

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS**  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

**Vision:** To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

April 19, 2013

TO: Ian Hallett, Director of HCAS  
Dr. Mike Haworth, Chair, Animal Advisory Task Force

From: Douglas Holt

Subject: Community Cat Program

Dr. Carina Blackmore, Florida State Public Health Veterinarian and Acting State Epidemiologist, presented to the Animal Advisory Task Force in December 2012. She has asked that I restate the Florida Department of Health position that since 2009, the Florida DOH has published a Position Statement that the concept of managing free-roaming/feral domestic cats is not tenable on public health grounds because of the persistent threat posed to communities from injury and disease.

I also wanted to inform you of an initiative the Florida Department of Health-Hillsborough County Health Department began in November of 2012 as a result of several incidents where the medical community did not properly report the animal bites as required by law. This internal QI effort is designed to improve the process of reporting animal bites and the evaluation regarding the appropriate use of rabies post exposure prophylaxis. We envision a community wide educational effort targeting the medical profession and general public.

Sincerely,

Douglas Holt, MD  
Director

cc: Mike Merrill, BOCC

dah/tad

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