

In response to the Government of Canada's announcement of more stringent protective measures focused on slowing the spread of the COVID-19 virus municipal animal services will be limited to essential and urgent services only in areas where the Ontario SPCA is contracted to provide bylaw enforcement services. Please find enclosed a number of documents that you might find useful within your municipality, feel free to share or modify as needed. The Ontario SPCA continues to be available as a resource to municipalities and can be contacted via 310-SPCA.

### **Essential and Urgent Services**

#### **Municipal**

- Pick up of contained animals (running at large, sick or injured animals) *\*see precautions listed below*
- Standards of Care *\*case by case with precautions if public safety concern*
- Animals on the highway or in traffic (safety concern)
- Protective custody *\*municipal bylaw requirement only, case by case assessment*
- Police assistance
- Pick up of deceased animals
- Animal reclaim, stray drop off *\*by appointment only*
- Dog bites *\* See below*

*\*Case by case review with precautions*

#### **Bylaw Enforcement**

Officer health and safety is of utmost importance and if at any time officers do not feel safe, they should make note of the situation and follow up at a later date. Calls related to animal control will be prioritized with immediate threats to safety being the main concern. Calls regarding off leash, licensing, barking and park patrols will be designated low priority to be dealt with at a later time.

#### **Direction to Animal Services Officers:**

If it is determined that an in-person meeting is required for public safety the following information will be collected prior to attending (form to be emailed and returned):

1. *Is anyone at this address presenting with fever and/or new onset of cough or difficulty breathing?*
2. *Does anyone at this address have a history of travel to a COVID-19 impacted country within 14 days of onset of symptoms?*
3. *Has anyone at this address had close contact with a confirmed or presumptive case of COVID-19?*
4. *Has anyone at this address had close contact with a person with acute respiratory illness who has travelled to a COVID-19 Impacted country within 14 days of onset of illness?*

*If the answer to any of the questions above is "Yes", indicate you will book an appointment at a later date (beyond 14 days). Make a note of the date and follow up when appropriate.*

**Only cases listed above as essential or urgent will be responded to in person.** For cases relating to dog bites or other investigations where evidence collection may be required but animals' confinement is not required a telephone call should be utilized for initial case assessment. This may include obtaining pictures from dog bites, will say statements, telephone interviews. In-person verification of evidence will be completed at a later date and witnesses should be advised of this fact.

**Additional resources:**

**Public Health Government of Canada public health services**

- FAQ: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novelcoronavirusinfection/frequently-asked-questions.html#a4>
- General Information: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novelcoronavirus-infection.html>
- Ontario Ministry of Health: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus>

**Veterinary Services (Ontario)**

- [www.ovma.org/mobile/pet-owners/find-a-veterinarian/](http://www.ovma.org/mobile/pet-owners/find-a-veterinarian/)