

April 24, 2020

As we continue to navigate through this unprecedented time, the Humane Society of the Treasure Coast wants to keep our community up-to-date with the most current information regarding COVID-19 and pets. We also want to assure you that our humane society continues to closely follow the guidelines and recommendations of healthcare and animal experts. While this matter continues to be studied by the American Veterinary Medical Association, it is still believed that dogs and cats cannot infect humans with COVID-19. Of the more than 2.5 million confirmed human cases around the world, there are only 11 total cases of animals having contracted the virus from a human caretaker, including the two New York cats recently [announced by the CDC](#). Therefore, it has been concluded that this type of transmission is rare, and that human outbreaks of this virus are driven by person-to-person transmission.

As this pandemic continues, Humane Society of the Treasure Coast recommends that pet owners follow the guidelines prescribed by the CDC:

- Do not let pets interact with people or other animals outside the 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 a large number of people and dogs gather.

If you are sick with COVID-19 (either suspected or confirmed by a test), the CDC further suggests to restrict contact with your pets and other animals, just like you would around other people.

- 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.

Finally, HSTC urges you to include your pets in your household preparedness plans. In addition to preparations typically recommended for any natural disaster threat, individuals with pets should identify family members or friends to care for pets if someone in the household comes ill and is hospitalized. You can learn more about what to include in your pet preparedness plans by visiting www.hstc1.org/covid-19. In fact, we encourage you to frequently visit this page for continued shelter updates and direct links to national resources for both personal and pet health.

Stay well!
Dr. Patricia Diskant
Shelter Veterinarian