

1980 WL 121104 (S.C.A.G.)

Office of the Attorney General

State of South Carolina

March 18, 1980

***1 Re: Pet Inoculations**

The Honorable Herbert Kirsh
Representative
P. O. Box 11867
Columbia, S.C. 29211

Dear Mr. Kirsh:

You have requested the opinion of this Office regarding two questions:

- (1) May owners inoculate their own animals against rabies or must this be done exclusively by a licensed veterinarian?
- (2) If owners are allowed to inoculate their own animals, are owners required to certify the rabies inoculation to any State agency?

[Section 47-5-60 of the 1976 Code of Laws of South Carolina](#) generally requires that prior to July 1st of each year, every owner of a pet shall have his pet inoculated against rabies. That Section does not expressly prohibit owners from inoculating their own pets. Therefore, it appears that the answer to question one above is that owners may inoculate their own animals against rabies.

However, [Section 47-5-60](#), *supra*, further provides that evidence of inoculation shall consist of a certificate signed by a licensed graduate veterinarian upon a form prepared and issued by DHEC to the exclusion of any other type of certificate. Therefore, while not violating the provisions of [Section 47-5-60](#), owner inoculations do not satisfy its certificate requirement since such certificates are issued only for inoculations performed by licensed graduate veterinarians. Consequently, while an owner may inoculate his own pet, he may not receive a certificate as evidence of such inoculation and, therefore, has not fulfilled the requirements of the [Section 47-5-60](#).

I trust the preceding discussion adequately answers your questions, however, if any further assistance is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

Richard P. Wilson
Assistant Attorney General

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