

PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT **ABOUT COVID-19 AND PETS 6/4/2020**

First and foremost, the risk of animals spreading COVID-19 is incredibly low. Although there has been information about pets being infected with COVID-19, the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) stresses that the primary risk of transmission to humans is other humans. The CDC states that currently there is no evidence that animals play a significant role in spreading the virus that causes COVID-19. The [American Veterinary Medical Association](#) (AVMA) also notes that there have been fewer than 25 reports from around the world of pets (dogs and cats) being infected with COVID-19; however, none of these reports suggest that pets are a source of infection for people.

CDC encourages pet owners to treat pets as you would other human family members to protect them from possible infection. This means limiting contact between your pets and people outside your household as much as possible and avoiding places where large numbers of people gather. If you are sick with COVID-19, either suspected or confirmed by a test, you should restrict contact with your pets and other animals, just like you would with people. Until we know more about this virus, people sick with COVID-19 should avoid contact with pets and other animals.

KEY POINTS ABOUT COVID-19 AND PETS:

- **Most importantly, have a plan in place for your pet if you become sick or require hospitalization.** Having a plan for your pet's care in advance will allow you to focus on your own recovery and free up resources for those individuals in emergency situations with no other resources to assist with the care of their animals.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) stresses that the **primary risk of transmission to humans is other humans.** The CDC states that **at this time there is no evidence that animals play a significant role in spreading the virus** that causes COVID-19. Based on the limited information available to date, **the risk of animals spreading COVID-19 to people is considered to be low.** *(This is a rapidly evolving situation. Guidance will be updated as new information becomes available.)*
- The American Veterinary Medical Association has done further research and now believes there is a **low risk that the virus that causes COVID-19 can spread to people from the skin or fur of pets** because porous, especially fibrous, materials absorb and trap the virus, making it harder to contract through simple touch.
- While additional animals may test positive as infections continue in people, it is important to note that **performing animal testing does not reduce the availability of tests for humans.** The CDC and [United States Department of Agriculture](#) **do not recommend routine testing of animals for this virus at this time.**

For more information about COVID-19 and animals visit the CDC site [HERE](#).

Therefore, the CDC recommends the following:

What to do if you own pets

Until we learn more about how this virus affects animals, treat pets as you would other human family members to protect them from a possible infection.

Because there is a small risk that people with COVID-19 could spread the virus to animals, CDC recommends that pet owners limit their pet's interaction with people outside their household.

- Keep cats indoors when possible and do not let them roam freely outside.

- Walk dogs on a leash at least 6 feet (2 meters) away from others.
- Avoid public places where a large number of people gather.
- Do not put face coverings on pets. Covering a pet's face could harm them.

There is no evidence that the virus can spread to people from the skin, fur, or hair of pets. Do not wipe or bathe your pet with chemical disinfectants, alcohol, hydrogen peroxide, or any other products not approved for animal use.

Talk to your veterinarian if your pet gets sick or if you have any concerns about your pet's health.

Protect pets if you are sick

If you are sick with COVID-19 (either suspected or confirmed by a test), you should restrict contact with your pets and other animals, just like you would with people. Until we know more about this virus, people sick with COVID-19 should **avoid contact with pets and other animals**.

- When possible, have another member of your household care for your pets while you are sick.
- Avoid contact with your pet including petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, sharing food, and sleeping in the same bed.
- If you must care for your pet or be around animals while you are sick, wear a cloth face covering and wash your hands before and after you interact with them.

If you are sick with COVID-19 and your pet becomes sick, **do not take your pet to the veterinary clinic yourself**. Call your veterinarian and let them know you have been sick with COVID-19. Some veterinarians may offer telemedicine consultations or other plans for seeing sick pets. Your veterinarian can evaluate your pet and determine the next steps for your pet's treatment and care.

For more information visit: [What to Do if You are Sick](#).

If you have no other options for pet care and need emergency assistance with caring for an animal in Juneau during this time, please contact Animal Control at (907) 789-6997.

Keep yourself and your pets safe during this time by maintaining control of your pets by keeping them inside or on-leash and maintaining a minimum of six to ten feet of physical distance away from others. Avoid public places where a large number of people gather. Taking care of yourself and your pets takes care of our community.