



Frequently Asked Questions Regarding COVID-19 and Animals

- **Can I contract COVID-19 from my pets?**

While COVID-19 is contagious for humans and, as of now, is understood to spread primarily from person to person, the WSAVA (World Small Animal Veterinary Association) Global Veterinary Community— an association representing more than 200,000 veterinarians— states that there is no evidence that companion animals can be infected.

The association does, however, caution that this is a rapidly evolving situation and updates will be provided as they are received.

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) has suggested the following for those who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and have a pet or other animal:

- avoid close contact with them
- do not snuggle or kiss them, or let them lick you, sit on your lap, or sleep in your bed
- practice good cough etiquette
- avoid coughing and sneezing on your animals
- have another member of your household care for your animals
- if this is not possible, always wash your hands before touching or feeding them
- limit your animal's contact with other people and animals
- this may mean keeping them indoors

- **Will my local shelter/SPCA/humane society continue operating and caring for animals in their care?**

Animals and people in our communities continue to depend upon their local humane society, SPCA or animal shelter.

The top priority of shelter leadership is the safety of their staff and the animals under their care. Most humane societies and SPCAs throughout Canada are no longer open to the public but may be still adopting out animals on an appointment-basis.

Animal intake may also be on a scheduled basis. Shelters will take all necessary COVID-19 measures to protect the community, staff and animals.

For more information regarding your local shelter/humane society/SPCA, please visit their website and/or their social media pages.

- **Are animal shelters deemed essential services?**

Humane Canada™ and its members (humane societies and SPCAs) are working hard to ensure that all animal shelters are deemed essential. As of March 23, 2020, the provinces of Ontario and Quebec have deemed these services essential and therefore exempted shelters from closing.

- **Who will investigate animal cruelty cases?**

Animal Protection Officers and police will continue responding to concerns of animal cruelty, abandonment or neglect.

- **If my pet gets sick during this time, can I take him/her to the vet?**

The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association is advocating for all veterinary practices to be deemed essential services. Your veterinary clinic may still be functioning on a limited operational basis or with stringent COVID-19 protocols in place.

It is recommended that you call or contact the clinic via their website or their social media channels for detailed information.

- **How can I help animals at this time?**

These are challenging times for Canadian charities, including of course, humane societies and SPCAs. We appreciate your keen desire to help, but at this point, it is best to stay home and abide by health professional recommendations to contain the virus.

As you can imagine, the charitable sector will be hard hit during this crisis. If you are in a position to make a financial donation, it would be greatly appreciated. Please consider e-transfer when possible.

- **Can I foster animals at this time?**

Fostering pets may be an ideal way to help your local shelter manage their number of animals during this crisis. Each shelter is making their own decisions regarding fostering shelter animals.

Check out your local shelter's website and/or social media pages to see if you can help this way.

- **How can I support my local shelter now?**

Please check with your local humane society/SPCA as they may be in need of items such as food for their shelter pets.

Some shelters may also be accepting donations for their pet food banks to support those who may need extra help during the crisis.

Again, if you are in a position of doing so, a financial donation would be greatly appreciated to continue supporting your shelter's daily operations.