



**MISSION  
RABIES**

**VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

Mass canine vaccination projects in global rabies hotspots





## THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING WITH MISSION RABIES!

Around the world **someone dies from rabies every nine minutes**. Together, we are changing this.

It's absolutely brilliant to have volunteers join the team - not only would our projects be impossible without your support, but the energy and enthusiasm you bring inspires us all. Mission Rabies was born out of a desire to make a difference. To champion animal welfare in tough places and to protect vulnerable children who die from a disease which is entirely preventable. Vaccinating dogs, and creating a herd immunity, is a proven way to eliminate rabies – and we're doing just that. Whether you are helping us with data collection, vaccinations or marking of dogs – every single aspect of our projects is just as important and vital as the next. Teamwork underlies everything we do– and you're now a massively valued part of this team, so thanks so much for joining us and giving up your time to do so!

On behalf of all of us at Mission Rabies, welcome and thank you. Please make the most of this experience, see first-hand the difference you are making and as tough as it may be at times – there is nothing we can't handle united.

**Let's power on together!**

With very best wishes and rock on!

Dr Luke Gamble BVSc DVM&S FRCVS  
Mission Rabies CEO & Founder







## ABOUT MISSION RABIES

Rabies is a **NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASE** responsible for an estimated **59,000 human deaths** per year, despite being **100% VACCINE-PREVENTABLE**. The disease causes immense suffering to both humans and dogs alike and once symptoms develop, there is virtually no chance of survival. The disease disproportionately impacts upon the world's most disadvantaged areas, globally causing the death of **one person every nine minutes**.

### **WE EXIST TO CHANGE THIS.**

Mission Rabies was launched in 2013 with one aim – to eliminate canine-transmitted rabies. We work in global rabies hotspots around the world, following World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines to run mass canine vaccination projects, the proven most effective way of eliminating the disease. In addition, we strengthen our efforts to save lives from rabies by running education programmes that teach children and communities how to protect themselves.

We started big in India – a country that sees a third of all human rabies cases – when we vaccinated 60,000 dogs in the space of four weeks. Since then we have established permanent vaccination teams who work year-round at our flagship projects in India and Malawi. Alongside this we run annual vaccination campaigns in areas across the globe most affected by the devastating impact of rabies. Our evidence-based approach reduces the burden on stretched public health infrastructure, protects dogs from inhumane culling through fear of the disease and most importantly prevents the unnecessary suffering and needless deaths of countless people and dogs across the world.

We are committed to working towards the shared global goal of elimination of dog-mediated human rabies by 2030. Thanks to the passion and dedication of our volunteers and supporters, over the past 6 years we have been able to make great strides towards this, vaccinating over **1.3 million** dogs and providing life-saving rabies education lessons to over **3 million** children.

**HOWEVER, THERE IS STILL SO MUCH MORE TO ACHIEVE -**

**WE NEED YOUR HELP TO DO SO!**



## RABIES OVERVIEW

Rabies is a **ZOONOTIC** disease that can affect the nervous system of any mammal. However, over **99%** of human rabies cases are caused by an infected dog bite. Therefore whilst rabies continues to exist in the canine population, people will continue to be at risk.

The disease is transmitted via direct contact with the saliva of an infected animal e.g. through a **bite, scratch** or through the virus coming into contact with an **open wound** or **mucous membrane**. The virus attaches to a nerve cell at the site of infection and travels along the peripheral nerves to the central nervous system. Sadly, by the time the first symptoms develop the virus is widely disseminated throughout the central nervous system and there is virtually no chance of survival. The virus ascends the spinal cord, causing progressive inflammation until it reaches the brain, ultimately causing a fatal encephalitis.

The disease presents itself in two forms – **furious** and **paralytic**.



### RABIES IN DOGS

#### Symptoms

##### Furious

- Restlessness
- Sensitivity to sound and movement
- Uncontrollable aggression
- Throat paralysis/ hanging jaw
- Buildup of excess saliva (inability to swallow)

##### Paralytic

- Increasing muscle weakness
- Lethargy
- Ataxia (incoordination)
- Gradual paralysis

Once a dog has shown clinical symptoms, these will develop further and the dog will inevitably **die from inflammation of the brain within 10 days**.



**MASS CANINE VACCINATION IS THE PROVEN MOST EFFECTIVE METHOD OF ELIMINATING RABIES.**

To break the cycle of transmission of rabies at least **70%** of a dog population in an area needs to be vaccinated against the disease, by doing so we create **herd immunity** - a barrier to disease transmission.



## RABIES IN HUMANS

Whilst over 120 countries are still affected by rabies, **95%** of human rabies deaths occur in Africa and Asia, with India accounting for 35% of the global rabies burden.

Rabies disproportionately affects the world's **poorest communities** and as such has important socio – economic impacts. Many of the areas hardest hit by the disease are communities where awareness of the disease is low, mass canine vaccination is not widely in place and access to appropriate post-exposure treatment is limited - thereby placing a catastrophic financial burden on the worlds most disadvantaged regions, contributing to and perpetuating the cycle of poverty.

Initial symptoms of the disease include a fever and a tingling or burning sensation at the site of infection. The vast majority of human cases present with the furious form.

### Symptoms

#### Furious

- Hyperactivity
- Hyper salivation
- Periods of agitation alternating with lucidity
- Loss of ability to swallow, resulting in hydrophobia (fear of water)
- Aerophobia (an aversion to fresh air & drafts)

All symptoms ultimately progress, with the infection invariably leading to **coma and death (usually within 10 days)**.



#### Paralytic

- Muscle weakness starting at the site of infection
- Gradual paralysis



**59,000 HUMAN DEATHS PER YEAR**

**40% OF VICTIMS ARE AGED UNDER 15**

**99% OF CASES CAUSED BY A DOG BITE**

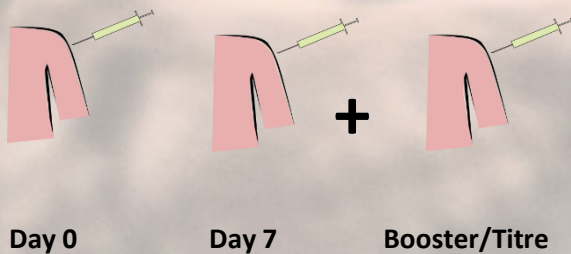
**100% VACCINE-PREVENTABLE.**



# PRE & POST EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS

## PRE-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS

To volunteer on a project, you must have proof of a primary course of pre-exposure vaccinations. The schedule for this can vary country to country. A commonly used schedule is as follows:



## CATEGORIES OF EXPOSURE

The World Health Organization distinguishes between 3 categories of exposure:

**Category 1: Touching or feeding animals, licks on unbroken skin:** No Post-exposure Prophylaxis required.

**Category 2: Nibbling of uncovered skin, minor scratches or abrasions without bleeding:** Post-exposure Prophylaxis required.

**Category 3: Single/ multiple transdermal bites or scratches, contamination of mucous membrane with saliva:** Post-exposure Prophylaxis required and administration of immunoglobulin.

## POST-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS

**Rabies is a fragile virus; prompt post-exposure treatment greatly reduces the chances of contracting the disease.** After any potential exposure it is crucial that the below WHO guidelines be followed:

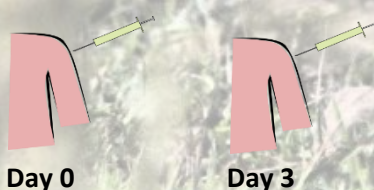
1. Wash the wound

Wash the wound immediately after exposure for **15 minutes** with water and soap, and iodine or ethanol.

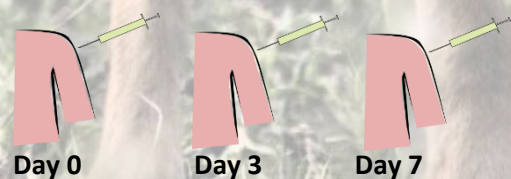
2. Receive vaccinations

The recommended vaccination protocol depends upon whether an individual has had the primary course of pre-exposure vaccinations. WHO recommend the following:

### Previously vaccinated individuals



### Non-vaccinated individuals



**Rabies immunoglobulin for category 3 exposures** (as soon as possible after first vaccine).





**"WHILE OUR WORK SEEMED TECHNICALLY SIMPLE,  
IT WILL HAVE A LIFE-SAVING IMPACT ON THESE  
COMMUNITIES.**

Heather, Uganda 2019 Volunteer



# VOLUNTEER TESTIMONIALS



“Volunteering abroad is something I have always wanted to do, so when I saw online that Mission Rabies were looking for volunteers to join them on their vaccination drive in Cambodia, I jumped at the opportunity.

As a “non-vet”, I didn’t really know what to expect. However, after a warm welcome from the Mission Rabies team I was soon to realise that I had nothing to worry about. The Mission Rabies team and my fellow volunteers were a joy to work with throughout and I am already looking up dates for my next trip!”

**BETH** Animal Behaviour Student, U.K

“Our team found dogs in so many different locations; from tourist-filled beaches on the west coast, to busy residential streets. Some of the buildings in this area were painted in traditional bright and vibrant colours, with others being quite minimalistic – but were equally as interesting. Unintentionally, my Mission Rabies trip had turned out to be an amazing way of seeing India.

Joining this expedition and learning about Mission Rabies has been equally rewarding, inspirational and educational and I would recommend it to anyone!”



**PHILIPPA** Veterinary Nurse, U.K



“Upon my arrival in Entebbe, Uganda, I was quick to discover that I was going to be seeing and interacting with Africa in a way I never even dreamed of.

I got to see parts of Uganda that I would have never seen just as a tourist and our group was showered with gratitude and respect from the local community. I witnessed the Pearl of Africa with beautiful scenery, very kind people, delicious food and enthusiastic children. My life perspective has been forever changed by this experience. When asked if I would go again...  
**ABSOLUTELY!!**”

**HEATHER** Veterinarian, U.S





## **BEING A MISSION RABIES VOLUNTEER**

Volunteers are vital to our work, bringing fresh energy and enthusiasm and enabling us to work on a scale that would not otherwise be possible.

Our projects involve Mission Rabies staff and volunteers from all across the world joining forces with our local teams and charity partners to deliver mass vaccination campaigns over a 2-week period. These campaigns are hugely important. Alongside allowing us to deliver an increased number of vaccinations, they provide a platform to drive forward our operational research, challenge our established vaccination methods and develop new tools and partnerships in rabies hotspots around the world. Crucially, they also raise awareness of the threat of rabies in areas that are most at risk - as a town and its schools fill with volunteers in bright yellow tops, communities cannot help but become engaged in our work!

By coordinating ahead of time and building contingency plans, Mission Rabies strive to make the potentially challenging job of vaccinating hundreds or thousands of dogs a day, go as smoothly as possible. However, the nature of field work means that each day is different and can be difficult to predict, being able to 'go with the flow' is therefore essential!

We hope that you get as much enjoyment from your time with Mission Rabies as we do, that you are proud of the life-saving work that you will complete and that you take home happy memories, new friendships and a great sense of achievement.

**PLEASE KNOW YOUR WORK MAKES A LASTING DIFFERENCE & SAVES MANY LIVES!**



## SELECTION

We welcome volunteers with all levels of experience - whether a veterinarian, veterinary nurse/technician, student or non-vet, there are meaningful roles for everyone! Primarily, we ask that you have a sense of adventure, flexibility and willingness to work hard. If you have any medical or health issues that you think may limit your ability to participate, please inform us upon application - on a case by case basis we may require a fitness to travel certificate from your doctor. We also ask volunteers to tell us of any allergies they have prior to travel, and ensure that they have visited a travel clinic to discuss required vaccinations and other medication before the project. Additionally, we require volunteers to read through and agree to our Code of Conduct, Terms & Conditions and policies outlined within this document.

## FEES & FUNDRAISING

We ask that you pay your deposit within one month of submitting your application - this confirms your place. Due to the in-country costs we incur once a place has been confirmed, this deposit is non-refundable. The remainder of your participation fee is due one month before travel at the latest. The volunteer fee covers the cost of accommodation, vegetarian meals, soft drinks, in-country project-related transport, health & safety and support. On some projects, there will be a separate optional trip during your time off - this will usually be paid directly to the 3<sup>rd</sup> party trip provider in-country.

We also ask volunteers to fundraise at least £350, this donation goes directly to supporting our work. In the past, volunteer funds have allowed us to expand next year's project, helping to save more lives! In addition, by fundraising and telling your friends about your trip, you help to bring international awareness to our work and to the global problem of rabies.

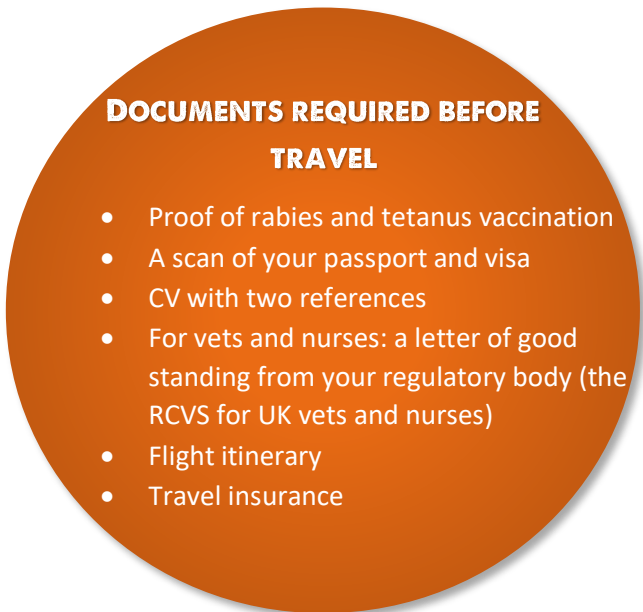
## FLIGHTS & INSURANCE

You are responsible for booking your own flights to and from the project – if you have any queries on timings of flights please get in touch before booking.

Your insurance must cover you for veterinary/voluntary/manual work abroad and for any other additional activities you choose to do. Please ensure it covers you for emergency assistance and repatriation, including air ambulance transport costs. You are eligible for free travel insurance on a Mission Rabies trip by becoming a member of our sister charity WVS - this costs £40 for the year and includes a range of other benefits. Follow [this link](#) to find out more!

## PRE-PROJECT BRIEFING & INFO PACK

Once signed up to a project you will be given access to an online Pre-Project Briefing, this will provide more information on rabies, our projects and will run through the health and safety considerations. In the run up to the trip, you will also be provided with a comprehensive information pack specific to your trip.



**DOCUMENTS REQUIRED BEFORE TRAVEL**

- Proof of rabies and tetanus vaccination
- A scan of your passport and visa
- CV with two references
- For vets and nurses: a letter of good standing from your regulatory body (the RCVS for UK vets and nurses)
- Flight itinerary
- Travel insurance



## ARRIVAL AND ACCLIMATISATION

You will be picked up from the airport by a Mission Rabies representative and brought to your accommodation - here you will be welcomed by our project staff. You can then spend the day acclimatising and getting to know the rest of your team!

The following day you will get a full briefing on what to expect from the next 2 weeks, alongside training on how to use the WVS Data Collection App. Using the app, you will help to collect data on every dog vaccinated to ensure we reach our target coverage, and to obtain further data about the dog population that will help Mission Rabies have a sustainable impact in the area.

## ROLES

Within each team there are many jobs which need to happen in quick succession to ensure our work is as effective as possible, these include; vaccinating the dog, marking its head, writing a vaccination card (if owned), recording the data on our smartphone app, handing out educational material and talking to owners about our work. As part of a Mission Rabies team, you will get the most out of your time with us if you are flexible, prepared for the unexpected and ready to put heart and soul into making a difference. The differing roles within the team are outlined below, most often these roles are not set and team duties shift throughout the day. Go with the flow and find a routine that suits your team!

### Dog Handling

The dog handlers are local staff, specially trained to catch dogs in butterfly nets quickly and humanely – they are needed in countries that have a high free-roaming dog population that cannot be handled. They will help you by restraining dogs while they are vaccinated and marked before being released.

### Vaccinating

Vaccinators will be vets, vet nurses/technicians, and vet students (under supervision). The vaccine should be given subcutaneously if possible, however it can also be given intramuscularly. The needle must be changed after every dog. Please ensure you do not litter clinical waste in the street– put the needles in the sharps bin and any other waste in the rubbish bag.

### Painting

Each dog needs to be marked with animal-friendly paint - ideally on the top of its head or along its back. The mark indicates a dog has been vaccinated so it must be visible for the post-vaccination survey team. The painter might also help carry equipment and draw up vaccines, handing vaccine-filled syringes to those vaccinating and taking back used syringes for refilling.



## Data Collecting & Navigating

All volunteers will be trained to use the WVS Data Collection App – this enables us to collect data on every dog we vaccinate, ensuring we reach the vital 70% coverage needed to reach herd immunity and allows us to obtain further data about the dog population to help us have a continued sustainable impact in the future. Using the map function on the app, this person will also be responsible for navigating their team to ensure they reach every corner of their area!

## Writing vaccine cards & handing out educational material

Every owned dog will need a vaccination card, when handing these out it is important to explain to the owners that they will need to re-vaccinate their dog each year. These encounters are a great chance to briefly explain more about the dangers of rabies and how to protect yourself - we will have educational flyers to hand out within the communities to help with this.

## Post-vaccination Survey Team

The post-vaccination survey will be completed by local staff within 24 -72 hours of vaccination taking place in an area. The purpose of this survey will be to estimate the proportion of animals in an area that have been vaccinated in order to establish if we have reached our 70% target. If not, teams can be redeployed to the area to ensure we reach greater coverage.





# WHAT TO EXPECT ON A PROJECT

## PHYSICAL WORK & EARLY STARTS

In order to reach 70% coverage of a local dog population, we have to work hard during our campaigns! We ask that you are comfortable walking up to ~15 km a day over variable terrain and in hot sunny weather – sturdy and comfortable closed-toe shoes are highly recommended. You should be prepared for early starts, with a typical day starting at 6 am to get into the field to start work at 7am. Although the days may be physically demanding, they will also be incredibly rewarding - you will end each day knowing you have contributed towards stopping the spread of rabies and the devastating consequences this brings.

## SHARING ROOMS

To ensure we can get as many volunteers in the field as possible and keep the in-country costs low for you, you will be sharing a room with another volunteer of the same sex. If you would rather have a single room please inform us as soon as possible so that we can arrange this, however please note this will be at an extra cost. In addition if you are volunteering with a friend or partner and would like to share with them, please mention this upon application.

## WHAT TO WEAR

We will provide you with 2 Mission Rabies t-shirts that you should wear whenever you are working in the field. We expect you to dress appropriately, taking into consideration the work you are undertaking and the country you are in. We recommend you wear closed and comfortable footwear and light working trousers. We will provide you with a kit list specific to your project before you leave to help with packing.

## SUPERVISION

Mission Rabies is very aware of the fact that travelling abroad can be an overwhelming experience even for seasoned travellers and we want your volunteer experience to be as rewarding and comfortable as possible. The project will be run by members of the Mission Rabies Leadership Team - there will be a Project Leader and then each working team will also have a fully trained Team Leader. They will be on the ground working with your team, helping you get to grips with the tasks and activities of the project and will always be available if you have any questions, concerns, or particular needs throughout your trip.





## POST-PROJECT

### SURVEY

Once you have returned, you will be sent a short feedback survey about your experiences - we really value this feedback! An element you appreciated about the trip may have been the result of someone else's feedback, so please do take the time to fill this in.

### BLOG

We also encourage volunteers to write a short blog post about their experience, which we can then use on our website and share on social media so others can hear all about the incredible work carried out by our volunteer teams! This can be written in any style you like – just imagine what you would write to tell your friends and family about your experience. If you feel in need of some inspiration, head to our [website](#) to view past examples of these!

### BECOME AN AMBASSADOR

We are always looking for people to spread the word of Mission Rabies! If you would be interested in delivering a talk at your local college, university or place of work about your trip and the work of Mission Rabies, please do get in touch. We can support you with this by providing promotional material or collection pots (if local to Mission Rabies HQ!).

### VOLUNTEER AGAIN!

We'd love for you to join us again! As a valued part of the Mission Rabies team you can opt to join our returning volunteers list – this ensures 2 weeks **exclusive access** to our future trips before they are made public. Just email [enquiries@missionrabies.com](mailto:enquiries@missionrabies.com) to take up your spot!





**"FOR THE GOOD OF DOGS AND PEOPLE, OURS MUST BE THE  
GENERATION TO TAKE LEAPS FORWARD IN COMBATTING  
THIS ANCIENT DISEASE."**

Andrew Gibson, Director of Strategic Research, Mission Rabies





### MITIGATION OF COVID-19

As a charity whose aim is to protect communities from a prevalent disease, we are acutely aware of how COVID-19 is impacting lives. The health and safety of our volunteers, staff and the communities in which we work is our absolute priority, as such we will be regularly reviewing the situation before each trip and will keep volunteers updated throughout this.

COVID-19 can cause more severe symptoms for those with pre-existing medical conditions, such as high blood pressure, asthma, heart disease or diabetes. Any underlying health conditions should therefore be declared within the application form and discussed with staff before departure. If you develop symptoms of COVID-19 before the project, please ensure you have been tested before travelling. If you have any concerns over travel to your project destination, please get in touch with Head Office to discuss this before departure.

Our teams will be following local, national and global guidelines on controlling the virus, and will take all possible precautions to keep everyone safe - this will include use of face masks, social distancing, provision of hand sanitiser and regular disinfection of all equipment.

### VACCINATIONS

To take part in our campaigns, we require proof of a full course of rabies vaccinations within the past two years - if this primary course was longer than 2 years ago we additionally require a booster (within the past 2 years) or proof of adequate titre (within the last three months). Proof of current tetanus vaccination is also required. Regarding other vaccines, it is your responsibility to ensure that you have contacted a medical professional at least 6-8 weeks before the date of the project. You must ensure you have all the necessary vaccinations and that you get any boosters or additional medication in sufficient time.

### WORKING IN THE FIELD

Mission Rabies are a UK-based charity that prides itself on offering high standard projects (in line with British Standard 8848) and on ensuring the safety of our volunteers and staff. However, the countries in which we work are not guaranteed to have the same safety standards as you are used to – for example in terms of road safety, accommodation and medical facilities. We do what we can to mitigate such risks, by carrying out a comprehensive risk assessment ahead of the project and developing contingency, incident and emergency response plans. We will ensure that you are informed of the important aspects of these prior to departure and will have an in-country briefing covering local health and safety. We ask that you listen to our advice and take every step to stay safe.

### DOG BITE PROTOCOLS

Mission Rabies takes dog bites and potential rabies exposure very seriously. We have a comprehensive policy on rabies exposure covering all scenarios and have plenty of experience in dealing with suspected rabies exposures. We follow strict protocols in line with the latest World Health Organization recommendations, whereby any potential exposure will receive post-exposure treatment. You will be briefed before you travel and in-country on our procedures for your own protection and there will always be a member of Mission Rabies staff to help.

**It is vital that you let us know of any accidents or incidents whilst in the field, especially if you believe you have had a potential rabies exposure.**



We want you to have the best experience possible, however as a volunteer please remember that you are an ambassador for Mission Rabies. We ask that you therefore work diligently towards the aims and objectives of the project and under the supervision of the leadership team.

## **CULTURAL SENSITIVITY**

We ask that you are aware of and sensitive to, local cultures, customs and laws. Mission Rabies will endeavour to provide volunteers with this information prior to travel, but it is always worthwhile doing a bit of homework beforehand. We expect you to dress conservatively with clothes that cover your shoulders and knees and behave respectfully. Our team are always happy to answer any questions you have about local culture or laws before or during the project.

You will be visiting areas where people may not be used to seeing foreigners and this can attract interest. This is most often people simply interested in our work or people trying to help by directing us to dogs. It is important to always be polite and respectful in these interactions. It is through maintaining positive relationships with local communities and governments that we can continue and expand the crucial work we are doing. You will always be working alongside at least one local team member, they will help you to communicate with members of the community and can answer any questions you may have on local customs and appropriate behaviour.

## **ANIMAL WELFARE**

Volunteers should be mindful of animal welfare at all times - it is expected that all volunteers will handle animals in a humane way. Whilst out in the field, you may come across instances where you believe an animal requires further veterinary support. Where possible, we always try to work with organisations to provide a level of emergency veterinary care to such animals - however, please bear in mind that the practicalities of whether this is possible can vary project to project.

As animal welfare standards vary greatly across the world, you may on occasion witness an animal being handled in a way you would deem unacceptable. In such circumstances, we ask you to remain calm and refrain from getting involved. Instead, we recommend you inform your team leader who will then take mitigating steps, if safe to do so.

## **FREE TIME**

On working days, you will have evenings free - this is most often used to relax, catch up and exchange stories with the rest of the team. During the project, you will have two free days - you are free to do what you wish with this time off, but we ask that you be mindful of the safety briefing you received and the above behavioural expectations. On some projects, there may be an optional trip provided by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party tour operator, which many past volunteers have enjoyed.



## CHILD SAFEGUARDING

Whilst in the field children will often want to help by leading you to local dogs they know of, though this can be incredibly useful, please always ensure that you are never left alone with a child. We take child safeguarding very seriously, please read our Safeguarding Code of Conduct (Appendix 3). You will be briefed more thoroughly on this in-country. Important steps to follow include, ensuring that you always ask permission before taking photos of children (and all community members) and only proceed to take photos if given permission. If posting photos on social media, ensure not to post any location specific information that could be used to identify the child within the photos.

**Any event/behaviour we determine to be detrimental to Mission Rabies' work or reputation, or in contravention to that described in this document and in the Code of Conduct, will result in us following the procedure outlined in the "Resolving Issues", Appendix 1.**

## OTHER POLICIES

### Data Protection

Any personal information provided to Mission Rabies will be processed in accordance with the UK Data Protection Act 1998 and the EU General Data Protection Regulation.





## **THANK YOU ONCE AGAIN FOR TAKING THE TIME TO JOIN US ON A PROJECT!**

We're very excited to have you on board and to get out there and start saving lives. There will be plenty more information coming your way in the next few months specific to your trip, but if you have any questions in the meantime, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Email: [enquiries@missionrabies.com](mailto:enquiries@missionrabies.com)

Phone: +44 (0) 1725 557225

Post: Mission Rabies, 4 Castle Street, Cranborne, Dorset, BH21 5PZ, UK

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/missionrabies>

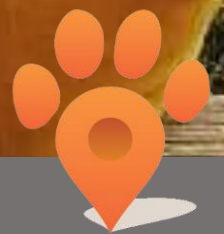
Twitter: [www.twitter.com/MissionRabies](http://www.twitter.com/MissionRabies) or @MissionRabies

Website: [www.missionrabies.com](http://www.missionrabies.com)

We are sure you will have a brilliant time volunteering with our teams. However, the following two appendices outline both the course of action taken if problems were to arise during the course of your time spent volunteering with us and the guidelines to follow if you would like to make a complaint regarding your time with Mission Rabies. We strive to provide a fair, effective, and consistent method of dealing with such issues as set out in these appendices.







**MISSION  
RABIES**

Registered Charity in England & Wales: 1162293

Mission Rabies USA is a 501 (c) (3) Non-Profit Organization EIN: 81-5065473



# **APPENDIX 1:**

## **RESOLVING ISSUES**

Mission Rabies's aims are to encourage positive volunteer experiences and seek to maintain a high level of volunteer conduct and performance. This section sets out the course of action which will be taken when rules are broken and provides a fair, effective, and consistent method of dealing with problems. This document is not a disciplinary procedure nor a dismissal procedure but outlines ways to inspire acceptable standards of work.

Volunteers are expected to know what volunteer trips entail as laid out in the volunteer handbook, volunteer trip information and volunteer briefing. In the event of any problems or concerns, volunteers will be provided with details of the allegations and any evidence in support of this prior to any discussions. Volunteers will always be given the opportunity to give their version of events. A volunteer is entitled to be accompanied by a colleague or friend at any meeting. No volunteer will be asked to leave a trip in the event of a first problem, except in cases of gross misconduct. Volunteers have the right to appeal.

### **Informal discussions**

In the event of a problem between Mission Rabies and a Volunteer, the Team Leader and/or Volunteer Coordinator will make every effort to resolve the matter by informal discussion with the volunteer. This gives the volunteer the opportunity to discuss and explain events and circumstances with a Mission Rabies representative and to outline measures to prevent recurrence. Only where this fails to bring about the desired improvement shall the matter be taken further. We might take notes to document what has been discussed during the informal discussion and they will be disposed of upon completion of the project.

Informal discussions shall be the first event for minor and major misbehaviours. A minor misbehaviour includes, but is not limited to: regular poor timekeeping, careless work, minor breaches of hygiene/safety/security rules, failure to wear protective clothing/equipment provided.

A major misconduct includes, but is not limited to: dangerous physical horseplay, neglect causing loss of or damage to Mission Rabies', a Mission Rabies employee's or fellow volunteer's property/tools/equipment, serious neglect of hygiene/safety/security rules, behaviour affecting the welfare of animals and others, unsatisfactory attitude towards work/others, insubordination, offensive behaviour to the host culture, violation of local laws.

### **First or formal verbal warning**

If the problem persists, or other problems arise, a member of the Mission Rabies Management team and a member of the host partner organisation management (where applicable) will have a formal meeting with the volunteer. The volunteer has the right to be accompanied by a colleague or friend during the meeting. During the meeting the problem(s) shall be explained and the volunteer has the right to respond to and explain the allegations.

The volunteer shall be given a performance note detailing the meeting. Such meetings will be recorded but disregarded after completion of the trip.

### Written warning

If the volunteer's work or conduct fails to improve, or where the allegation is particularly serious, the volunteer will be called to a meeting and the volunteer issued a written warning. After completion of the trip, if no further problems arose and the minor breach has been resolved, the warning will expire and be discarded.

### Final written warning

If the volunteer's work or conduct fails to improve, or where the allegation is particularly serious, a member of Mission Rabies management will follow the same procedure as for a written warning. If proven, a final warning, will be given to the volunteer, warning that any further misconduct will result in them being asked to leave the volunteer trip with appropriate notice. No project fees will be refunded in this event and the volunteer has to make their own arrangements if they choose to go home early. After completion of the trip, depending on the nature of the infraction and on the condition that no further problems arose, the warning will be discarded.

### Gross misconduct

A volunteer can be asked to leave without notice on grounds of gross misconduct, which will be confirmed in writing in due course. The volunteer will receive food, soft drinks and accommodation while the circumstances of the alleged incident are investigated. Examples of gross misconduct include, but are not limited to: violation of local laws, theft, physical violence, deliberately ignoring hygiene/safety/security rules and thereby endangering one's own or another's physical well-being or safety, fraud, intoxication induced by alcohol or drugs during working hours, falsification of records, wilful damage to, or gross negligence of, Mission Rabies', a Mission Rabies employee's, or volunteer's property/equipment/tools, serious offences affecting the welfare of animals and/or people. The police will be informed of any potential criminal activity. Where a volunteer has a misconduct relating to a child, we will also inform the relevant Child Protection agencies and follow Local Safeguarding Children's Board guidelines.

### Meeting Procedures

The volunteer will normally receive a written invite to any meetings to discuss a problem detailing the reason for the meeting. In the case of gross misconduct where a meeting has to occur at short notice, the volunteer will be informed of the meeting verbally. In such a situation written notice shall be given as soon as possible. Meetings will be held at a reasonable time and location.

### The right to appeal

If the volunteer wishes to appeal against any decision, they must appeal in writing within 7 working days of the decision being communicated to them to the Mission Rabies CEO. The



CEO will discuss the complaint with the volunteer and any relevant parties; all communication will be documented and retained confidentially. They will investigate the matter to come to a fair decision within 15 days of an appeal discussion with the volunteer. The CEO's decision will be final.

## **APPENDIX 2:**

### **VOLUNTEER COMPLAINT GUIDELINES**

It is the aim of Mission Rabies that all volunteers are able to raise concerns regarding their working responsibilities, relationships and placement environment. It is expected that volunteers and staff firstly aim to resolve issues informally. If however a volunteer considers that his or her concerns have not been addressed adequately s/he may raise a formal complaint under the following procedure. The procedure aims to ensure that where problems are identified, they are dealt with promptly and consistently. This procedure and any personal data about a volunteer will be followed lawfully, in the strictest confidence throughout. All formal grievance records will be treated as confidential and kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the EU General Data Protection Regulation.

#### **Mission Rabies responsibility to the Volunteer**

Mission Rabies endeavours to ensure that the workplace is safe and that activities do not pose an unacceptable level of risk. A risk assessment is conducted for every project placement and every effort is made in the field to uphold the contents of this document. Volunteers receive briefing documents prior to travel and induction that gives advice on risk avoidance, actions to take in emergency and the contact details for support. Whilst Mission Rabies will endeavour to always assist and look after volunteers, volunteers are clearly informed that Mission Rabies accepts no liability for their action whilst participating in the trip and they are undertaking to help the project at their own risk and responsibility. All concerns brought to the attention of the volunteer coordinator in terms of health and safety will be investigated and corrected quickly where appropriate.

#### **Volunteer responsibility to Mission Rabies**

The volunteer is under no contractual obligation to perform tasks requested of them however Mission Rabies reserves the right to reduce or re-designate the volunteer duties to ensure the programme runs effectively. Mission Rabies endeavours to provide support through volunteer coordinators to reduce the potential of this and will aim to ensure volunteers are briefed and prepared in the roles and tasks requested of them. To ensure the safety of all volunteers, participation on the project can be terminated by Mission Rabies where the volunteer participates in illegal activities or puts themselves or others at risk.

#### **Informal Complaint**

All volunteers are given the opportunity to clarify the working expectations, health and safety requirements, data protection and placement environment prior to the trip. Concerns can be



raised at any time prior, during and post project. All volunteers of Mission Rabies are expected to express concerns openly and honestly, in a timely fashion in order that staff can try to resolve the concern informally and directly with the person or staff member in question. It is hoped that the majority of concerns will be resolved at this stage. If resolution cannot be found in the first instance the volunteer should inform the Volunteer Coordinator present in the field, who will ensure that everything is done to try to resolve the issue. Concerns that relate to an immediate volunteer coordinator (project or UK based) may, in the first instance, be informally discussed with a senior manager. The volunteer may request mediation to address a range of issues, including relationship breakdown, personality clashes, communication problems, bullying and harassment. Mediation will involve a discussion with both parties to offer neutral assistance in tackling the concern on an informal basis. All volunteers are offered the opportunity to provide feedback post-trip by the UK volunteer coordinator. Should a concern be raised following the point where a resolution for the individuals concerned can be met, the issue will be investigated where there could be an ongoing issue; particularly regarding health and safety, data protection, discrimination or harassment.

Formal complaints should be used only when informal approaches have not resolved the issue or the volunteer feels unable to tackle concerns on an informal basis.

### Formal Complaint

If a volunteer feels that the matter has not been resolved through informal discussions, they should put the complaint in writing to the UK volunteer coordinator. If the complaint involves the UK volunteer co-ordinator the complaint should be put in writing to a manager in the organisation. A response will be given to the volunteer by the appropriate staff member and opportunity for discussion of the complaints (via, phone, email or in person). A written response from the appropriate staff member outlining how the complaints will be responded to will be received within 7 working days, unless further meetings or investigations are required. The response will include a reference to the right of appeal. If a volunteer chooses to leave a project early due to an unresolved complaint, they should provide Mission Rabies with details of the complaint in writing before they leave. Should a volunteer chose to lodge a claim for compensation, they should also do this in writing and before the completion of the project.

### Right of Appeal

If the volunteer wishes to appeal against any decision, they must appeal in writing within 7 working days of the decision being communicated to them to the Mission Rabies CEO. The CEO will discuss the complaint with the volunteer and any relevant parties; all communication will be documented and retained confidentially. They will investigate the matter to come to a fair decision within 15 days of an appeal discussion with the volunteer. The CEO's decision will be final.

## **APPENDIX 3:**

### **MISSION RABIES SAFEGUARDING CODE OF CONDUCT**

Thank you for becoming part of Mission Rabies. Your work is going to make a huge difference to the lives of children and animals in some of the poorest communities in the world. We take our responsibility for the safety of children and vulnerable adults on our programmes incredibly seriously. This is why we have a Code of Conduct that governs all our work.

Please read our code of conduct below and sign the statement of commitment at the bottom to show that you agree to follow the code and understand how to report any concerns that you have about a child or vulnerable adult to Mission Rabies.

If you are joining our education team then you will be asked to attend further induction training on Child Safeguarding and your line-manager will let you know the additional requirements for your role.

#### Code of Conduct

This code of conduct sets out rules for what is, and is not, appropriate and acceptable behaviour around children and adults at risk. These are designed to protect children and adults at risk as well as intended to protect representatives of Mission Rabies from false accusations of inappropriate behaviour or abuse.

This Code of Conduct applies to ALL Mission Rabies staff, volunteers, consultants, contractors, trustees, advisory committee members, patrons, other Mission Rabies representatives and supporters or visitors to our projects.

If in any doubt you should seek advice from Mission Rabies' Safeguarding Officer at your project location, your line manager or any available paid member of staff member in the case of unpaid staff and supporters.

#### Key Principles

Remember you are in a position of trust and should always behave professionally and appropriately. Speak and act in a way that respects children and adults at risk, treats them fairly, equally and keeps them safe from harm.

You always have a duty of care to children and are accountable for your actions. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defence.

Always report any disclosure or concern about a child, an adult at risk or the behaviour of another person, no matter who this is.

Breaches of this code will be considered misconduct or gross misconduct and will result in dismissal. Where an ambassador or partner organisation breaches this code of conduct, Mission Rabies will sever ties with that person or organisation.



## Do not

- Enter a school without necessary legal permission from the appropriate authorities in that country and approval of the headmaster/mistress/ principal.
- Collect personal information on children without approval from your supervising member of staff and the consent of their guardian.
- Share confidential or personal information about a child or adult.
- Take photographs of children without informed consent from the child and/or child's parent/guardian, school or partner organisation responsible for the child at that time. Consent can be given verbally or in writing depending on the circumstances and local law, but consent must be given before any image is used for publicity, fundraising, awareness-raising or other purpose.
- Give personal contact information to a child and/or make contact with a child outside of a staff members' professional life.
- Be alone with a child or adult at risk at any time. No child, young person or adult at risk should be in or invited into the home or vehicle of a staff member or volunteer. Where a situation occurs such as having to accompany a child to hospital then your supervising staff member and the in-country Safeguarding Officer must be notified immediately.
- Visit the home of a child or adult at risk unaccompanied even if their parent/ guardian is at home. Staff and volunteers will need to enter homes where children are present during door-to-door vaccination drives, but this will occur when you are working as part of a vaccination team according to an agreed schedule that is under the supervision of a Mission Rabies staff member.
- Hit or hurt a child or adult at risk physically (hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm) or emotionally (intimidation, exclusion, humiliation, or embarrassment). All Mission Rabies representatives must adhere to this regardless of local custom and practice.
- Do things of a personal nature that a child could do themselves, including dressing, removing clothing, bathing, or personal grooming.
- Engage in or allow sexually provocative games with children or adults at risk to take place; kiss, hug, fondle, rub or touch a child in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way; use sexually suggestive language about or in front of a child or expose children to sexually explicit images. Sexual activity with a child under the age of 18 is always strictly prohibited, regardless of the legal age of consent in the country concerned. Mistaken belief of the age of the child is not a defence.
- Give a personal gift of any kind to a child. If you would like to give a gift to a child then you should contact your supervising member of staff, who will notify the in-country Safeguarding Officer and make a decision on whether it is appropriate. It is never appropriate to give alcohol, drugs or cigarettes to a child.
- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual activity. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance
- Engage in any sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics

- Use language or behave in ways that may frighten, embarrass, shame or humiliate a child or adult; use derogatory language or show discrimination on grounds of race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality, or political persuasion.

## Do

- Wait for appropriate physical contact to be initiated by the child e.g. holding hands during a game or activity. Physical contact must always be socially acceptable in line with cultural views and issues of gender and in a safe and supervised environment, such as a classroom.
- Use the 'two adult' rule where two or more adults supervise any activity involving children or adults at risk. Encourage teachers and/or teaching assistants to stay and observe or participate in lessons that you are giving.
- Ensure all communication with children or adults at risk is transparent, open to scrutiny and reserved for official channels and visits during agreed projects. Personal email, phone or social media accounts should never be used.
- Report if a child initiates inappropriate contact to your line-manager or in-country Safeguarding Officer as this may be a sign of abuse.
- Report any breaches of this code to your line-manager or in-country Safeguarding Officer.
- Report any disclosures of abuse by children or adults at risk to your line manager or a paid member of staff so that they can follow local safeguarding procedures.
- Seek advice from your line manager, in-country Safeguarding Officer or Mission Rabies staff member if you are in any doubt about appropriate interactions with children or adults at risk.

## Photographs

If you are a visitor to one of our projects and would like to take some photos of your trip then the person coordinating your visit will give you specific advice on taking photographs at your briefing in country. In general, we are happy that visitors take photographs provided that this follows any guidance you have been given and the children and people you photograph are happy to take part. If you intend to use photographs for any publicity (e.g. your own organisation's website) then please speak to the person coordinating your visit as this may require additional consent from children and families you visit in the country where you are working.



## **APPENDIX 4:**

### **MISSION RABIES VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT**

We want everyone to have a positive and rewarding experience while volunteering for Mission Rabies. To achieve this, we have a duty to ensure we maintain a respectful approach throughout our work, conducting ourselves in a way that demonstrates integrity, fairness and professionalism. As a volunteer you are an ambassador for Mission Rabies and our partners, we therefore require you follow the below code throughout your time with us.

#### Service

1. Always act with fairness, honesty, integrity and openness; respect the opinions of others and treat all with equality and dignity without regard to gender, race, colour, creed, ancestry, place of origin, political beliefs, religion, marital status, disability, age, or sexual orientation.
2. Promote the mission and objectives of Mission Rabies in all dealings with the public on behalf of the charity and within Mission Rabies.
3. Provide a positive and valued experience for those receiving service within and outside Mission Rabies.

#### Accountability

1. Act with honesty and integrity and in accordance with any professional standards and / or governing laws and legislation that have application to the responsibilities you perform for or on behalf of Mission Rabies.
2. Comply with both the letter and the spirit of any training or orientation provided to you by Mission Rabies in connection with those responsibilities.
3. Adhere to the policies and procedures of Mission Rabies.
4. Take responsibility for your actions and decisions. Follow reporting lines to facilitate the effective resolution of problems. Ensure that you do not exceed the authority of your position.

#### Conflict of Interest

Conflict of interest arises when a person participates in a decision about a matter (including any contract or arrangement of employment, leasing, sale or provision of goods and services) which may benefit or be seen to benefit that person because of his/her direct or indirect monetary or financial interests affected by or involved in that matter. In the event that such a matter arises, the person shall formally disclose the interest, refrain from attempting to persuade or influence other persons participating in the decision, and shall not cast any vote on the matter.

#### Confidentiality

Respect and maintain the confidentiality of information gained as a volunteer. We encourage volunteers to share their trip on social media. By accepting your place, you agree that pictures

taken and shared with Mission Rabies may be used for marketing purposes without prior consent. Volunteers have the right to request that their photo(s) not be used for these purposes. Volunteers also agree not to approach or respond to professional media without previous clearance from a member of the Mission Rabies leadership team. As original epidemiological research will be conducted during the course of the project, volunteers must not disclose any information that might be used in a future publication - this includes research methods, design and results.

### Personal or Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any conduct, comment, gesture or contact of a sexual nature that one would find to be unwanted or unwelcome by any individual. Personal harassment means any conduct whether verbal or physical that is discriminating in nature, based upon another person's race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political beliefs, religion, marital status, physical or mental disability, sex, age or sexual orientation. It is discriminatory behaviour, directed at an individual, which is unwanted or unwelcome and causes substantial distress in that person and serves no legitimate work-related purpose. Mission Rabies has a zero tolerance policy with respect to Personal/Sexual Harassment. Personal/Sexual Harassment in any form is strictly prohibited.