



## NACA Statement on Officer Safety During the COVID-19 Pandemic

For the safety of our officers and the public they serve, NACA is advising all officers to take extra measures to mitigate the short and long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. These measures include protecting themselves properly to reduce risk related to the SARS-CoV-2 virus, as well as working to manage and minimize the number of new animals entering our shelters.

The primary method for officers to protect themselves remains appropriate social distancing practices. Additionally, officers should follow CDC's recommendation to wear a cloth mask whenever leaving home including when working in the field or the office, to reduce the risk of spreading the virus.

Out of an abundance of caution, officers should make every effort to avoid entering a residence on any call for service. If an officer must enter the home, inquire first to see if someone known or suspected to have COVID-19 is currently living there. If not it is recommended to wear a cloth facemask and disposable gloves. The officer should continue to make every effort to maintain appropriate social distancing and minimize contact with the residents. Working in the animal care and control field presents unique challenges. If the officer is responding to the home of a known or suspected COVID-19 patient see the [NACA Statement on Removing Pets from Homes of Residents that are Confirmed or Suspected to be Infected With COVID-19](#)

After removing an animal from a vehicle, the animal housing compartment should be cleaned and disinfected following shelter protocols and utilizing appropriate chemical products per label directions. See the [ASPCA Shelter Disinfectant Quick Reference Guide](#) for dilution and contact time guidance.

All equipment including but not limited to leashes, crates, control poles, grabbers, nets, etc. should be cleaned and disinfected after use on each animal.

Recommended PPE for officers to have on hand include:

- Mouth/respiratory protection: A cloth mask for routine wear, a surgical or other facemask and an N-95 type respirator if available.
- Eye protection: goggles or face shield that fully covers the front and sides of the face  
Personal eyeglasses and contact lenses are NOT considered adequate eye protection.
- Barrier protection, hands: disposable nitrile gloves or similar  
Gloves should be changed when they become torn or heavily contaminated  
Be aware of cross contamination, gloves should also be changed whenever you should have washed your hands had you not been wearing gloves (ie after contact with something contaminated and before using phone, entering vehicle, etc.)
- Barrier protection, body: An isolation/surgical gown, coveralls, or other disposable or reusable/washable clothing, used to cover and protect clothing and bare skin from potential exposure  
Should be carefully removed and discarded in the trash or placed in a bag for later disposal or laundering



Recommended cleaning/sanitation supplies include:

- Hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol and/or hand sanitizing wipes labelled to kill >99% of germs. Wipes are particularly useful when hands are soiled and can be used prior to hand sanitizer or a second wipe
- Spray disinfectant (Accelerated Hydrogen Peroxide or Potassium Peroxymonosulfate when possible)
- Disinfectant wipes (Accelerated Hydrogen Peroxide or Potassium Peroxymonosulfate when possible)

General personal care recommendations:

- All personnel should wear a cloth facemask and avoid touching their face while working
- Hand sanitizer should be used frequently
- Whenever possible wash your hands! Hand sanitizer should not take place of washing your hands and should only be used until you can get to a place where you can wash your hands
- Avoid shaking hands
- After completing the response and before entering their response vehicle, officers should remove and dispose of any PPE used and perform hand hygiene to avoid soiling the vehicle compartment (<https://www.cdc.gov/hai/pdfs/ppe/ppe-sequence.pdf>).

Suggestions for social distancing:

- Gather as much needed information as possible over phone, text, or email
- Have someone bring the animal out of the home if it is safe to do so. It can be placed in a carrier or securely tied to a nearby structure allowing the handler to walk away before the animal is collected by the officer.
- Before entering a home, ask that the owner confine the animal to a specific room or block access to other rooms, to limit time and movement within the home.
- Ask residents in the home to move to a room you will not be working in to ensure social distancing.

For ongoing information, please continue referring to all updates from the Centers for Disease Control:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>