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HEALTH DEPARTMENT**
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RELEASE DATE:

6/12/2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Love Them and Leash Them – The Importance of Keeping Dogs Leashed

The Genesee and Orleans County Health Departments (GO Health) are reminding pet owners the importance of keeping their dog(s) leashed and under control at all times. This year, there have been numerous reported incidents of off-leash dogs biting children, pedestrians, and cyclists.

Leashing dogs can give pet owners greater control over their animals and lower the risk of mishaps, aggressive behavior toward people or other pets, and interactions with wildlife. “GO Health is strongly encouraging all pet owners to prioritize the safety of themselves, their pets, and the broader community,” stated Darren Brodie, Environmental Health Director for GO Health. “Leashing your dogs is an essential step to prevent dog bites and protect the safety of all residents.”

In 2023, Genesee County investigated 191 animal bite and rabies incidents, and Orleans County investigated 137. In 2023, a combined total of 45 individuals were treated for rabies post exposure, 22 in Genesee County and 23 in Orleans County. Many of these incidents could have been avoided by pet owners keeping their dog on a leash.

Pet owners should:

- Keep your dog fenced in or on a leash when outside of your home and in public areas.
- Avoid allowing your dog to approach unfamiliar dogs, people, or wildlife.
- Stay on top of your pets yearly vaccinations.

Residents are encouraged to take note of our upcoming drive-thru rabies vaccination clinics for dogs, cats, and ferrets in Genesee and Orleans Counties that are offered at no charge.

Genesee County Rabies Clinics at the Genesee County Fairgrounds (5056 East Main Street, Batavia, NY 14020)

- Thursday, August 8, from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m.
- Thursday, October 10, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Orleans County Rabies Clinics at the Orleans County Fairgrounds (12690 State Route 31, Albion, NY 14411)

- Saturday, August 10, from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.
- Saturday, October 19, from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.

For more information on GO Health's programs and services, visit GOHealthNY.org. You can also contact your respective health department:

- Genesee County- 585-344-2580 x5555 or Health@geneseeny.gov
- Orleans County- 585-589-3278 or OCPublicHealth@orleanscountyny.gov

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