



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

# RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING WILDLIFE REHABILITATION



**AUTHORITY:** These regulations are adopted pursuant to Chapters 42-17.1 "DEM"; 42-17.6; 20-1-4, 20-1-18, 20-1-22, 20-37-3 and in accordance with the requirements of the administrative procedures act Chapter 42-35 of the Rhode Island General Laws of 1956, as amended.

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

**RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING  
WILDLIFE REHABILITATION**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

RULE 1	PURPOSE .....	ii
RULE 2	AUTHORITY .....	ii
RULE 3	APPLICATION .....	ii
RULE 4	DEFINITIONS .....	ii - iii
RULE 5	SEVERABILITY .....	iii
RULE 6	SUPERSEDED RULES AND REGULATIONS .....	iii
RULE 7	VIOLATIONS .....	iii-iv
RULE 8	APPEAL & HEARING PROCEDURE .....	iv
RULE 9	REGULATIONS .....	1-10
	PART I - REQUIREMENTS .....	1-3
	PART II - PERMIT ISSUANCE .....	4
	PART III - SPECIAL CONDITIONS .....	5-7
	PART IV - OTHER RESTRICTIONS.....	8
	PART V - RABIES VECTOR SPECIES .....	9-10
RULE 10	EFFECTIVE DATE PAGE.....	11

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

**RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING  
WILDLIFE REHABILITATION**

**1. PURPOSE**

The proper care of orphaned and/or injured wildlife requires special knowledge and facilities not possessed by the general public. Specially trained individuals, collectively called Wildlife Rehabilitators, provide for the care of injured and orphaned wildlife so that such wildlife may be returned to the wild. The purpose of these regulations is to establish the standards under which such wildlife rehabilitators may be permitted to temporarily possess wildlife protected by the Department under Rhode Island General Laws (RIGL) Chapter 20-1, in order to provide necessary aid.

**2. AUTHORITY**

These rules and regulations are adopted pursuant to authority vested in the Director pursuant to Chapters 42-17.1 "DEM"; 42-17.6; 20-1-4, 20-1-18, 20-1-22, 20-37-3 and in accordance with the requirements of the administrative procedures act Chapter 42-35.

**3. APPLICATION**

The terms and provisions of these rules and regulations shall be liberally construed to permit the Department to effectuate the purposes of state law, regulations, and policies.

**4. DEFINITIONS**

Wherever used in these rules and regulations the following terms shall be construed as follows:

- (A) "Department or DEM " means the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management
- (B) "Director" means the Director of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, or his/her duly authorized agent or agents.
- (C) "Division" means the Division of Fish & Wildlife of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management so-called in the RIGL's; and called Fish and Wildlife (F&W) in regulations.
- (D) "Endangered Species" means those species of animals designated as threatened or endangered according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as

published in 50 CFR 17.11 and 17.12.

(E) "Euthanasia" for the purpose of wildlife rehabilitation means the methods as described in the "2000 report of the AVMA panel on Euthanasia" published in the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, vol. 218, no. 5.

(F) "Exotic animals" as defined in these regulations refers to animals not occurring naturally, either presently or historically, within the boundaries of the State of Rhode Island including, but not limited to: Mute Swans, Monk Parakeets, Mudpuppies, and Red-eared sliders.

(G) "Fish and Wildlife" (F&W) means the Fish and Wildlife Program of DEM's Office of Natural Resources, formerly referred to as the Division.

(H) "IWRC" means the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council

(I) "Native Wildlife" means animals occurring naturally, either presently or historically, within the boundaries of the State of Rhode Island.

"Permittee", see (U) "Wildlife Rehabilitator"(J) "Person" any individual, partnership, firm, joint stock, company, corporation, association, trust, estate, municipality, or other government entity or other legal entity.

(K) "Person" means any individual, partnership, firm, joint stock, company, corporation, association, trust, estate, municipality, or other government entity or other legal entity.

(L) "RVS Handbook", shall mean, the most current rabies vector species handbook prepared by the Division of Fish and Wildlife

(M) "Sponsor", shall mean, person previously permitted as a Level II rehabilitator, agreeing to assist between one and three Level I apprentices, according to the guidelines adopted in the sponsor packet, as provided.

(N) "Sharps" Sharps that have been used in animal or human patient care of treatment, including sharps generated from the preparation of human and animal remains for burial or cremation, or in medical, research, or industrial laboratories, including, but not limited to, hypodermic needles, syringes with or without the attached needle, pasteur pipettes, scalpel blades, blood vials, needles with attached tubing, glass carpules, and glass culture dishes regardless of presence of infectious agents. Also included are other types of broken or unbroken glassware that have been used in animal or human patient care or treatment, such as used slides and cover slips. For the purpose of these regulations, disposable syringes and needles are considered regulated medical waste after one use.

(O) "Standards" shall mean the most current "Minimum Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation" 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 2000 established by National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association (NWRA) and the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council (IWRC) and in accordance with these regulations.

(P) "State List" means currently listed wildlife species requiring a permit for handling.

(Q) "State Manual" means the most current wildlife rehabilitation manual prepared by the Division of Fish & Wildlife.

(R) "Sub-permittee" means persons authorized to assist with the rehabilitation of

wildlife under the authority of a Level II licensee's permit.

(S) "Transporter" means persons authorized to transport wildlife to licensed wildlife rehabilitators.

(T) "Vector Species" means those species that are the most common wildlife carriers of rabies including raccoons, skunks, bats, groundhogs, and foxes, may be referred to as RVS.

(U) "Wildlife Rehabilitation" means the practice of providing care for injured, orphaned or sick wildlife including their capture, housing, feeding, emergency treatment for the primary purpose of release into the wild.

(V) "Wildlife Rehabilitator or permittee" means persons receiving a special purpose scientific collectors' permit pursuant to these rules and regulations.

## **5. SEVERABILITY**

If any provision of these Rules and Regulations, or application thereof to any person or circumstances, is held invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the validity of the remainder of the Rules and Regulations shall not be affected thereby.

## **6. SUPERSEDED RULES AND REGULATIONS #718**

On the effective date of these rules and regulations, all previous rules and regulations (**#718**), and any policies regarding the administration and enforcement of wildlife rehabilitation shall be superseded. However, any enforcement action taken by, or application submitted to, the Department prior to the effective date of these Rules and Regulations shall be governed by the Rules and Regulations in effect at the time the enforcement action was taken, or application filed.

## **7. VIOLATIONS**

- I. Any violation pursuant to the provisions of Title 20 of the General Laws of Rhode Island and the rules and regulations herein, either by a permittee or a sub-permittee working under said permittee may be cause for imposing penalties in accordance with the provisions of the above mentioned statute, removal of regulated species, as well as revocation of existing rehabilitation permit(s) of both the sub-permittee and responsible permittee
- II. Special Purpose Scientific Collector Permits for Wildlife Rehabilitation may be terminated by the Director for any of the following reasons:
  - A. The Wildlife Rehabilitator has ceased to meet appropriate eligibility requirements for appointment as set forth in these regulations.
  - B. The Wildlife Rehabilitator has failed to perform duties as provided in these regulations.
  - C. The Level I Wildlife Rehabilitator or sub-permittee does not meet criteria on evaluation form and is no longer endorsed by the designated sponsors.
  - D. The Wildlife Rehabilitator has ceased to have an approved wildlife rehabilitation facility available for permittee's use.
  - E. In cases where a permit is terminated, the Director, in his/her discretion, may

impose a period of probation, recertification and testing, and/or reduce the level of permit, or reinstate the permit.

## **8. APPEAL & HEARING PROCEDURES**

### Opportunity for Hearing

A. Denials -- Any person whose application for a permit, permit renewal, or other approval, has been denied by the permitting agency, acting through Fish and Wildlife, may appeal to the Administrative Adjudication Division, for review of the decision on which the denial is based.

B. Violations -- Any person who has been issued a notice of violation of any of the provisions of these rules, may request a hearing from the Administrative Adjudication Division, subject to the provisions of R.I.G.L. 42-17.1-2(u).

C. Hearings and Administrative Procedure -- Pursuant to the authority granted to the Department in Chapter 42-17.7-9

1. Any person who seeks an adjudicatory hearing in order to contest an enforcement action which alleges violation(s) of these rules and regulations must file said request in writing with the clerk of Administrative Adjudication Division, 235 Promenade Street, Providence, Rhode Island, 02908 within twenty (20) days of receipt of the contested agency enforcement action.
2. Any person who seeks an adjudicatory hearing relative to the denial of a permit or sub-permit arising under these rules and regulations must file said request in writing with the clerk of Administrative Adjudication Division 235 Promenade Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02908 within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the contested agency action.

## **9. REGULATIONS**

As follows:

## Part 1 REQUIREMENTS

1.1 Criteria -- Fish and Wildlife may issue an annual special Scientific Collectors Permit to rehabilitate native wildlife to persons meeting the criteria set forth in these regulations. Prior to permit issuance, Fish and Wildlife shall determine that the applicant has met the following requirements in the categories described below:

### 1.1.1 Level P-Sub-permittee:

- A. Sub-permittees must pass a written examination established by the Department. Following satisfactory completion of the State test, as delineated in 1.2.8, a person may qualify to assist any class of Level II permittees under the direct supervision of the permittee. Sub-permittees are strictly prohibited from handling raptors, or RVS species at any time. In addition, sub-permittees are strictly prohibited from handling any category of animals for which their supervising permittee has not been duly authorized to care for.
- B. Following the completion of not less than 25 hours of hands on activity and 6 hours of instructional training sufficient to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the permittee that the sub-permittee has sufficient skills knowledge, the permittee shall be considered for off-site approval.
- C. In order to be considered for off site approval, the applicant must meet the following requirements:
  - 1A. Facility must meet or exceed the minimum standards and be inspected by the permittee on forms provided by and submitted to DEM prior to acceptance of any wildlife for rehabilitation.
  - 2B. The submission by the permittee of a written policy which shall include inter alia, the relationship to be maintained between the permittee and the sub-permittee, frequency and extent of inspection and continuing monitoring of the sub permittee. In no case shall the sub-permittee's facilities not be inspected by the permittees less frequently than 1 month interval during the season for initial year and one visit per season for subsequent years and that the permittee submit a report on the progress of the sub-permittee on the form provided at 30 and 60 day intervals.

In addition to 1.1, Sub-permittees are restricted to pre-fledged songbirds and waterfowl and unweaned non-RVS small mammals.

Sub-permittees are permitted to temporarily house post weaned non RVS mammals for soft release only, restricted to the providing of food and water limited to a period not to exceed two weeks. Handling of soft release candidates strictly prohibited.

Sub-permittees must comply with all requirements set out in part 3.

1.1.2 Level I – Apprentice: Authorized to receive, rehabilitate, transfer and release all wildlife in categories listed on the permit under the supervision of a Division approved sponsor and under conditions specified in the regulations. Applicants for licensure as Level 1 rehabilitators must present written letter of recommendation by Level II or IIA rehabilitator willing to serve as the applicant's sponsor/consultant during the first year of applicant's apprenticeship and must pass a written examination established by the Department and the IWRC. Apprentices must consult sponsor immediately after receiving any wildlife, as well as adhering to regulatory requirements. Level I permittees are not authorized to list sub-permittees on their permit.

1.1.3 Level II – Qualified persons are persons who were previously licensed as a Level II rehabilitator in Rhode Island or in another state having equivalent requirements and offering reciprocal privileges to licensed rehabilitators of this state, or who have currently held a Level I permit for 1 (one) year with a letter of recommendation from a Level II sponsor and having passed required examination, may apply for licensure by the Division as a Level II rehabilitator. Sub-permittees are permitted to assist under the direct supervision of Level II permittees. Level II permittees are directly responsible for the action of any sub-permittee acting under his /her permit. Level II permittees shall sponsor no more than 5 sub-permittees as an individual or 10 sub-permittees at an approved center.

1.1.4 Level II R - Persons meeting Level II requirements, having held a previous Level II R permit or with a letter of recommendation from a Level II R sponsor.

1.1.5 Level F - Qualified persons holding a valid Rhode Island General or



Master class Falconer permit may obtain a permit restricted to raptors. Level R permit holders are required to adhere to all requirements set out in part 1.1 with the exception of the IWRC class.

1.1.6 Level T - Qualified persons are limited to the **transport only** of non-vector species native wildlife. Qualified persons shall be those holding transport permits in the past or individuals who have attended and successfully completed class in transporting wildlife, approved by the Division.

1.1.7 Level TX - Qualified persons are limited to the transport of non-vector species and rabies vector species. In addition to above transport requirements, Level TX permit holders must abide by the conditions in Part 3 of these rules and regulations and the requirements in the RVS Handbook and the State Rabies Protocol Manual.

1.1.8 Level II V - Restricted to veterinarians licensed in the State of Rhode Island.

1.1.9 Level II X - Qualification is limited to those persons meeting Level II requirements in addition to the conditions, requirements, and training as described in Part 5 and the referenced RVS Handbook and State Rabies Protocol Manual.

1.2 Application Requirements For All Categories -- The application shall include but not be limited to the following:

1.2.1 Certification that the applicant is at least 18 years of age, and a resident of Rhode Island;

1.2.3 Submission of letter of acceptance from sponsor as required

1.2.4 Submission of letter from Rhode Island licensed and permitted veterinarian, agreeing to provide services at no cost to the state

1.2.5 Provide description of education and experience

1.2.6 Provide address and description of facility. Facility must meet or exceed minimum standards as defined and be available for inspection by the Department at any reasonable hour.

1.2.7 Designate category of permitted native wildlife that the applicant wishes to rehabilitate (small mammals, small birds, reptiles, raptors, rabies vector species or all)

- 1.2.8 Prior to licensure, first-time applicants and sub-permittees must receive a grade of 80 percent or higher on the open book written examination administered by the Department. First-time applicants, excluding sub-permittees, must also receive a grade of 70 percent or higher on the exam administered by the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council's in the Basic Wildlife Rehabilitation Skills Seminar; veterinarians and general or master falconers are exempt.
- 1.2.9 Submission of applicant's USFWS special purpose rehabilitation permit, if applicable, or application if pending. Federal permit is required prior to handling of any federally regulated species pursuant to 50 CFR Part 13 and 50 CFR 21.27.29
- 1.2.10 Certification by applicant that no local ordinances prohibit the possession of wildlife and/or that the possession of wildlife does not violate any rental or real estate agreement at the facility where the applicant proposes to conduct wildlife rehabilitation. Applicant must also submit letter of approval from employer if wildlife is to be temporarily housed at a work facility, to include address and description.
- 1.2.11 Certification from the applicant on application provided by the Division that all rehabilitation activities will comply with these regulations.
- 1.2.12 Certification of proof of Tetanus vaccine within last ten years, and additionally for rabies vector species, proof of rabies vaccination or report of antibody titre >0.5 IU checked at least every two years.
- 1.2.13 Certification that applicant has not been convicted of the violation of any provisions of these regulations, has not been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a Title 20 misdemeanor, or had his/her license to rehabilitate wildlife revoked or suspended within three years prior to application.

## **Part 2 PERMIT ISSUANCE**

2.1 Interview and inspection by a Division representative of a first-time applicant or apprentice to assess the applicant's compliance with licensing requirements and facilities as described in the Standards; Level II-X applicants require an additional inspection, meeting the criteria in Part 5 and RVS Handbook.

2.2 Issuance of permits may be made by the Department, notwithstanding availability in the program, sponsorship availability, level of expertise and upon:

2.2.1 Receipt of completed application providing the information enumerated under Part 1; and for Level II-X applicants, additionally, Part 5.

2.2.2 Submission of completed rehabilitation log sheet(s) on form provided with information required, on or before January 7 following the expiration date of past license, if applicable and;

2.2.3 Submission of proof of a minimum of 12 hours of continuing education credits within three years of permit issuance for Level I, Level II, and Level IIX permit holders.

2.2.4 Payment of the twenty-five dollar (\$25) non-refundable permit fee, sub-permittees are exempt.

2.2.5 Pending verification of information, permit may then be issued, indicating the level of expertise, category(s) of wildlife species, and expiration date of the permit.

## Part 3 SPECIAL CONDITIONS

3.1 No person shall rehabilitate, handle, release or transport any wildlife, except as provided in parts 3.2, 3.5, and 5 of these rules and regulations without having first obtained the appropriate permit as designated in Part I from the Department.

3.2 No person shall rehabilitate, handle, release or transport any wildlife other than the categories specifically set out in the permit, and in compliance with the state list. Persons may transport non-rabies vector species to rehabilitators, provided rehabilitator records name, address, and telephone number of said person.

**Exception:** Rabies vector species transport must conform to conditions in Parts I and 5 and the RVS Handbook.

3.3 No person shall rehabilitate, handle, release or transport any species, as defined in these regulations as "Exotics."

3.4 There is no permit required for the rehabilitation, handling, release or transportation of the following species: mice, shrews, voles, moles, house sparrow, Rock Dove, and European Starling.

3.5 Veterinarians may provide emergency first aid to any member of an endangered or threatened species, without first obtaining a permit, provided that immediate notification is given to the Division via telephone as to the species, nature of the injury/illness, location where the species was encountered, description of the service provided, and last location where the wildlife was seen. Such species shall be transferred to a licensed rehabilitator within 48 hours, or as soon as medically stable, with additional notice to the Division, to include notice after release, and/or euthanasia. Permittees must further comply with federal regulations. Licensed veterinarians may give emergency treatment without obtaining a rehabilitation permit, to the remainder of the non-rabies vector state listed species, providing that the species be transferred to permitted facility within 48 hours. Notification must be made to the Division within 24 hours of initial contact.

3.6 No person shall release any non-vector species rehabilitated wildlife at a location other than the point of origin, or in suitable habitat and season for that species within the boundary of Rhode Island. Refer to Part 5 of the rules and regulations for release conditions of vector species

3.7 All permittees and sub-permittees must operate under all aspects of the current standards and manual guidelines, as defined, and in accordance with these regulations with regard to care and facilities or have a working relationship with permittees with appropriate facilities. Permittees must maintain initial physical evaluation form, to include location of origin, name, address, and telephone number of transporter in accordance with Part 3.2; and disposition logged on each individual. Permittees must maintain a current Sub-permittee Transfer log, on forms provided by DEM, to track the species, date and location of wildlife to their sub-permittees. Facilities and log sheets may be inspected at any reasonable hour by the Department's designee. Wildlife shall be held no longer than necessary for the restoration of its health and when wildlife is rehabilitated, after which it shall immediately be released to the wild at its point of origin, or in a suitable habitat. Such log sheets shall contain, at a minimum, the information as shown in the IWRC basic skills manual. Refer to Part 5 of the rules and regulations for additional documentation required for rabies vector species.

3.8 In addition to the provisions in 50 CFR 17 and 21, certain diseases are reportable to DEM and DOH. As a requirement of this permit, you are required to notify the proper department if you encounter or suspect any of the following as listed in "Reportable Disease in Rhode Island".

3.9 Wildlife held under this permit must be released as soon as possible in accordance with criteria established in the "Standards" and into a suitable habitat for that species. All wildlife being treated shall be released to the wild within forty-eight (48) hours of the subject wildlife meeting the "Minimum Standards for Release of Wildlife Following Rehabilitation" as described in Section 7.2 of International Wildlife Rehabilitation Committee and National Wildlife Rehabilitation Association as published in 2000 (a copy of which is attached and incorporated herein). All wildlife being treated shall be released to the wild or euthanatized as soon as its condition can be determined and not later than ninety (90) days of the commencement of treatment. If it is determined by the Division that it is probable that the wildlife being treated will not be able to be released to the wild within ninety (90) days of the commencement of treatment, the wildlife shall be euthanatized within twenty-four (24) hours of the Division's determination unless prior written Division approval is received authorizing extended care of the wildlife. Refer to Part 5 for rabies vector species.

3.10 Wildlife held under this permit shall not be owned, sold, offered for sale, purchased, bartered, offered for barter, tamed, neutered, used for propagation purposes or used to conduct commercial transactions of any nature.

3.11 Permittees may not transport wildlife across state borders unless appropriate notification is made to RI DEM Division of Fish and Wildlife or, outside of normal business hours, the Division of Enforcement, and in accordance with applicable federal or state regulations including but not limited to the Federal Lacey Act 50 CFR 20.

3.12 Permittees may transfer wildlife to other Rhode Island permitted rehabilitation facilities with like permits to include categories of animals, i.e., small birds, small mammals, raptors, but shall not delegate to any other person the authority granted by this permit. The total duration of rehabilitation shall be in compliance with 3.8. For rabies vector species refer to Part 5.

3.13 The Department reserves the right to repossess any animal held pursuant to these regulations at any time.

3.14 Permittee must notify the department within 30 days prior to moving to another facility.

3.15 Permittees and sub-permittees must possess at all times a current wildlife rehabilitation identification card when in possession of wildlife outside the facility and must display permit in a prominent location at their facility.

3.16 Sub-permittees cannot accept wildlife directly from the public, prescribe medication, or perform euthanasia. Sub-permittees must report illness, changes in condition, failure to thrive, escapes or death of wildlife in their care to permittees within 24 hours by telephone and written on designated log sheets, documenting both condition and reporting. In case of illness or failure to thrive, permittee must additionally return above wildlife to permittee or his/her level II designee within 24 hours. All wildlife must be returned to the premises of the permittee within 7 days following weaning for small mammals and 3 days for birds. All disposals of carcasses must be provided in a manner consistent with state and municipal regulations.

3.17 Any permittee may terminate his/her relationship with any sub-permittee or apprentice at any time. If a permittee elects to terminate said relationship, the permittee shall notify both the Division and sub-permittee/apprentice, in writing, in not more than 5 days following termination. Sub-permittees/apprentices must return any animals in his/her care upon receipt of notice of termination.

3.18 All permits expire at the end of the calendar year. Permits must be renewed and are only valid after receipt of completed renewal application, and other conditions as

detailed in Part 2 and/or Part 5.

3.19 Permittees must agree, in writing, to hold the state harmless for any damage, injury, or disease caused by any wildlife held under the permit, to include treatment for or prevention of such. Permittees assume all liability associated with this permit.

## **Part 4 OTHER RESTRICTIONS**

4.1 Nothing in these regulations shall be interpreted as permitting the unlicensed practice of veterinary medicine to include but not be limited to: the diagnosis, treatment or dispensing of pharmaceuticals in accordance with Section R5-25-DOH Veterinary Rules and Regulations. Medications must be labeled, stored and disposed of in accordance with said Rules and Regulations. The State assumes no responsibility for the cost of such care.

4.2 Nothing in these regulations permits the use of regulated medical supplies including but not limited to syringes and drugs without specific conformance with Section R21-28-CS-4 of the DOH Rules and Regulations governing Hypodermic Needles, Syringes, and Other Such Instruments and Drugs.

4.2.1 Nothing in these regulations permits the disposal of excess or unused needles unless in accordance with DOH Rules and Regulations R21-28-CS-4, Section 4 and DEM –DAH-MW-01-92 Rules and Regulation Governing the Generation, Transportation, Storage, Treatment, Management & Disposal of Regulated Medical Waste in Rhode Island.

4.2.2 Disposal of sharps generated by permittees or sub-permittees, must conform with section 13.02a, b, and c of the above-stated regulations, providing for small generators at satellite facilities to transport sharps from point of origin to a central collection point. Generators must contact the RI DEM Office of Waste Management with a letter of request for approval of satellite facilities, providing names and addresses of off-site generators. Permittees and sub-permittees are responsible to log the transport of sharps from satellites on forms provided by DEM. Sharps must be stored in approved containers and transferred to the central collection point as requested by the central collection point when the container is full or when permittee/sub-permittee ceases to be licensed for wildlife rehabilitation.

4.3 Obtaining a permit pursuant to these regulations does not preclude the permittee's conformance with such other Federal, State or local requirements for licensure certification or permit which may be required.

4.4 Permittee may not demand a fee or otherwise charge for services rendered under



conditions of this permit. Nothing precludes permittee from accepting a donation(s).

## **PART 5**

### **RABIES VECTOR SPECIES (RVS)**

#### **Special Conditions & Requirements**

5.1 Applicants for licensure of a Level II-X permit to rehabilitate RVS must have previously possessed a valid Level II Rhode Island Rehabilitator Permit, meet all permit conditions, requirements, record keeping [see Part 3.7], in addition to the conditions outlined in Part 5, the State Rabies Protocol Manual and the RVS Handbook.

5.2 Only apparently healthy, orphaned young-of-the-year (less than 10-weeks of age) can be candidates for rehabilitation, limited to raccoons, foxes, skunks, and woodchucks, if no human or animal exposure has occurred, as determined by the Department of Health (DOH). Apparently healthy animals shall include absence of behavioral, neurological, locomotive impairments, or those animals with wounds. All species of bats and other adult rabies vector species cannot be candidates for rehabilitation.

5.3 Level II-X permittees must notify the DOH immediately upon admission of RVS and adhere to DOH procedures appropriate sections in the State Rabies Protocol Manual and the format outlined in the RVS Handbook as a condition of the permit. Level II-X rehabilitators will be responsible for pick-up and transport of RVS and will provide additional information on the person(s) finding the RVS [see *RVS Handbook*]. Level II-X permittees may make arrangements with Level TX permittees only. This permit does not authorize the care of RVS to transport permittees. DEM or DOH personnel will not provide transport of RVS to Level II-X permittees. Transfer of RVS from Level II-X to Level II-X, only will be permitted, providing immediate notification to DOH of the name and address of new location.

5.4 All applicants must obtain a State Rabies Manual and a RVS Handbook available from the Division and certify on the application the Division provides that all rehabilitation procedures and facilities will be adhered to, as a condition of the permit, to include appropriate forms and DOH notification.

5.5 Level II-X permit holders must provide facilities, as a condition of licensure, that meet or exceed the requirements listed in the RVS Handbook. Facilities must be inspected by a Division designee with a form provided by the Division, prior to license issuance.

5.5.1 Facilities must additionally meet IWRC criteria for specific species as specified in standards manual.

5.5.2 Immediately upon receipt by the licensee, each individual RVS must be identified with an external marker or held in such a manner that permits positive identification of the specific animal until that animal is released.

5.6 Any RVS accepted as a candidate for rehabilitation must be released as soon as they are able to survive in the wild, and no later than September 30. Following IWRC Basic Skills Manual, a soft release, no longer than two weeks, will be permitted in a natural setting with natural foods. The DOH must be notified immediately if RVS dies. Any cage mates of a rabies positive RVS must also be euthanized. RVS that cannot be released must be euthanized following criteria outlined in the RVS Handbook.

5.6.1 Level II-X permittees are required to take any RVS showing any abnormal behavioral, neurological, or locomotive signs to the designated Level II-V on their application for examination as soon as possible.

5.7 RVS cannot be released on state or federally owned land. Written permission from private landowner must be obtained prior to release and become part of the individual RVS record.

5.8 Veterinarians with Level II-V permits will be permitted to euthanize RVS under criteria established by DOH, as outlined in 5.2 and 5.7.

5.9 Level II-X permit holders assume all liability in association with this activity

## **RULE 10 EFFECTIVE DATE**

The foregoing- Rules and Regulations Governing Wildlife Rehabilitation, after due notice, are hereby adopted and filed with the Secretary of State to become effective twenty (20) days thereafter, in accordance with the provisions of Chapters 42-17.1 "DEM"; 42-17.6; 20-1-4, 20-1-18, 20-1-22, 20-37-3 and in accordance with the requirements of the administrative procedures act Chapter 42-35.of the General laws of Rhode Island of 1956, as amended.

---

W. Michael Sullivan, PhD  
Director, Department of Environmental Management

