

**WSVMA Alert 4-23-20**

**Confirmation of COVID-19 in Two Pet Cats in New York**

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) today announced the first confirmed cases of SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) infection in two pet cats. These are the first pets in the United States to test positive for SARS-CoV-2.

The cats lived in two separate areas of New York state. Both had mild respiratory illness and are expected to make a full recovery. 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.

At this time, routine testing of animals is not recommended. Should other animals be confirmed positive for SARS-CoV-2 in the United States, USDA will post the findings [here](#). State animal health and public health officials will take the lead in making determinations about whether animals should be tested for SARS-CoV-2.

For complete information, visit the CDC [website](#).

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**Updated information on animal testing for SARS-COV-2**

The **Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA)** updated their SARS-COV-2 ANIMAL TESTING GUIDANCE that was released earlier this week. You can read the complete information about criteria on their [website](#), but here is the updated criteria for testing:

Criteria	Epidemiological Risk		Clinical Features
A	Animal with history of close contact with a person suspected or confirmed COVID-19.	AND	Animal has clinical signs of a new, concerning illness that is suspicious of an infectious disease.
B	Animal with exposure to a known high-risk environment (i.e. where a human outbreak occurred), such as a residence, facility, or vessel (e.g. nursing home, prison, cruise ship).		
C	Threatened, endangered or otherwise imperiled/rare animal in a rehabilitation or zoological facility with possible exposure to SARS-CoV-2 through an infected person or animal.	AND	Animal is asymptomatic; OR Animal has clinical signs of a new, concerning illness that is suspicious of an infectious disease.

IDEXX Reference Laboratories has made IDEXX SARS-CoV-2 available testing available to veterinarians in response “to customer demand and growing evidence that in rare cases pets living with COVID-19 positive humans can be at risk for SARS-CoV-2 infection.”

IDEXX advises that veterinarians can order the test only after consulting with the state public health authority. In Washington, it’s WSDA. Idexx lists their criteria as follows:

- Pet is living in a household with a human who has COVID-19 or has tested positive for the virus

- Pet has already been tested for more common infections, that a veterinarian has ruled out
- Pet (especially cats and ferrets) is showing clinical signs consistent with COVID-19

AVMA's updated information as of April 22 on **testing animals for SARS-CoV-2** is available on AVMA's [website](#) (updated April 22) and a visual decision tree will be posted soon.

CDC's [Evaluation for SARS-CoV-2 Testing in Animals](#)

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## **Veterinary Board of Governors issues updated information on record-keeping during the COVID-19 crisis**

**The Veterinary Board of Governors** has updated their guidance on providing essential services and keeping records during the emergency.

### **Essential Procedures Additional Guidance**

[COVID-19 Non Urgent Medical Procedures](#) should be delayed to preserve medical equipment and supplies.

Each patient and situation is unique. Therefore, the veterinarian must exercise sound professional judgement to determine which situations may be safely managed via telemedicine, which may be safely postponed, and which can only be appropriately managed in-person without postponement.

*New: Medical records should reflect the decision to postpone the visit, perform telemedicine, or have an in-person visit during the emergency period.*

Consideration should be given to the state of emergency and the need for compliance with any active executive orders while also protecting patient and public health.

If there is a concern about a practitioner performing non-essential procedures, a complaint may be [filed with the governor's office](#).

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## **New CDC Guidance for Veterinary Clinics**

CDC has published new [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Veterinary Clinics during the COVID-19 Response](#). This guidance is for veterinarians and veterinary staff providing care to companion animals. The intent of this guidance is to facilitate preparedness and to ensure practices are in place in a veterinary clinical setting to help people and animals stay safe and healthy.

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## **The Paycheck Protection Program and Loan Forgiveness**

The CARES Act (the “Act”) hallmark provision is the potential for loan forgiveness under the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). As PPP funds are received by businesses, now is the time to strategize for maximum loan forgiveness. The PPP has been advertised as a grant, and, in many respects, it can function like one. However, the onus is on businesses to earn 100% loan forgiveness. Many will find this a difficult endeavor. This article examines business loan forgiveness considerations.

The Act enumerates specific expenses that essentially generate a credit against the loan, reducing the amount that will need to be repaid. The Act provides an eight-week window to accumulate this credit, starting on the day the funds are disbursed to the borrower. For those that have already received funds, the clock is ticking.

For complete information from Katz, Sapper & Miller, click [here](#).