

YOUR RSPCA PET GUIDE TO ANIMAL WELFARE DURING A CRISIS



Be prepared

You should have a minimum of two weeks' supplies for your pet, including food and any medications during isolation. All medications and instructions should be documented (include dosages, method of administration, and how often to give the medication) in case you get sick and someone else needs to care for your animals.

Important. Please read:

If you believe an animal's life is in danger, please call: 24 hour Cruelty Hotline on **(03) 9224 2222** or go to rspcavic.org/report



In case of sickness

If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, avoid intimate contact with pets and other animals, just like you would other people. When caring for your pets, follow the same advice as you would for interacting with other people who are not sick; avoid exposing animals to your sneezing or coughing and wash your hands before and after you interact with them. You should also avoid sleeping with them in your bed.



Separation anxiety

Pets may get used to having you home all the time during this period, but we want to avoid separation anxiety once isolation ends. It is important to continue to promote independence, and allow your pets to engage in activities without you. Providing toys and meals further away from you, and going in and out of the room while they entertain themselves is important.



Working from home?

Animals can be stressed by changes in routine, so if you are working from home try to keep as close to your normal routine as possible, or familiarise your animals with a new routine and stick to it. Some animals, especially cats, may find the extra activity and noise with more people constantly at home stressful. Make sure that your animals have places to hide away if they want to and have the things they need easily accessible (for example, food, water, and litter trays).



Food for thought

We might all be tempted to give our furry friend treats more often through this period, but did you know that one small cookie for a 9kg dog, is like a whole burger of calories for a human? If you're going to train or play games, rather than too many extra treats, use some of the daily food your pet would have received as part of their regular meals.

As always, good hygiene is critical. You should wash your hands before and after being around or handling animals, their food, or supplies, as well as avoiding kissing, licking or sharing food with animals. Also, regularly wash your pet's bowls, bedding and toys.

If you're concerned about your pet's health while you are practising social distancing – ring your vet to ask for advice. They will be able to work with you to ensure your pet receives the care they need while keeping their staff safe from COVID-19 infection.