

COVID-19

PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS

BUSINESS BEST PRACTICES:

- Prioritize your health and your staff's health
- Minimize or prevent contact between the staff so one person's exposure doesn't eliminate all staff at once
- If working in a traditional clinic or team setting, designate a multiple "team" approach so that an exposure does not quarantine your entire staff at one time
- Check with your business insurance provider to know what your business interruption coverage is and what qualifies
- If possible, begin saving/creating a fund to help offset payroll/sick leave expenses
- Follow the SBA for updates on available [Small Business Emergency Loans](#)
- Contact any lenders to see if interest-only payments or deferred payments will be available for the short-term
- Work with other home providers in the area to communicate so you know who is available for families and who might be closed or unable to work at a given time
- Monitor- the [AVMA](#) is updating frequently regarding the pending [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#)

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CLIENT SERVICES:

- Monitor [CDC advice](#) and frequent changes to recommendations
- Email clients to ask that they inform you if anyone in the home is sick or has potential exposure (and that they can trust your company will do the same before entering their home) and to share new protocol
- For extra protection, call the family prior to the appointment to confirm again that no one is sick or has been exposed to an illness
- Encourage, if possible, for appointments to take place outside
- Encourage only immediate family members to be present (more can join via technology)
- Encourage communication with your team if members of the household are in the at-risk group so even more precaution could be offered (including utilizing technology to include that person without exposure to a new person)
- Complete consent forms and payment online/over the phone or possibly obtain verbal permission and initial your paperwork or iPads yourself; AVOID having pet owners touch pens or iPads
- Clinicians should wear masks (to discourage facial touching), shoe covers, and gloves while in the home and these should be discarded before entering your car
- Take minimal supplies into the appointment
- Have clinicians switch to hard-sided boxes for supplies (vs the normal clinician's bags) that will be disinfected between visits
- If it's safe to do so, leave your keys in your vehicle along with your purse and phone
- If you need your phone for payment, carry small plastic bags and use the bag to cover the owners credit card to swipe on your phone; sign for them if appropriate for the credit card payment
- Clinicians should wash hands, use hand sanitizer, and other sanitizing products frequently
- Clinicians should not make physical contact with anyone other than the pet at the appointment- avoid hugging and handshakes
- Consider stepping outside after sedating the pet, checking on the family and pet often while minimizing time in the home
- Utilize telemedicine and tele-health when at all possible for QOL assessments and hospice rechecks
- If making paw prints, have everything ready to go before you go into the appointment (pre pad circles for the paw prints)
- Cremation staff should stay out of the home and ask families to help transport the pet to the car (accept no blankets, toys, etc. at this time)
- Cremation staff should wear gloves when touching pet and disinfect stretcher/removal apparatus between homes
- Cremation staff bringing cremated pets back home must minimize any contact with family
- Do not re-use blankets between pets even if they look "clean" to avoid contamination from house to house and in your vehicle
- Wear gloves when placing pets in bag for aftercare, as pet owners are often kissing and sadly crying quite a bit on their beloved pets
- If your state regulations allow, explore providing Social Worker and Chaplain visits via phone, video and other tele-health technology

This information is brought to you by Pet Loss At Home, Inc. www.petlossathome.com
Pet owners can call 877-219-4811 for a Veterinarian to help in the home during end-of-life.

