April 22nd, 2020

With the latest CDC announcement stating that two pet cats in separate parts of New York have tested positive for SARS-CoV-2, (the virus that causes COVID-19), we want to remind the public that AWA is committed to bringing you the facts about COVID-19 cases that affect animals.

The AWA team continues to review the latest information coming from American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), other animal experts from the larger national groups such as the Humane Society of The United States (HSUS) & American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). There are no evidence dogs and cats can spread the virus to humans. It is important to stay informed, calm, and love your pet as you normally do.

Our focus regarding protecting people will continue, wash your hands, social distance with a 6-foot space between you from other people, the #1 carrier of COVID-19. **Of course, we also want to protect our animals.**

There is a chance animals could get COVID-19 from us. The few known animals with COVID-19 either did not experience symptoms or symptoms were not serious. Isolation away from the public is the best thing you can do for you and your pet.

The CDC recommends:

- Do not let pets interact with people or other animals outside of household.
- Leave cats that are not your pets alone unless they are in an emergency situation. Keep owned, indoor cats inside with you.
- Walk dogs on a leash, maintaining at least 6 feet from other people and animals.
- Avoid dog parks or public places where many people and dogs gather.

SARS-CoV-2 infections have been reported in very few animals worldwide, mostly in those that had close contact with a person with COVID-19. This study by IDEXX, a global leader in veterinary diagnostics and software, evaluated thousands of canine and feline specimens during validation of a new veterinary test system from the COVID-19 virus and has seen no positive results in pets to date.

However, in the event you do get sick, the recommendation is to keep distance from other members of your household and that includes pets. This still does not mean kicking your animals out of the house. In fact, the current recommendation is that pets that live with positive people should "shelter in place" and not leave the home at all until the person is better.

To create a solid plan for the care of your pet:

1. Know the facts: according to the CDC, there is no evidence that people can get COVID-19 from pets. The best place for your animal is inside the home they know and love. If you are not feeling well but are still able to provide care for your pet, please keep them at home with you where they are most comfortable.

2. If you do become unable to provide for your pet, who can take over for you? Maybe a neighbor, friend, coworker, or family member who could take them in? Today the most important thing you can do is come up with <u>two potential pet plans and talk directly with those people in case they're called into action.</u>
3. <u>Prepare a pet supply kit.</u> Your kit should include the following, as best as you are able:

- Name and contact information for the person who can care for your pets
- Name and contact information for your back-up in case your go-to is no longer able to help
- Food, treats, a leash, a couple of toys, and any other supplies necessary to care for your pet for at least two weeks
- A crate or carrier to transport your pet
- Vaccination records
- Collars with ID tags (do not forget to make sure your pet's microchip information is up to date)
- Medications and prescriptions, along with a list of instructions
- Daily care instructions
- Contact information for your veterinary clinic

We are committed to continuing the AWA's mission-critical work for animals and people during these uncertain times. Your support is more critical now more than ever. Together, as a community helping one another we will find our way to brighter days. Now is the time to make a difference for animals in need.

Stay well and thank you!

Animal Welfare Association