



SAVE THEM ALL®

Protocol for Transports during COVID-19

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Persons Affected: All Best Friends Staff performing or directly involved with transports

***This document is a living document and is subject to change at any time. Leadership will continue to monitor the situation and provide updated guidance based on the best available information.**

Purpose: To have a streamlined process and definitions on animal lifesaving travel (transports) during this Coronavirus pandemic for Best Friends Animal Society Staff.

Definitions:

Animal Lifesaving Travel “ALT” – Essential travel for cats and dogs to increase live outcomes for these at risk pets. ALT includes, but is not limited to, animal transports out of a community or within a quarantined community from an at or over capacity facility to another facility with a guaranteed, and faster live outcome for the pet (barring unforeseen circumstances such as terminal injury or illness). Also included would be instances such as travel to and from organizations for behavior or medical needs in a quarantined community.

With communities under shelter in place (SIP) orders, animal services should be an considered essential public service. Shelter operations including those focused on live outcomes such as adoption, foster, and rescue transfers should continue throughout this pandemic as long as they meet these guidelines below for transports. Following National Animal Care Association guidelines: Transport/transfer in cases where shelters will become above critical capacity without these services, is considered an essential shelter service. Provided guidelines are implemented and follow all CDC guidelines for sanitation and within reason for social distancing, transports can still safely continue to happen to ensure animals are not euthanized due to lack of a live outcome.

There is no evidence of dogs and cats spreading COVID-19 to humans or other pets (Source: [CDC](#)). There are practical measures that can be put into place immediately to mitigate any transmission risk of COVID-19, therefore, all efforts should be made to ensure life or death transports continue.

Overview:

Animal Lifesaving transports are an essential lifesaving component to our work at Best Friends. While Best Friends is currently recommending staff not travel for business outside normal daily work commuting; transports will need to continue to ensure at risk pets are not killed **only on director approval**. As a result of COVID-19 shelters in some impacted communities are likely to see higher intake and potentially less volume of animals moving through lifesaving programs such as adoption thus putting more cats, dogs and shelter staff at risk especially if this pandemic lasts multiple weeks or months.

All employees and/or volunteers should assess their own comfort level and/or risk - if an employee is uncomfortable with business travel – the employee does not need to travel at this time. Managers should support an employee who makes this decision and should not require any further explanation from the employee about the decision.

Considerations for directors in approving travel

- Is the employee and/or volunteer comfortable with travel?
- Do volunteers pass the CV19 questionnaire?
- Can alternative arrangements be made to accomplish the same goal without travel?
- Could the travel be postponed to a later time?
- Is the destination and/or travel route (including needed stops) to or through a high-risk area (existing incidents of illness, high density population, level 3 or above on [CDC website travel notices](#): . Have a plan or easy communication access to trouble shoot problems such as being turned around at a state boarder – [check the following sheet](#) for most up-to-date state information.
- Has the receiving party had the opportunity to decline or postpone the transport?
- Has the receiving party instituted protocols that have communicated to everyone who will be on site to ensure safe transfer of the animals at the end point?

Precautions for transport staff and volunteers:

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.

- ∉ Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- ∉ Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

Masks:

Drivers in the same vehicle who come from separate household must wear a mask, cloth mask or scarf while in vehicle together.

[The CDC continues to study](#) the spread and effects of the novel coronavirus across the United States. We now know from recent studies that a significant portion of individuals with coronavirus lack symptoms (“asymptomatic”) and that even those who eventually develop symptoms (“pre-symptomatic”) can transmit the virus to others before showing symptoms. This means that the virus can spread between people interacting in close proximity—for example, speaking, coughing, or sneezing—even if those people are not exhibiting symptoms. In light of this new evidence, CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies) especially in areas of significant community-based transmission.

Take steps to protect yourself



Clean your hands often

- € Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- € If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- € Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.



Avoid close contact

- € Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- € Put distance between yourself and other people if COVID-19 is spreading in your community. This is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.

Take steps to protect others



Stay home if you're sick

- € Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care. Learn what to do if you are sick.



Cover coughs and sneezes

- € Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- € Throw used tissues in the trash.
- € Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



Wear a facemask if you are sick

- € If you are sick: You should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) and before you enter a healthcare provider's office. If you are not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then you should do your best to cover your coughs and sneezes, and people who are caring for you should wear a facemask if they enter your room. Learn what to do if you are sick.
- € If you are NOT sick: You do not need to wear a facemask unless you are caring for someone who is sick (and they are not able to wear a facemask). Facemasks may be in short supply and they should be saved for caregivers.



Clean and disinfect

- € Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- € If surfaces are dirty, clean them: Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

To disinfect:

Most common EPA-registered household disinfectants will work. Use disinfectants appropriate for the surface.

Options include:

- € Diluting your household bleach.
To make a bleach solution, mix:
 - ∅ 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water
 - OR
 - ∅ 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water
- € Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.
- € Alcohol solutions.
Ensure solution has at least 70% alcohol.
- € Other common EPA-registered household disinfectants.
Products with EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens pdf icon[7 pages]external icon claims are expected to be effective against COVID-19 based on data for harder to kill viruses. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.).

Additional Procedures and Recommendations:

- € As with other types of travel, the decision to participate in transports at this time should be up to the individual and should be respected by employers and other members of the team., This includes individuals who jobs include driving or who are serving as passengers for animal transports. As an example, immune compromised individuals or individuals with an immune compromised household members may choose not to assist with transports at this time..
- € Transport personnel should utilize Full Personal Protective Equipment: gloves, closed toe shoes, long pants, etc.
- € Changing all clothing directly after completion of transport. Scrubs or additional clothing can be provided by Best Friends: replacing footwear as well
- € Continue to utilize "Rescue" or "Accel" as directed for proper disinfection of full vehicles and all surfaces as it is effective in killing coronavirus. For deep clean (1:16) used for animal sanitizing is appropriate for COVID-19
- € Have animals who have come from confirmed CV19 homes, separated in a different room from other pets and positive CV19 people for 14 days prior to transport.
- € Utilizing single use identification (microchip, disposable collar ID, etc.)
- € Utilizing slip leads that can be thrown away after each contact with a person or an animal.

Procedures:

Currently Best Friends is operating transport programs under normal guidelines for animal selection, standards of care, and general SOPs **only under director approval**. As the COVID-19 situation is fluid, Best Friends will continue to evaluate the need for more enhanced transport procedures. If the situation arises that these procedures need altered to meet the lifesaving demand for emergency transport it will be identified here.

Please ensure review the following basic PPE videos and site with staff and volunteers prior to transports for reinforcement of proper PPE usage:

1. [Proper Glove Usage](#)
2. [Donning and Doffing PPE](#)
3. [UC Davis Sanitation Practices](#)
<https://www.sheltermedicine.com/library/resources/?r=sanitation-in-animal-shelters>

To avoid contracting or potentially spreading the coronavirus, please follow these added precautions as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (above):

The transport vehicles will be stocked with the following items:

- Hand sanitizer
- Clorox wipes or disinfecting spray and paper towels
- Trash receptacle
- Space to fit a regular-sized cooler if you choose to bring one to store food and/or drinks from home
- Enough slip leads for each individual person to have fresh slip lead for every animal walk, entry and delivery.

Prior to transport vehicle use:

- Any trash left from previous drivers/passengers will be removed
- Steering wheel, dashboard, cupholders, phones/GPG devices, cords, interior and exterior handles will be cleaned
- Shared items, such as animal manifest binder, will be cleaned