

# McHenry County Animal Control & Adoption Center (MCAC)

---

*Veterinary Public Health Division*  
*Upholding Illinois State Animal Control Act*  
[www.ilga.gov](http://www.ilga.gov)

100 N. Virginia St.  
Crystal Lake, IL 60014  
Phone: 815.459.6222  
Fax: 815.334.4682

## Important Information Regarding Animal Bites:

### Preventing Bites:

Dogs and cats are usually friendly human companions that provide happiness, emotional support, and excitement to a family. However, dogs and cats can also be unpredictable, especially when a dog or cat is in an unfamiliar situation or acting strange, startled or not feeling well.

Below are some tips from MCAC on how to prevent dog bites:

- “Be still like a tree”—remain motionless when approached by a dog that looks like it is going to bite or attack
- DO NOT disturb dogs with loud noises, fast movement, or while it is eating or sleeping
- Call MCAC’s Health Educator to schedule a bite prevention workshop
- Practice Responsible Pet Ownership (see our educational web tab on [www.mcdh.info](http://www.mcdh.info))
- Always pay attention to an animal’s behavior or warning signs that it is agitated

### Treating Bites:

If you are bitten by an animal:

- Find a safe place to assess the wound
- See healthcare provider about bite, especially if rabies status of animal is unknown
- Seek medical attention if wound is red/swollen or you develop a fever

*Under section 13 of the Animal Control Act mandated by the Illinois General Assembly, you must report the biting incident to MCAC at 815.459.6222.*

## **Keeping Safe When Bitten:**

If you or someone you know is bitten by a dog or cat, you should do the following:

**If the animal is a stray see if someone you know owns it. Then, follow these two steps:**

- 1.) Call Animal Control at 815.459.6222
- 2.) Write down a description of the animal so that Animal Control can locate it. Color, breed, size, collar color, and location seen are all extremely useful.

**If the animal is owned, such as by a neighbor, friend, or person in a dog park/on the street, then follow these three steps:**

- 1.) Get the owner's name, address, and phone number
- 2.) Get the name of the cat or dog
- 3.) Get a description of the dog or cat

**When you get to the doctor's office or hospital, follow these steps:**

- 1.) Use the description you recorded about the animal to fill out the state-mandated animal exposure report
- 2.) The doctor or healthcare provider will help you fill out paperwork with your name, address, contact number, age, location of bite, severity of bite, and why/how the animal bit you

Animal Control will work with local police departments to make every effort to locate a stray animal or its owner and make sure that animal undergoes a state-mandated, post-bite, rabies observation

If the animal is not found, then your doctor will work with the Health Department on what the best protocol is for your safety.

These incidents also help us improve our education and outreach efforts, ensuring our interventions are targeted and effective.

Animal Control DOES NOT take away people's animals, so do not be afraid to tell MCAC and the healthcare professional whose animal it is. Your safety is our main concern.

## **FAQ:**

**Below are some frequently asked questions and answers about rabies, animal bites, animal illnesses, and how to keep our community safe.**

**Q:** What are the signs & symptoms that an animal might have rabies?

**A:** Animals like dogs, cats, bats, raccoons, foxes, groundhogs, and skunks all can carry rabies. Because rabies is a neurological disease, these animals may foam at the mouth, and act abnormally. Abnormal behavior can include aggression, paralysis, and seizures. However, rabies is a rare disease, and these symptoms can signify another illness an animal may have.

**Q:** What benefit is it for my pet to get a rabies vaccination if my pet never leaves the house?

**A:** Bats and other animals that could potentially carry rabies can get into your house. If your dog or cat comes into contact with this animal, rabies positive or not, and then bites or scratches you or someone else, hundreds of dollars could be spent on a rabies quarantine at a veterinarian's office. However, if your pet has an current rabies inoculation, the observation will cost significantly less. MCAC has a low-cost rabies and microchip even once a year. For details, please check our website at [www.mcdh.info](http://www.mcdh.info).

**Q:** If I was bitten by someone else's animal, will they know I reported a bite or filled out any forms?

**A:** Any and all information you give the doctor or us (MCAC) is confidential. We will not share your personal information.

**Q:** Are there any other dog and cat illnesses in our area that I should be aware of?

**A:** Yes, there are a number of diseases that can affect both our pets and us. The number one way to prevent disease transmission is to maintain a clean environment and wash your hands after touching your pet. For detailed information on pet illnesses, visit [www.cdc.gov/healthypets/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/index.html)

## **About Us:**

The McHenry County Animal Control & Adoption Center (MCAC) is a division of the McHenry County Department of Health. Our organization is dedicated to:

Improving the quality of life, health, and safety for county residents and their animals

Promoting Responsible Pet Ownership & Bite Prevention through education and practice

Enforcing Article 6 of the McHenry County Public Health Ordinance, MCAC's chief purpose is to regulate domestic animals in McHenry County. An Adoption Center has also been established to assist with lost and found pets as well as helping abandoned or relinquished pets to find new and loving homes.

**Animal Control Business Hours:**

M, T, Th, F: 8:00-4:30

W: 8:00-6:30

S: 8:00-2:30

Sun: Closed

**Adoption Center Hours:**

M, T, Th, F: 10:30-4:30

W: 10:30-6:30

S: 10:00-2:30

Sun: Closed

**After-Hours Emergency Response:**

815.459.6222

*Information for this brochure was taken from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website.*