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## INDIANA STATE BOARD OF ANIMAL HEALTH

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### ANIMAL HEALTH ADVISORY

#### Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information for Animal Shelters

(02 April 2020)

At this time, no evidence suggests companion animals can spread COVID-19. Current understanding is COVID-19 spreads mostly from person to person through respiratory droplets produced when a person coughs or sneezes, similar to influenza transmission.

#### **Protect Employees/Volunteers and Visitors**

Everyone should wash their hands frequently with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. If soap is not available, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

Strongly encourage employees and volunteers who are ill or showing signs of respiratory illness to stay home and not enter the facility until they are symptom free. In case of a staff shortage, check availability of volunteers.

Establish set teams of employees who work the same shift every time. Do not blend employees from different teams. This may help limit spread of COVID-19 should an employee become infected.

Consider limiting the number of people in the facility at one time. Schedule appointments for adoptions, fostering and surrenders. Consider conducting business outdoors, weather permitting.

Frequently sanitize common areas and surfaces with disinfectants that deactivate the coronavirus (COVID-19) and are safe to use around animals in the shelter.

Decrease the number of animals in your facility if possible. This should decrease the number of people and hours necessary to provide care. Ways to do this may include adopting out animals prior to spaying or neutering and utilizing foster homes for as many animals possible.

#### **Disinfectants for Use Against Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has a list of approved disinfectants that will deactivate the coronavirus (COVID-19) online: [www.epa.gov/coronavirus](http://www.epa.gov/coronavirus)

American Chemistry Council list of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) fighting products:  
[www.americanchemistry.com/Novel-Coronavirus-Fighting-Products-List.pdf](http://www.americanchemistry.com/Novel-Coronavirus-Fighting-Products-List.pdf)

#### **Prepare Shelter Facility**

Shelter operators are encouraged to be prepared to house pets that have been exposed to a person infected with COVID-19. In some cases, a pet owner may be hospitalized with COVID-19 and he/she does not have someone to care for the animal(s). Be prepared to identify, isolate, or divert animals that may have been exposed to COVID-19. This includes securing disinfectants and personal protective equipment that may be used safely around animals.

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Note: Individuals who are infected with or have been exposed to COVID-19 can safely keep their pets at home and do NOT need to surrender them.

Work with a veterinarian to develop intake and isolation protocols for exposed pets. Bathe the animal upon intake to remove any virus particles on the coat. The animal(s) should then be placed in an isolation area. Shelter employees should wear gloves and dedicated, non-porous, aprons when bathing potentially exposed pets. Shelters should have dedicated smocks, aprons, or coveralls for use in the isolation area. These items should not leave the isolation area other than for laundering. Disposable gloves should be used when handling exposed pets. After glove removal hands should be washed for 20 seconds. If gloves are not available then wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds after handling exposed pets.

How long a potentially exposed pet should be kept in isolation is not known at this time.

Secure additional food/supplies for increased intake, including foster network needs.

### **Resources**

Disaster plans and other resources for animal shelters are available at:

[www.animalsheltering.org/COVID19](http://www.animalsheltering.org/COVID19)

Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH): [www.in.gov/coronavirus/](http://www.in.gov/coronavirus/)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html)

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): [www.epa.gov/coronavirus](http://www.epa.gov/coronavirus)

National Animal Control Association: [www.nacenet.org/Covid19](http://www.nacenet.org/Covid19)

COVID-19 Guidance for Businesses and Employers: [https://coronavirus.in.gov/files/IN-COVID-19\\_Occupational%20Guidance%204.1.20.pdf](https://coronavirus.in.gov/files/IN-COVID-19_Occupational%20Guidance%204.1.20.pdf)

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