



COVID-19 AND NJ VETERINARY PRACTICES

As COVID-19 continues to impact our community, NJVMA has compiled suggestions to help veterinary practices protect their teams, communicate with clients, and continue to serve the public.

1. The AVMA's position is that veterinary hospitals are essential businesses and, as such, should not be subjected to mandated business shutdowns. That said, you should follow guidelines issued from your local public health authority.
2. If you close your office, we suggest the following ways to serve your clients:
 - Have information about the closest emergency clinic on your voicemail, business entrances, and website.
 - Send an email notification of the closure to all clients and include information about the closest emergency clinic.
3. If you keep your office open, we suggest the following ways to serve your clients:
 - Frequently disinfect high-touch surfaces.
 - Use no-touch trash receptacles.
 - Place hand sanitizer throughout your clinic; allow clients to use sinks to wash their hands if no sanitizer is available.
 - Consider postponing elective surgical procedures in order to preserve and free up treatment for critical patients.
 - Avoid close contact with people who are ill.
 - Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
 - Stay home if you are sick. If you get sick at work, go home immediately.
 - Practice self-isolation if you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>
 - Maintain "social distancing" by:
 - Obtaining histories using paper or online forms, or on the phone, or through email prior to appointments.
 - Asking clients to wait in their cars until an exam room is available.
 - Having staff meet clients and their pets at the door and taking them directly to an exam room.
 - Providing check-out in the exam room, curbside, or consider taking payments on the phone or online.
 - If clients must be in the waiting room, ask them to maintain a distance of at least 6' while waiting to be served.
4. Based on information from AVMA, there is no evidence that pets can contract or carry COVID-19. Review the AVMA resources here: [AVMA COVID-19](#).



Telemedicine

The NJVMA agrees with the AVMA position that telemedicine is a useful adjunct for providing care to patients **that already have a physically-established VCPR.**

New Jersey Veterinarians may look at the state's proposed telemedicine rules which, although not adopted yet, have been approved for adoption by the state Board. Veterinarians should comply with the specifics in the unadopted regulations, but generally, **veterinarians should determine if they can provide services through telemedicine to the same standard of care as they would if those services were provided in person.** If they cannot do so in their professional judgment, they should not provide services through telemedicine.

NJVMA Veterinarians interested in providing this service should review the telemedicine rules at: <https://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/Proposals/Pages/vetmedc-06172019-proposal.aspx>

Additional Resources

For updated, veterinary-focused information and resources, visit AVMA's dedicated [COVID-19 webpage](#).

The AVMA continues to gather information about veterinary drug and other medical supply needs related to the outbreak. They ask that veterinarians, practices/practice groups, and veterinary distributors with information about any shortages please email AVMA at coronavirus@avma.org. Please include as much information as possible about the product and its manufacturer/distributor.

Please note: the staff at NJVMA headquarters is adhering to all state requirements related to operating a business in a state of emergency. Among other measures, we have limited all non-essential business travel, are encouraging work from home, and are limiting visitors to our offices. Our business continuity plan enables us to deliver services regardless of staff's location, so please feel free to conduct business with us as usual.

If there is any support NJVMA can provide, please contact NJVMA at info@njvma.org.