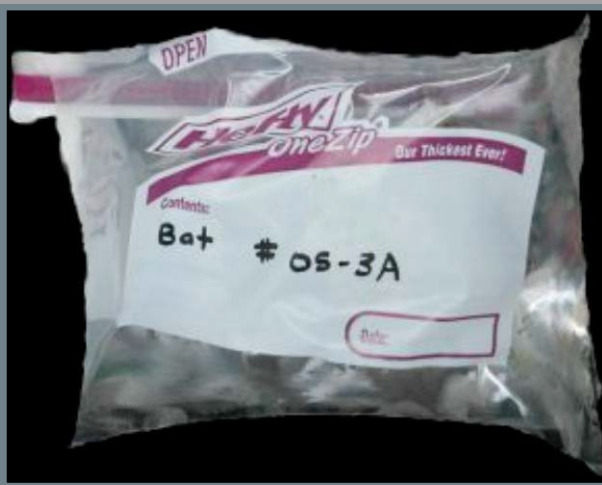
Image Source: Center for Disease Control and Prevention **A Mosaic from Louis Pasteur's Crypt**, from the cover of *Emerg Infect Dis* (1999), Vol. 5, May-June. [Retrieved 5/24/2022]. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3201/eid0503.AC0503>



The laboratory accepts only animal heads, except for very small rodents such as bats, rats, and mice. Due to biohazard safety guidelines the laboratory is unable to return carcasses to submitters. Whole bats are preferred, as it allows the Lab to speciate them. Live specimens will not be accepted.

If you are submitting an animal head for testing, have a qualified person separate the animal head from the body immediately after death. Avoid damaging the brain (cerebrum, cerebellum, and brainstem), as it may compromise the test.

Immediately chill the specimen to between 32°F and 45° F (0°C and 7°C). Do not freeze the specimen; freezing makes the specimen difficult to necropsy and may invalidate the test.



Place one specimen in a sealable storage bag placed inside a second sealable storage bag. Double bag larger animal heads in two appropriately sized plastic bags that can be securely sealed to prevent leakage.

Attach an identification number or name to the outside of each double-sealed plastic bag. This is especially important if more than one specimen is sent in a package.



Place a completed Rabies Submission Form (G-9) for each specimen in a separate sealable, double plastic bag. This keeps the form dry.

**The identification information on the form must match the identification information on the specimen.**



Obtain an insulated container strong enough to withstand shipment, for example a polystyrene box nested inside a cardboard box.

Line the bottom and sides of the polystyrene box with absorbent packing material such as newspaper to cushion the specimen(s).

Packing peanuts are not recommended as they are not absorbent.



Place the specimen(s) into the container. Surround the specimens with refrigerant. Use sufficient refrigerant to ensure that the specimen(s) will remain chilled for at least 48 hours. Do not use dry ice!



Gel packs or similar refrigerants are recommended.

Ice is not recommended. If ice must be used, double bag in heavy-duty sealable storage bags to prevent leakage.




Place additional absorbent packing material on top, and then seal the inner container.



Place the submission form(s) on top of the specimen container, immediately below the outer box top.

Seal the outer container.

Submitter Name Submitter Address Submitter City, State Zip code Contact Person Phone Number	
Texas Department of State Health Services Laboratory Services Section 1100 W. 49th Street, Austin, TX 78756  ATTN: "Rabies Identification Team" 512-776-7595  <b>BIOLOGICAL SUBSTANCE, CATEGORY B</b>  REFRIGERATE ON ARRIVAL	

Label the outside of the shipping container as follows:

**Texas Department of State Health Services  
 Laboratory Services Section  
 1100 W. 49th Street  
 Austin, Texas 78756**

**Attn: Rabies Identification Team  
 512-776-7595**

**Biological Substance, Category B  
 REFRIGERATE ON ARRIVAL**

Attach a diamond shaped UN3373 label near the address.

Include the name and address of the submitter as the return address on the shipping container. Provide submitter's contact phone number.



Call the toll-free Rabies Hotline:

**1-800-252-8163**

Provide information and expected arrival time.

**This is required by Texas state law.**

This number is available 24 hours a day and allows submitters to leave the shipping information in a message.

This notification is critical for the laboratory to monitor the arrival of specimens and to be able to notify the submitter if a specimen does not arrive as expected.



Specimens may be hand delivered or shipped by overnight courier for delivery between regular business hours, Monday–Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Deliveries after business hours, at weekends or during holidays are discouraged. We do not routinely receive deliveries outside of business hours. Instead, it is recommended that specimens be chilled between 32°F–45°F (0°C–7°C) over the weekend or holiday and be shipped the next regular workday.

For emergency processing of a specimen on a Saturday, **you must receive approval** from the Laboratory **prior to submission**. Call the Rabies Laboratory before 4 p.m. Friday at (512) 776-7595. After 4 p.m. call (512) 776-7111 and request to speak with a regional Zoonosis Control staff member. The specimen **must arrive at the lab by 8 a.m.** **Note:** Some couriers offer 8 a.m. deliveries but they may miss the 8 a.m. deadline. The only reliable way to get a Saturday submission to the lab by 8 a.m. is to hand deliver it.



Submitters may contact the Rabies Laboratory at 512-776-7595. When calling to check on results or specimen status, or to arrange special handling, please have as much of the following information available as possible:

- Name of agency that submitted the animal
- City, county, or municipality from which the animal was shipped
- Type of animal
- Identifying number or description that may have been included with the animal
- Owner (if applicable) and/or name of person who was in contact with the animal
- The approximate shipment date

This information will help us identify the animal and respond to questions more quickly.

TEXAS Health and Human Services Texas Department of State Health Services Rabies Testing Lab: (512) 776-7588 Toll Free Notification: 1-800-252-8163 <a href="http://www.dshs.texas.gov/lab">http://www.dshs.texas.gov/lab</a>		<b>G-9 Rabies Specimen Submission Form (JAN 2022)</b> <b>***FOR DSHS USE ONLY**</b>	
<b>PLEASE COMPLETE A SEPARATE FORM FOR EACH SPECIMEN SUBMITTED</b>			
<b>Section 1. SUBMITTER INFORMATION – (** REQUIRED)</b>			
Submitter Number	Submitter Name/Facility**		
<b>NO COD'S ACCEPTED</b> <small>The shipper is responsible for all shipping charges</small>			
Address**	City**	State** TX	Zip Code**
Phone**	Fax**	Contact / Collected By	Date of Collection
<small>State Law requires submitters of specimens for rabies examination to notify us in advance of shipment. Our toll-free number for notification is 1-800-252-8163; this number is monitored by a recorder 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Please do not send specimens without prior notification. This will allow us to act promptly on missing specimens.</small>			
<small>Emergency testing or result reporting will only be done on weekends with prior approval of the Rabies Laboratory. Please call (512) 776-7595 before 4 p.m. on Friday to arrange for weekend testing. The laboratory and Zoonosis Control personnel will evaluate the situation and determine if emergency testing is necessary. After 4 p.m. on Friday, contact the Physician-on-call @ 512-776-7111 to request emergency testing. The submitter must provide an after hours contact telephone number if results are requested outside normal work hours.</small>			
<b>** Do not submit live animals **</b>			
<b>** Do not freeze head. Send head only with the exception of bats and small rodents. Please know, head will not be returned, no exceptions. **</b>			
<b>Section 2. SPECIMEN/ANIMAL INFORMATION – (** REQUIRED)</b>			
Animal Type**:	Unique animal ID: (created by and for the submitter) <small>(Must match ID on head)</small>	Description	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cat <input type="checkbox"/> Skunk <input type="checkbox"/> Bat <input type="checkbox"/> Bovine <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Dog <input type="checkbox"/> Fox <input type="checkbox"/> Raccoon <input type="checkbox"/> Equine	Animal Owner's Name	County of Animal's Origin**
		Exposure Date	
<b>Section 3. HUMAN &amp; PET EXPOSURE – (REQUIRED)</b>			
Human Exposure:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Human Bite:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Pet Exposure:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Exposure Unknown:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Comments:			
<b>FOR LABORATORY USE ONLY</b>			
Carrier:	<input type="checkbox"/> Hand <input type="checkbox"/> Bus <input type="checkbox"/> LSO <input type="checkbox"/> Fed Ex <input type="checkbox"/> UPS <input type="checkbox"/> Express Mail <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		
Date Received:	Comments:		
Time Received:			
<small>Laboratory Service Section: 1100 WEST 42<sup>ND</sup> ST AUSTIN, TX 78756</small>			

Remember:

- Keep the specimen chilled between 32° F and 45° F. Do not freeze.
- Submit a completed Rabies Submission Form (G-9) for each specimen.
- Pack the specimen(s) in a double container. Line the inner container with newspaper, or other absorbent packing material.
- Use gel packs or similar refrigerants for shipping. Do not use dry ice. Use of wet ice is not recommended.
- Call the toll-free Rabies Hotline at 1- 800-252-8163 with details about the specimen and its expected arrival time.
- Prior approval from the Lab is required for processing of specimens on Saturdays.