

Proposed language to allow continued care for companion animals during shelter-in-place or safer at home orders:

The intent of this proposal is to have language included in proposed “shelter-in-place” or “safer at home” orders to allow for continued care by animal control facilities, animal shelters, rescue organizations, boarding facilities, veterinarians and similar businesses for the animals in their care, whether or not housed in a shelter:

People may lawfully leave their residence while this Order is in effect to engage in the following essential activities:

- To provide necessary care for companion animals in the custody and care of an animal shelter or animal rescue organization, whether housed in a commercial shelter facility, residence, or other dwelling; necessary care includes, but is not limited to, provision of food, water, veterinary care, medication, cleaning of primary enclosures or living area, etc.;
- To provide necessary care for companion animals in the custody and care of a boarding facility, kennel, or other household where companion animals are regularly housed, whether or not for remuneration;
- To transport any companion animal under the care of one of the aforementioned entities to a veterinary facility for medical care; or
- In order to provide ongoing necessary care for a dog or cat residing at another household, residence or property.
- To engage in outdoor activity, provided the individuals maintain social distancing of six (6) feet from other individuals, such as, by way of example and without limitation, walking, hiking, or running with or without a companion animal.

In addition to the above, animal control officers and other humane law enforcement officers should fall under the usual “law enforcement” exceptions that are contained in shelter-in-place orders. However, in order to avoid leaving the issue open to interpretation, governmental entities drafting and enforcing shelter-in-place orders should unequivocally ensure that essential employees include animal control officers, humane investigators, other humane law enforcement officers, or those that serve animal control functions.

For any questions regarding the proposed, please contact Ledy VanKavage at ledyv@bestfriends.org.