



Position on Canine Hybrids

The AVMA recognizes that: a) wild canines crossbred with domestic animals (canine hybrids) are often maintained in captivity as companion animals, for breeding purposes, for research activities, and for exhibition; b) depending on the management and disposition of canine hybrids, they may constitute a significant hazard to human health, other animal species, the environment, or themselves; and c) there is incomplete evidence with regard to the amount of genetic diversity between some wild and domestic canines and the suitability of canine hybrids as companion animals.



The AVMA strongly opposes keeping as pets any hybrids of wild canines crossbred with domestic animals. The AVMA believes that all commercial traffic in these animals for such purposes should be prohibited.

Persons who own or are contemplating owning canine hybrids should be aware of the following:

1. Laws in their state or community that may prohibit canine hybrids or require a permit for their presence.
2. The existence of strong evidence from experts in animal behavior, animal control, animal welfare, and public health that canine hybrids can exhibit unpredictable behavior and pose a significant threat of severe attacks on humans.
3. Public health officials may require euthanasia of canine hybrids after they bite a person or are exposed to a rabid or potentially rabid animal, regardless of their rabies vaccine status, because presently there is no USDA approved rabies vaccine licensed for canine hybrids and incomplete data exists on the pathogenesis of rabies in these animals.
4. The need for special housing, including secure fencing to prevent escape and to prevent direct contact with humans and other animals.
5. Owners or keepers of canine hybrids may be at increased risk for liability.
6. The importance of establishing a good relationship with a veterinarian who has some knowledge of canine hybrids and is willing to provide appropriate health care through treatment and preventive medicine.

Veterinarians should be aware of all of the above so that they can appropriately counsel their clients. In addition, each veterinarian should clarify the position of his or her liability insurance carrier to determine if protection will be available if the veterinarian accepts canine hybrids as patients.

Recognizing that some states allow canine hybrids to be owned, the AVMA encourages the development and licensure of drugs and biologicals that can be used on such animals.