

Interim Recommendations for Intake of Companion Animals from Households Where Humans with COVID-19 are Present (last updated 3-30-20)

This interim guidance is shared with the knowledge that ongoing research will likely uncover new information necessitating frequent updates. Much is unknown in this rapidly evolving situation and authoritative international expert guidance is still pending.

Every effort should be made to keep pets with their families. The [CDC released guidelines for COVID-19 patients with pets recovering at home](#). However, some exposed pets will need to be housed in shelters, such as when the owner is hospitalized or unable to provide basic care. See [guidance for animal control functions and officer safety](#) during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The virus is spread primarily from infected people through small droplets from the respiratory tract that can remain viable in the environment for several days. Although there is no evidence at this time that pets from contaminated households can transmit the virus to people or other animals, it is considered prudent to minimize contact with animals with known exposure to COVID-19. If intake into a shelter cannot be avoided, the AVMA recommends the following steps be followed and provides a [detailed protocol](#).

1. **Wear PPE** when entering a contaminated environment (such as an infected person's home) cannot be avoided or when handling an exposed animal as for intake processing. [CDC guidance for EMTs](#) provide practical examples of PPE.
2. **House in an area segregated** from the rest of the shelter population for 14 days, ideally in double-sided housing so feeding and cleaning can be completed without handling the animal.
3. **Post signage** on the kennel identifying the exposure and "do not touch."
4. **Restrict access** by the public and nonessential personnel.
5. **Disinfect surfaces** in common use areas where exposed animals have contacted (floors, gurneys, animal control vehicles, tables, handling equipment, etc). Fortunately, coronaviruses are easily inactivated by detergents and common shelter disinfectants, such as quaternary ammonium compounds, bleach, Trifectant, Virkon, Wysiwash, and AHP.

Read the complete detailed protocol [here](#) and check frequently for updates.