

Shelter Staff and COVID-19 Priorities

As a front line employee during the COVID-19 pandemic, you and your family need to be protected. The following guidelines have been put forth by national organizations to reduce the risk of COVID-19 exposure to our community and to safeguard our operation from a full shut down that would hinder our ability to provide emergency, life-saving care. We'll be updating these guidelines regularly as more information becomes available.



Stay safe and follow COVID-19 safety protocols at all times



Spay/neuter is not critical at this time



Animal transport is not critical at this time



Animal intake should be on an emergency basis only



Use technology to continue running operations and vital programs

FOR THE MOST UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION, VISIT [CDC.GOV](https://www.cdc.gov)

>> Stay safe and follow COVID-19 safety protocols at all times. As an essential, frontline employee, your number one priority is to stay safe and follow the protocols to protect you, your family, your co-workers, our community, and our animals. If you do not have the tools or Personal Protection Equipment you need to stay safe, stop and notify a manager.

>> Spay/neuter is not critical at this time. While spay/neuter has long been one of the central tenets of our work, it is not essential at this time. Performing surgery brings staff to work and into close proximity with each other. Essential procedures are for conditions that are life-threatening, rapidly deteriorating, or relieve suffering. Spay and neuter services for the public, shelter pets, and feral cats are not essential.

But that doesn't mean we can't continue to strongly encourage - or even require - people to spay/neuter their pets. Consider offering vouchers for procedures and/or having any adoptions of non-altered animals include an agreement that they'll return the animal for spay/neuter when it's safe to do so.

>> Animal transport is not critical at this time. It is not safe to put staff and volunteers at risk of contracting COVID through animal transport, however, we need to be ready to hit the ground running when the stay at home orders are lifted. Instead, engage the community through foster and adoption; check with groups within our own community for transfer assistance; check out innovative virtual adoption programs in the COVID-19 Tool Kit; and talk to local media about reporting on available shelter pets.

>> Animal intake is not critical at this time. Keeping pets out of the shelter is imperative at this time but we don't have to say "no" to intake; we can say "not right now" and provide support and/or alternatives to surrender. Offer free pet food and supplies, behavioral assistance, or suggestions for rehoming with a family member or friend. If your shelter is compelled by law to accept surrenders, do so at specific times when proper distancing protocols can be put in place.

>> Use technology to continue running operations and vital programs. There are several ways your shelter can continue to help the animals in your care and serve the community. For example, you can handle adoption meet-and-greets online and over the phone; conduct online foster training; and keep your staff trained through online learning.