



Protocol

Create date: 3/12/20

Update date: 3/30/20 to reflect the most current information

Testing for COVID-19 in Companion Animals

Purpose

Pets cannot contract the COVID-19 virus. It can, however, live on their fur if touched by an infected person, for a VERY short period of time. Staff and Volunteers need to be vigilant about washing and/or sanitizing hands between handling animals and disinfecting surfaces that are touched frequently (clinic exam tables and lobby chairs/floors/counters, door handles, computer keyboards, phones, etc. common in any office or home). **Pets are not at risk of developing the disease at this time.**

A confusing factor is that pets have their own coronaviruses, and always have. These common pet coronaviruses must not be mistaken for the mutated COVID-19 virus. **It would be good to stop any hysteria by pointing people worried about coronavirus in animals in the right direction to resources like [this for cats](#) and [this for dogs](#) that explain the common viruses that shelter personnel deal with every day.**

Resources

Here is a resource for test interpretation if a shelter performs PCR testing on pets:

https://www.idexx.com/files/reference-laboratories-covid-19-coronavirus-diagnostic-update_0320.pdf

AmPA! has virtual support services available for each of these protocols in the AmPA! COVID-19 Animal Shelter Preparedness Guide. For custom support or guidance on any of these protocols, or how to implement for your organization, contact us [here](#) and include "COVID-19 Support" in the message.