

**March 19, 2020**

## **COVID-19 Guidelines for Pet Owners**

### **What we know about COVID-19**

- Person-to-person spread of the novel coronavirus (SARS CoV-2) has been indicated in the United States, including Washington D.C.
- Currently, there is no treatment or vaccine for this disease.
- There is currently [NO evidence](#) that companion animals, including pets, can spread COVID-19 to people.
- However, since animals can spread other diseases to people, it's always a good idea to wash your hands after being around animals.
- Animal owners should remember to include pets and other animals in their emergency preparedness planning, including keeping a two-week supply of food and medications on hand.

### **Information for People with COVID-19 and People Who Are Under Home Care and Isolation**

- If you have been diagnosed with COVID-19, restrict contact with pets and other animals. This includes avoiding petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, and sharing food with their pets. Exceptions include service animals.
- If possible, a household member other than the affected individual should care for animals for 14 days from the last date of exposure to the affected person.
- If someone else is walking your pet, transfer the pet outside of your home and maintain 6 feet of distance (for example, tie the leash to the external doorknob). Arrange for the dog walker to bring their own leash to minimize the risk for contamination.
- Individuals who are self-isolating and have a home with fenced in property can allow the family pet(s) out into the fenced area.
- People with COVID-19 should refer to the [DC Health coronavirus webpage](#) and the [CDC website](#) for guidance on living with their pets for more information.
- Individuals who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 should NOT leave the house to walk their pets.

### **What to Do if You Are Under Home Care and Isolation and Your Pet Needs Veterinary Care**

- Call your veterinarian to let them know that you or your household member are currently under home isolation for COVID-19.
- An unaffected household member or friend who does not live with you should be designated to transport the pet to the veterinary hospital/clinic.
- Follow the instructions given by your veterinary hospital/clinic to minimize risk to your pet and other individuals.