

# COMMUNITY PLANNING: COVID-19 and Our Pets



## Can I catch the virus from my pet?

At this time, there is no evidence that animals play a significant role in spreading the virus that causes COVID-19. Based on the information available to date, the risk of animals spreading COVID-19 to people is low. A small number of reports exist of pets becoming infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, mostly after contact with people with COVID-19.

Pets have other types of coronaviruses that can make them sick, like canine and feline coronaviruses. These other coronaviruses cannot infect people and are not related to the current COVID-19 outbreak.

However, since animals can spread other diseases to people, it is always a good idea to practice healthy habits around pets and other animals, such as washing your hands and maintaining good hygiene.

## If I am sick with COVID-19, can I give it to my pet?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is aware of a small number of pets, including dogs and cats, infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, mostly after close contact with people with COVID-19. Only a few of the animals reported to be positive showed signs of illness.

There is still a lot to learn about this virus, but it appears that it can spread from people to animals in some situations. Further studies are needed to understand if and how different animals could be affected by COVID-19.

## How can I keep my pets safe?

Until we learn more about how this virus affects animals, treat pets as you would other human family members to protect them from a possible infection.

- Do not let pets interact with people or other animals outside the household.
- Keep cats indoors when possible to prevent them from interacting with other animals or people.
- Walk dogs on a leash, maintaining at least 6 feet from other people and animals.
- Avoid dog parks or public places where a large number of people and dogs gather.

You can also follow these everyday tips to keep your pets safe:

- When handling and caring for animals, you should follow basic hygiene recommendations. This includes hand washing before and after being around or handling animals, their food, or supplies, as well as avoiding kissing, licking, or sharing food.
- Include your pets in your family's emergency preparedness planning.
- Make sure you have a two-week supply of food and medication for your pets.
- If you think your pet is sick, or if your pet becomes injured, call your veterinarian before you bring your pet in.
- Never abandon your dogs, cats, or other pets because of COVID-19 fears.

Livingston County Animal Shelter is in need of donations to keep pets safely in their homes. We are currently accepting pet food, cat litter, and other basic pet supplies.

**Livingston County Animal Shelter**

418 S. Highlander Way, Howell, MI 48843 • 517-546-2154 • [www.livgov.com/animalshelter](http://www.livgov.com/animalshelter)

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## What happens to my pet if I get sick with COVID-19?

If you are sick with COVID-19 (either suspected or confirmed by a test), you should restrict contact with your pets and other animals, just like you would with people. Until we know more about this virus, people sick with COVID-19 should **avoid contact with pets and other animals.**

- When possible, have another member of your household care for your pets while you are sick.
- Avoid contact with your pet including, petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, and sharing food or bedding.
- If you must care for your pet or be around animals while you are sick, wear a cloth face covering and wash your hands before and after you interact with them.
- If a pet must be transferred to a family member's home for temporary care, bathe the pet with dish soap or pet shampoo before entering the new home to limit the risk of spreading the virus.

## How can I prepare now in case I get sick with COVID-19?

It is important to have an emergency plan in place for all members of your household, including pets. You should put a plan in place if you become ill and need to be hospitalized:

- Keep a two-week supply of pet food and medications on hand.
- Identify a family member or friend who can care for pets if you are hospitalized. This person may stop by your home to care for the pet or may care for the pet at their own home.
- Have crates, food, and extra supplies on hand for quick movement of pets.
- Keep all animal vaccines up to date in the event boarding becomes necessary.
- Ensure all medications are documented with dosages and administering directions. Including the prescription from your veterinarian is also helpful.

- Ensure that your pets are wearing a collar and ID tag (best practice is microchipping).

## What should I do if my pet gets sick and I think it is COVID-19?

Only a small number of animals around the world are reported to be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, mostly after having contact with a person with COVID-19.

If your pet gets sick after contact with a person with COVID-19, **do not take your pet to the veterinary clinic.** Call your veterinarian and let them know the pet was around a person with COVID-19. Some veterinarians may offer telemedicine consultations or other plans for seeing sick pets. At this time, routine testing of animals for COVID-19 is not recommended.

## Where can I find more information?

You can find more information by visiting the CDC's website:

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/animals.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/animals.html)

## Whom can I contact if I need help?

Generally, the best thing you can do for your pets during this time is keep them safe and healthy within your own home. If that is not possible, or you are having difficulty finding basic pet supplies, the Livingston County Animal Shelter may be able to help. Please reach out for assistance.

## Contact Information

### **Livingston County Animal Shelter**

Address: 418 S. Highlander Way, Howell, MI

Phone: 517-546-2154

Email: [lcac@livgov.com](mailto:lcac@livgov.com)

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