



Dear Firehall 4 Animal Hospital Family,

As the situation with COVID-19 continues to evolve we want to keep you updated on any new developments in our hospital along with the veterinary industry at large so that you have the most current information in regards to your pet's health and safety.

Currently, as congress looks at closing "non-essential" businesses in an effort to better mitigate COVID-19, leaders in the veterinary industry are urging government officials to consider veterinary hospitals as essential businesses. Classification as an "essential" business would allow us to stay open and operate as needed. We are adamant that veterinarians and their teams provide important animal and public health surveillance as well as essential medical care for ill animals both in the companion and food industries.

For the time being, we are being urged to defer elective procedures such as dental cleanings, spays and neuters, and wellness exams in order to preserve medical supplies and decrease possible routes of exposure to coronavirus. We are also being encouraged to adopt certain biosecurity procedures that safeguards both the health of our animal patients, owners, and employees. In light of these recommendations we have instituted the following protocols for our practice.

1. All elective procedures including wellness examinations will be postponed until COVID-19 government-mandated safeguards are lifted.
2. We will continue to remain open as long as allowed for emergency and sick visits. If you have an emergency or a sick pet please call to schedule an appointment with our front desk as usual.
3. To minimize person-to-person contact we are asking that all appointments be dropped off. Clients that wish to remain present are welcome to wait in their vehicle while their pet is examined, treated, and prescriptions are filled. If you have an appointment for your pet, please call our front desk when you arrive and a staff member will come to retrieve your pet from your car.
4. We ask that clients keep any collars, leashes, or harnesses with them in the car and allow us to use our own slip leads to eliminate one possible fomite thereby lessening the chance of spreading the virus.

Lastly, we ask for your patience in this situation as we work through the difficulties mentioned above as well as possible short-staffing due to the fact that we have staff with children unable to come to work as well as staff at high risk deciding to self-quarantine.

Please know that we care deeply for our Firehall family including our patients, our clients, and our staff and we will do whatever we can to deal with any changes in this situation as they arise. As always, we are available by phone and email for any consultations and want nothing more than for all our pets to stay happy and healthy during this time!

Sincerely,

Dr. Jennifer Peterson and Dr. Kelly Laas