



KEEPING YOUR PET BUSINESS SAFE Pet Handover Protocol May 2020

As many pet businesses return to work, with the gradual easing of emergency restrictions, robust hygiene and social distancing protocols must be adopted when receiving a pet from or returning to their owner. There remains no evidence that pets are implicated in the transmission of coronavirus to people, but there is some risk of the virus being carried on pets and their belongings. The risk of human to human transmission remains, however, and social distancing measures throughout the handover process must be adopted to help prevent the spread of the disease.

The measures set out below should be considered by each pet business during every handover, and be used to inform your business's risk assessment with regard to each type of individual and household you encounter during your work. You should ascertain the health status of each household before agreeing to care for the pet.

When receiving a pet from the owner where the status of the household is healthy

- Agree times or book appointments with clients to ensure that you only deal with one customer at a time.
- Wash your hands for 20 seconds using soap and water or use hand sanitiser before going to collect or receive the pet.
- Determine a way to receive or return the pet in a manner which maintains a two metre distance and if possible hand over the pet in an outside secure area.
- If safe to do so, dogs should be securely tied to a fixed object such as a hook whilst the owner retreats two metres and the staff move forward to attach the business lead and take the dog. Once the staff have moved back the owner then retrieves their lead. The reverse procedure is used to return the dog.
- If handover occurs within the premises, face masks should be worn by both parties at the point of transfer and if entering someone else's home, you should ask them to open and close the doors for you.
- Use different equipment to the owner's where possible. If you have to use the owner's equipment, such as a carrier, the collector should wear gloves and wipe the equipment before taking the animal. The equipment should be washed with soap and water once away from the animal and safe to do so. The reverse should be done when returning the animal.
- To collect cats, the owner should put the cat into their own carrier before the handover and the cleaning process above should then be followed for the carrier.
- Wipe the pet with a pet safe damp cloth at the point of collection or drop off. All wipes or cloths should be disposed of immediately after use.
- Limit handling of anything else, such as your phone and your face, during any time of contact.
- Wash your hands for 20 seconds using soap and water or hand sanitiser once you have returned the pet.
- If you are transporting pets, disinfect any surfaces that the pet(s) has come into contact within your vehicle with a pet-safe disinfectant spray and/or wipe surfaces, before transporting other pets.

When receiving a pet from a shielded person or someone who has, or is suspected of having Coronavirus:

- If taking animals from an infected or vulnerable household, do not mix them with animals from other households and collect them after all other animals.
- Avoid any contact with occupants of the home, maintain two metres distance at all times and if possible, avoid entering the home.
- If walking a dog for an owner keep them on a lead in public spaces to avoid other pets and people touching them in case the virus is on their fur.