

WHAT ARE CORONAVIRUSES?

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that are zoonotic, meaning they are transmitted between animals and people. Several known coronaviruses are circulating in animals that have not yet infected humans.

A novel coronavirus is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified. The virus causing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), is not the same as the coronaviruses that commonly circulate among humans and cause mild illness, like the common cold.

CORONAVIRUS AND ANIMALS

Some coronaviruses cause illness in people, and others, such as canine and feline coronaviruses, only infect animals. Rarely, animal coronaviruses that infect animals have emerged to infect people and can spread between people. For example, SARS-CoV was associated with civet cats and MERS-CoV is transmitted by dromedary camels. Possible animal sources of COVID-19 have not yet been confirmed.

While this virus seems to have emerged from an animal source, it is now spreading from person-to-person. At this time, there is no evidence that companion animals including pets can spread COVID-19. However, since animals can spread other diseases to people, it's always a good idea to wash your hands after being around animals.

IF I GET SICK, WILL MY PET CATCH IT?

You should restrict contact with pets and other animals while you are sick with COVID-19, just like you would around other people. It is recommended that people sick with COVID-19 limit contact with animals until more information is known about the virus. When possible, have another member of your household care for your animals while you are sick.

If you are sick with COVID-19, avoid contact with your pet, including petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, and sharing food. If you must care for your pet or be around animals while you are sick, wash your hands before and after you interact with pets and wear a facemask.

If your pet shows any symptoms that they may be ill after becoming in contact with a person who is sick, then contact your veterinary surgery for further advice.

HOW IS COVID-19 SPREAD?

Although there are now cases where companion animals have caught the virus from their owners, there is yet no conclusive evidence that pets such as cats and dogs are able to spread the virus that causes COVID-19.

People can catch COVID-19 from others who have the virus. The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs or exhales. These droplets land on objects and surfaces around the person. Other people then catch COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth.

To protect yourself, avoid direct contact with animals and surfaces in contact with animals. Ensure good food safety practices at all times. Handle raw meat, milk or animal organs with care to avoid contamination of uncooked foods and avoid consuming raw or undercooked animal products.

HOW WILL THE CORONAVIRUS AFFECT YOU AND YOUR PETS?

Changes to our pet care services going forward!

- **LOCKDOWN** - If a travel ban is put in place in Ireland causing your plans to be cancelled please see our cancellation policy below. For those owners who are still away when this happens we will continue to look after your pets up until the booked service end date or your return, whichever comes first.
- **OUR STAFF** - All of our staff will have access to face masks, alcohol based hand sanitisers and gloves, which will be used where necessary.
- **MEET & GREET** - All initial Meet & Greets will be held though ZOOM where possible to talk through all the pet care requirements and for any questions to be asked. A pet sitter/dog walker will then be assigned to each new client, where a physical meet will take place at the owners home with appropriate social distancing measures in place so we can meet your pets etc.
- **PET SITTING** - If there are other persons (family members/friends) who may have access to the home at this time (ie. shared pet care responsibility), we must be informed of when they may be entering the home, and we please request that they use precautions such as hand sanitiser before entering the home to help protect our pet sitters and your pets to limit the risk of spreading the virus.
- **DOG WALKING** - For the regular daily clients, if there will be members of the family at home during the day that are ill or have flu-like symptoms, we will be UNABLE to walk your dogs due to the risk of coming into contact and spreading the virus, Our dog walkers may be at risk of passing the virus on if are unaware they have been infected. **Touching your dogs fur/collar/harness/leads are all possible areas where the virus can be transferred and therefore spread from person to person.**

What if you become ill whilst away and are delayed getting home?

- We will continue to look after your pets and/or arrange alternate care with your emergency contact until you arrive home. Each case will be determined if/when they arise.
- If you are admitted to hospital due to illness we will arrange alternate care where possible with your emergency contact.

**** PLEASE ENSURE EMERGENCY CONTACTS ARE UP-TO-DATE ****

What if your pet sitter becomes sick?

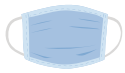
- We have back-up pet sitters and dog walkers available should circumstances arise
- We will be UNABLE to care for your pet if all of our staff become sick or have to self isolate. It is important to help contain the spread of the visus and therefore we will arrange alternate care with your emergency contact.

What is our COVID-19 cancellation policy?

In light of the constantly changing circumstances surrounding COVID-19 which are out of our control, to account for a large loss of income during this time and our ongoing administration costs, our cancellation policy will be as follows:

- All cancellations from clients less than 4 days before start of service will be charged at 20% of service total (equals an 80% refund).
- All cancellations by Offaly Pet Sitting Limited will be refunded 100% of the service total.

Safety Protocols for Staff & Clients



FACE MASKS

- To be worn by all individuals when entering homes if visiting for a Meet & Greet.
- Masks should fit snugly against the face, and properly fitted around the nose.
- It is recommended to desensitise and countercondition dogs to face masks.



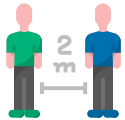
HAND WASHING

- Wash hands frequently when with pets or when touching surfaces in homes.
- Use alcohol based hand sanitizer before & after entering homes, and touching pet items or harnesses etc.



EQUIPMENT

- Staff use our own leashes etc, to minimize touching clients personal equipment.
- Carry own cleaning spray to wipe any surfaces touched in clients home.



SOCIAL DISTANCING

- All individuals should adhere to social distancing guidelines during Meet & Greets.

How we are Moving to Contactless Visits



MEET & GREET

- Initial Meet & Greets can be arranged through ZOOM video calls.
- Enables all pet & owner information to be collected virtually before meeting pets.
- Allows owner to give a virtual tour of their home, pets sleeping area, feeding areas etc.
- Plenty of time to answer any and all questions.
- Minimises time spent in person when meeting owners pets at secondary Meet & Greet.


COLLECTING FOR DOG WALKS

- If owners are home - where possible dogs should be left in secured garden, screened-in porch or garage etc, prior to dog walkers arrival.

PET SUPPLIES

- It is recommended clients place all pet supplies in once specific location, that can be accessed easily without entering multiple rooms of the home.

ONLINE PAYMENTS

- We encourage online payments using our secure online professional software via  to minimise exchange of cash.

SERVICE DOCUMENTS

- All documents will be sent via email and stored for on the clients personal online portal.
- Where possible we would prefer clients to sign service agreements online to avoid printing, touching and exchange of paper etc.

PET UPDATES

- Will be via Whatsapp or text instead of our "Welcome Back" cards.

COVID-19 EXPOSURE

- We kindly ask daily Clients to call to cancel if anyone within the home becomes sick.
- We kindly ask that Clients are transparent regarding possible exposure to the virus prior to any pet visits etc, and to ensure they have not displayed any symptoms in the 2 weeks prior to start of service.
- Staff schedules will be arranged so that visits to homes with a higher risk of exposure will be visited last, ie. Frontline and essential workers.