



National Animal Care & Control Association

40960 California Oaks Rd. #242

Murrieta, CA 92562

(913) 768-1319

naca@nacanet.org

www.nacanet.org

NACA Recommendations for Continued Modified Operations Due to COVID-19

As communities around the U.S. ‘re-open’ for services, NACA is providing updated guidelines for animal services operations to ensure physical distancing and public safety. As always, this statement is intended to provide guidance for animal services agencies, but communities should make decisions that are in line with state and local laws and reflect individual organizational needs around operations for shelter and field services. Animal services agencies should first and foremost follow guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and the American Veterinary Medical Association.

Operations

- Continue to provide essential shelter and field services, as outlined in the [NACA statement on essential functions](#) published in March, 2020.
- Maintain a reduced flow of pets into the shelter and continue a slowed but steady approach to intake, adoptions and other services. Re-start or increase services incrementally, to include time for safety planning and testing new things.
- Admit pets with urgent medical needs; dogs that pose a risk to public safety; pets in immediate danger; and other animals with no other viable options once other options have been pursued.
- Determine a plan for resuming pre-COVID services, including [spay and neuter services](#), transport and transfer, ensuring that physical distancing and other safety measures are maintained.
- Continue to serve healthy cats and kittens in the community, as outlined in the [NACA statement on cat and kitten intake during COVID-19](#).
- Create and implement medium and long term plans for providing increased remote and telehealth veterinary services; appointment-based foster and adoption services; curbside and drive-up services; and limiting the number of people entering the shelter facility.
- Ensure [protective measures](#) are put in place for staff, volunteers and the public, including making masks available; conducting temperature screenings for people entering the shelter facility; and operating on a split schedule to reduce the number of staff and volunteers at risk of falling sick with COVID-19.



National Animal Care & Control Association

40960 California Oaks Rd. #242

Murrieta, CA 92562

(913) 768-1319

naca@nacanet.org

www.nacanet.org

- Animal control officers should continue to respond to priority calls as outlined in the [NACA statement on animal control](#) functions published in April, 2020.
- Ensure animal control officers have complete and appropriate [personal protective equipment](#) for all calls where [owners are suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19](#).
- Increase programs and services related to pet owner support, pet retention and stray returns to owner, to reduce the number of animals requiring sheltering and to reduce person-to-person contact in the shelter.
- Continue to house most pets in [foster homes](#), instead of the shelter, to reduce person-to-person contact in the shelter. Develop and implement avenues to permanently outcome foster pets to adoptive homes without those pets having to return to the shelter, except for routine medical care and sterilization.

Communications and Education

- Ask animal services personnel to sign up to view [this webcast](#) about COVID-19 for shelter and field services employees.
- Provide up-to-date information and guidance to your community and to animal services personnel based on guidance from the [CDC](#) and [AVMA](#), including information for pet owners on [making plans for your pets](#) if you fall sick with COVID-19.
- Engage your community and [ask for help](#). Remind them we're all in this together, and we need their help to get stray pets home, care for kittens and cats in the community, and help keep pets in their homes and communities, instead of the shelter.

NACA encourages agencies and their communities to think outside the box and not be afraid to try new things. Challenges such as COVID-19 often lead to increased innovation and collaboration through pilot programming that pushes the limits of what we all have previously believed possible.