



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of the Commissioner



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CTGrown.gov

Revised February 5, 2-21
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**COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Guidance
for Animal Shelters holding Adoption Events**

HARTFORD, CT – In addition to implementing the Stay Home, Stay Safe protocols effective on March 23, 2020 at 8:00 p.m. through April 22, 2020; Governor Lamont's [Executive Order 7H](#) required the Department of Economic and Community Development to provide a [guidance document](#) to determine essential businesses.

The Essential Businesses or Nonprofits designated in the guidance are not subject to the in-person restriction set forth in Executive Order 7H. Item 7 *Services Including* contained: "Animal shelters or animal care or management, including boarding, grooming, pet walking and pet sitting" as an essential business.

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture (DoAg) recognizes that this is a challenging time for all – both shelters and animal importers alike. It is our intent to ensure the health and welfare of animals is met, while mitigating the risk to the people engaged in those tasks. It is prudent for all of us to use common sense as we navigate the COVID-19 crisis. Every shelter is unique with various capacities, services, and capabilities in providing the care essential to the wellbeing and health of the animals entrusted in their care.

The Department supports limitations imposed by shelters to permit adoptions by appointment only, and cease any mass adoption event open to the public.

All shelters should set up a schedule of access times to ensure that there are no more than five (5) people at the facility at one time. It is imperative that the principles of social distancing, proper disinfecting, and sanitary practices are maintained. Shelters are free to enact additional measures and controls as needed to ensure the safety of all.

This guidance document cannot cover every single scenario. The following information is meant to clarify what activities may continue and which should be discontinued at this time.

Essential Animal Care

- Providing food, water, proper handling, health care (veterinary services), and proper housing
- Exercise necessary to an individual animal

Recommended Practices

- Maintain the recommended social distancing protocols that include six (6) feet of separation between individuals
- Limit gatherings to no more than five (5) people
- Ensure proper handwashing
- Limit access to and disinfect common areas regularly

Updated February 5, 2021

- If sharing equipment and supplies between people, sanitize and isolate items for 24 hours prior to subsequent use. See the following notes and exceptions:
 - Non-porous materials (nylon halters/leashes, gate latches, door handles, spray nozzle) harbor the virus longer than porous materials
 - Disinfect gate latches, spray nozzles, and other frequently used items regularly or after contact with personnel

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The Connecticut Department of Agriculture's mission is to foster a healthy economic, environmental and social climate for agriculture by developing, promoting, and regulating agricultural businesses; protecting agricultural and aquacultural resources; enforcing laws pertaining to domestic animals; and promoting an understanding among the state's citizens of the diversity of Connecticut agriculture, its cultural heritage, and its contribution to the state's economy. For more information, visit www.CTGrown.gov.

