

## Companion Animals and COVID-19

### What do we know about COVID-19 and companion animals?

- At this time, there is no evidence pets play a role in spreading COVID-19 to people. However, some pets have tested positive for the virus. Therefore, it is important to isolate ill pets from healthy people and pets when possible, just as ill people should be isolated from healthy people and pets.
- Person to person transmission of COVID-19 is still much more likely to occur than transmission from an animal. Additionally, soft surfaces, such as fur or hair, don't transfer viruses as well as hard surfaces, such as doorknobs and keyboards.
- It is always a good idea to practice good hand hygiene after normal interactions with your pet and keep your animal's environment clean.
- Please see CDC's COVID-19 and Animals webpage ([www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/animals.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/animals.html)) and the Healthy Pets, Healthy People webpage ([www.cdc.gov/healthypets/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/index.html)) for additional information.

### Can I bring my animal into the veterinarian for care?

- If you are healthy and your pet needs to see a veterinarian, please call before bringing them in to the vet. Veterinary clinics are taking precautions and may have a special operating procedure that you will be asked to follow.
- If you are ill with COVID-19 and your animal needs emergency care, ask a healthy family member or friend to bring your animal in to be seen.

### Can I have contact with my animal if I am ill with COVID-19?

- Please limit contact with your pet if you are ill with COVID-19. If possible, have another member of the household care for your animal.
- If you are the only caretaker for your animal or you have a service dog; do not kiss, hug or have "face-to-face" contact with them. When in contact with your animal's items (toys, food dishes, etc.) always wash your hands with soap and water before and after handling.

### Should my animal be tested for COVID-19?

- Routine testing of animals for the virus that causes COVID-19 is not currently recommended.
- If your animal is displaying signs of respiratory illness, please consult your veterinarian. If your pet has been exposed to COVID-19 and tests negative for other illnesses, testing for the virus that causes COVID-19 could be considered.

- For pets with consistent clinical signs, veterinarians are strongly encouraged to rule out more typical respiratory pathogens first. Testing could be considered for animals with consistent clinical signs who have a history of close contact with persons with COVID-19.

## **Latest Updates and Additional Resources**

- The COVID-19 situation is changing rapidly, and this guidance may be updated as needed.
- Situation updates from MDH Situation Update for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) webpage (<http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/situation.html>) and CDC Coronavirus (COVID-19) webpage: ([www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html)).
- Minnesota Board of Animal Health Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) webpage: ([www.bah.state.mn.us/covid-19/](http://www.bah.state.mn.us/covid-19/))