**ANIMAL BITES**

**Must a physician report cases of animal bites?**

While not all animal bites require reporting, those bites in which human exposure to rabies is suspected is reportable to the local health department.[[1]](#footnote-1) Principal health care providers should notify the local health department of animal bites immediately at the time of diagnosis or suspected diagnosis, by telephone or by secure facsimile transmission of a written case report.[[2]](#footnote-2) If the latter method of communication is used, the party sending the report must confirm immediate receipt by a live person.[[3]](#footnote-3) See **NOTIFIABLE CONDITIONS**.

**What must a physician include in a report of a case of animal bite?**

See **NOTIFIABLE CONDITIONS.[[4]](#footnote-4)**

**Are there any penalties for failing to report an animal bite case?**

Failure to make a required report can constitute unprofessional conduct which may subject a physician to disciplinary action.[[5]](#footnote-5) See **UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**.

1. WAC 246-101-101. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. WAC 246-101-110. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. WAC 246-101-110. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The content of notifications physicians that are required to provide in their reports can be found at WAC 246-101-115. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. RCW 18.130.180(7): States that the violation of any state or federal statute or administrative rule regulating the profession in question constitutes unprofessional conduct. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)