

# **PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT ABOUT COVID-19** **AND PETS 5/5/2020**

Recently there has been new information released regarding pets being infected with COVID-19. Although these reports are alarming, Juneau Animal Rescue assures you that the CDC stresses that the primary risk of transmission to humans is other humans. JAR wants you to be informed in order to keep both you and your pets safe. First and foremost, remember that the risk of animals spreading COVID-19 is incredibly low.

## **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 CDC is aware of two cats in the United States reported to be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 after close contact with people with COVID-19. Both cats had mild respiratory illness and are expected to make a full recovery. **Very few COVID-19 infections have been reported in pets worldwide.**
- The [American Veterinary Medical Association](#) has done further research and now believes there is **no evidence 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:**

### **If you own pets:**

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

- **Do not let pets interact with people or other animals outside the household.**
- **Keep cats indoors when possible to prevent them from interacting with other animals or people.**
- **Walk dogs on a leash, maintaining at least 6 feet (2 meters) distance from other people and animals.**
- **Avoid dog parks or public places where a large number of people and dogs gather.**

There are a small number of animals around the world reported to be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, mostly after having contact with a person with COVID-19. 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, and sharing food or bedding.**
- **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 from both animals and people. Taking care of yourself and your pets takes care of our community.