

Animal Related Queries Q&A



Louth County Council

This Q&A has been prepared as a source of information for persons concerned about animals and the current Covid 19 situation (subject to ongoing review).

1. **Are my pets a source of coronavirus?**
2. **Can a person who has coronavirus infect their own pet?**
3. **Can I take my pets outside for exercise?**
4. **I am in an at-risk group/ cocooning/self-isolation - Can I exercise my pet outdoors?**
5. **How can I exercise my companion animal if I am infected with COVID-19 or self-isolating?**
6. **If persons have or are suspected of having COVID-19, what precautions should be taken when they have close contact with animals?**
7. **What if my animal requires veterinary attention and I am infected with COVID-19, self-isolating or I am restricting my movements in line with HSE guidelines?**
8. **I have found a stray dog on my property - what should I do?**
9. **There is a serious dog control situation- whom do I contact?**
10. **Stray horse query?**
11. **I have a farming query - what should I do?**

12. **I wish to report a dead animal - what do I do?**
13. **There is a serious welfare problem - whom do I contact?**
14. **Can food spread the virus?**
15. **Which disinfectants are effective against coronavirus?**

1. Are my pets a source of coronavirus? HIGHLY UNLIKELY

There is no evidence, to date, that companion animals have spread the disease.

COVID-19 virus infections are widely distributed in the human population and human outbreaks are driven by person to person contact.

However, the virus could be passed from person to person via surfaces such as a pet's fur, collar and lead.

You should keep your pet's living area and accessories clean and disinfect them regularly. You should always wash your hands before and after handling animals, their food, or supplies, as well as avoiding kissing animals, and them licking you.

Standard recommendations issued by the World Health Organisation (WHO) to prevent spread of infection includes: regular hand washing, covering mouth and nose with the elbow when coughing and sneezing, and avoiding close contact with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illness such as coughing and sneezing.

2. Can a person who has coronavirus infect their own pet? NOT A KNOWN RISK

The risk of human-to-animal infection is very small.

However, the virus could be passed from person to person via surfaces such as a dog's fur, collar and lead. Coronavirus may contaminate the hair, skin, feathers of your pet.

The virus could then be passed from person to person via surfaces such as a dog's fur, collar and lead.

When possible, people who are sick or under medical attention for COVID-19, should avoid close contact with their pets and have another member of their household care for their animals.

If they must look after their pet, they should maintain good hygiene practices and wear a face mask if possible.

Animals belonging to owners infected with COVID-19 should be kept indoors as much as possible and contact with those pets should be avoided as much as possible.

The best way to prevent transmission of coronavirus in the home (or anywhere else) is to observe strict personal hygiene and physical distance protocols as advised by the HSE.

3. Can I take my pets outside for exercise?

YES* PROVIDED WITHIN 2KM AND SOCIAL DISTANCING OBSERVED AND PETS ON LEASH

Yes, you may take your pets outside for exercise in accordance with current HSE guidelines.

Do not go outside the 2km zone currently in force. Keep your dog on a lead at all times while in a public place and remove all faeces hygienically.

You may also let your dog out to the back garden for exercise and toilet if the garden is well fenced.

If your cat is usually kept indoors keep them inside and hygienically clean their litter tray regularly.

Always wash your hands as per HSE guidelines after handling your pet or pet equipment.

4. I am in an at-risk group/ cocooning/self-isolation - Can I exercise my pet outdoors?

ADVICE IS NOT TO DO SO

Current HSE guidelines recommend that extremely vulnerable people cocoon by staying at home at all times and avoid face-to-face contact with others.

If possible, arrange for someone else to exercise your animal in accordance with HSE guidelines within 2km of your home and maintaining a minimum physical distance of 2m or more from other people.

You should also maintain a minimum physical distance of 2m from the person who is exercising your pet and avoid contact with equipment used to exercise the dog e.g. leash etc.

5. How can I exercise my companion animal if I am infected with COVID-19 or self-isolating?

ONLY ALLOW PETS INTO AN ENCLOSED GARDEN/RUN

The HSE currently advise that people infected with Covid-19 or self-isolating should remain indoors, so you should not bring your pet outdoors for exercise during this time.

Dogs can be let outside into your garden for exercise and toilet if your garden is well fenced. If your cat is usually kept indoors keep them inside and hygienically clean their litter tray regularly.

6. If persons have or are suspected of having COVID-19, what precautions should be taken when they have close contact with animals?

AVOID CLOSE CONTACT WHILE ILL

The risk of human-to-animal infection is very small.

However, because animals and people can sometimes share diseases (known as zoonotic diseases), it is still recommended that people who are sick with COVID-19 limit contact with companion and other animals until more information is known about the virus.

When possible, people who are sick or under medical attention for COVID-19 should avoid close contact with their pets and have another member of their household care for their animals. Do not allow companion animals to lick you.

If they must look after their pet, they should maintain good hygiene practices and wear a face mask if possible.

Animals belonging to owners infected with COVID-19 should be kept away from other households as much as possible.

Always wash hands before and after any interaction with your pet animal.

It is very important animal welfare standards should be maintained and that animals in affected households are properly cared for.

7. What if my animal requires veterinary attention and I am infected with COVID-19, self-isolating or I am restricting my movements in line with HSE guidelines?

NOTIFY YOUR VET BY TELEPHONE FOR ADVICE-DO NOT TRAVEL AND ARRIVE TO A PRACTICE UNANNOUNCED PLEASE

Veterinary practices are essential services to safeguard animal health and welfare.

It is important that people who are infected with COVID-19, self-isolating or restricting their movements in line with HSE guidelines, follow HSE advice and do not bring their animals to a veterinary practice themselves.

Do not turn up unannounced. First phone your vet and follow their directions.

Alternative arrangements should be made in order to obtain veterinary care for your animal in consultation with your veterinary practitioner – this could include arranging for someone who is not restricted or infected with COVID-19 or self-isolating or in a vulnerable category to bring the animal to the practice on your behalf.

Observe both the [HSE guidelines](#) and biosecurity protocols which the veterinary practice may have put in place for the protection of human health.

8. I have found a stray dog on my property - what should I do? PHONE THE DOG WARDEN

Your Local Authority is operating an emergency dog warden service for urgent requests.

If this is an emergency, please contact your Local Authority Dog Warden Service at the designated number (1890-202303 or vets@louthcoco.ie)

)

9. There is a serious dog control situation- whom do I contact? GARDAI AND DOG WARDEN SERVICE BY TELEPHONE

Your Local Authority is operating an emergency dog warden service for urgent requests at the designated number (1890-202303 or vets@louthcoco.ie) Please also contact your local Garda station.

10. Stray horse query? CONTACT LOCAL AUTHORITY IN CASES OF RISK TO PUBLIC

The Local Authority is operating an emergency only horse warden service for urgent requests.

Please contact your local authority (1890-202303 or vets@louthcoco.ie) and the Gardaí if it is an emergency and the horse is in a public place or the public road.

11. I have a farming query - what should I do? CONTACT DAFM

Please check the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine (DAFM) website www.agriculture.gov.ie for information or use their Coronavirus dedicated helpline 076 1064468

12. I wish to report a dead animal - what do I do? IF IN PUBLIC PLACE, E.G. SIDE OF ROAD, RECORD DETAILS AND PASS ON TO LOCAL AUTHORITY

Dead animals on farms should be reported to Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine (DAFM).

Dead animals on public property should be reported your Local Authority Environment Service who are operating an emergency service(details).

13. There is a serious welfare problem - whom do I contact?

ANY OF FOLLOWING DEPENDING ON CASE

- Domestic pets- ISPCA 1890 515515

- If it concerns dog control issue could refer to the dog warden service of LA-(1890-202303 or vets@louthcoco.iot)
- If it concerns a farm animal, please contact the Department of Agriculture Food and Marine (DAFM) at their dedicated helpline 01 6072379 or 0761 064408 email animalwelfare@agriculture.gov.ie.

14. Can food spread the virus?

NO EVIDENCE BUT OBSERVE SAFE HANDLING PRACTICES OF FOODS AS USUAL

There is currently no evidence that food is a likely source or route of transmission of the virus and the virus cannot grow on food.

Meat from healthy livestock that is prepared and served in accordance with good hygiene and food safety principles remains safe to eat.

Good hygiene practices should always be followed during food handling and preparation, such as washing hands, cooking meat thoroughly and avoiding potential cross-contamination between cooked and uncooked foods.

15. Which disinfectants are effective against coronavirus?

MOST REGULAR HOUSEHOLD DISINFECTANTS EFFECTIVE. BLEACH SOLUTION CAN BE MADE UP AT HOME

Most regular household disinfectants are effective against Coronavirus.

The World Health Organisation has stated that 0.1% bleach is effective (most household bleach is about 4%, so dilute 1:40)

Hand washing with soap and warm water as per the HSE guidelines is the best way to prevent transmission.