Mobile Veterinarians and COVID-19

What do we know about COVID-19 and domestic animals?

- To date, there is no evidence that domestic animals can become ill with the virus that causes COVID-19, or spread it to people. However, we are still learning about this virus.
- Transmission of COVID-19 is much more likely to occur from infected people, rather than animals. Soft surfaces, such as fur or hair, don’t transfer viruses as well as hard surfaces.

How can mobile veterinarians maintain social distancing with clients?

- If possible, follow CDC guidelines on How to Protect Yourself (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/prevention.html) for keeping a 6-foot distance from others.
- Consider telehealth or telemedicine in your veterinary practice for established clients with a valid veterinarian-client-patient relationships.
- If your client is ill (with COVID-19 or another illness), consider postponing if it’s a non-essential appointment. In emergency situations, ask the client to have a healthy person meet you for the appointment. Discuss care and follow-up with the client by phone.
- Stay home if you are sick. If a client needs veterinary care, contact another veterinarian to assist them.

How can I protect myself?

- Use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for each situation.
  - For routine visits, we recommend wearing gloves for working with animals.
  - If a client informs you they have tested positive for COVID-19, request to evaluate the animal in a different location (if possible) with a healthy person present.
  - If a healthy person is not available to handle the animal, call MDH Zoonotic Diseases Unit for guidance at 651-201-5414.
- As always, wash your hands before and after each visit and routinely throughout the day.

How should my equipment be cleaned and disinfected?

- Standard cleaning and disinfection protocols will kill the virus that causes COVID-19. Be sure to follow the correct contact time and dilution instructions for the products you use. Focus additional disinfection on high contact and high touch surfaces.
Do I need to notify the State Public Health Veterinarian if I see an animal from a premise where someone is ill with COVID-19?

▪ No, you do not need to let the SPHV know about each of these instances. However, we are available if you have questions.

What if one of my employees becomes ill with COVID-19?

▪ Veterinary personnel should not work while ill, whether it is COVID-19 or another illness.
▪ At this time, contacts of people who test positive for COVID-19 are being assessed for their risk and recommendations are made to reduce potential spread. Your clinic may be contacted by MDH in this situation.

Latest Updates and Additional Resources

The COVID-19 situation is changing rapidly and this guidance may be updated as needed.

▪ Minnesota Board of Animal Health [Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)](www.bah.state.mn.us/covid-19/)
▪ [Minnesota Board of Veterinary Medicine](mn.gov/boards/veterinary-medicine/)
▪ [Compendium of Veterinary Standard Precautions for Disease Prevention in Veterinary Personnel](nasphv.org/Documents/VeterinaryStandardPrecautions.pdf), published by the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians includes infection control plan templates and disinfectant guidelines
▪ [American Veterinary Medical Association: COVID-19](www.avma.org/resources-tools/animal-health-and-welfare/covid-19), with additional suggestions for modifying clinic traffic

Minnesota Department of Health
Zoonotic Diseases Unit
651-201-5414
www.health.state.mn.us

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To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-5414