

Veterinary Care MUST Look Different During Safer at Home Order

Veterinary Care Under Wisconsin’s Safer at Home Order. On March 25, 2020, Governor Evers ordered all non-essential businesses in Wisconsin to close and banned public and private gatherings of any size to combat the spread of COVID-19. However, his order preserved veterinary care and healthcare provided to animals but stated that “non-essential veterinary care should be avoided.”

Essential Veterinary Care is Fact-Specific. Under the Order, determining whether a procedure or treatment for a veterinary patient is “essential” is a fact-specific determination made by a veterinarian using his or her professional judgment. Each decision will be made on a case-by-case basis keeping in mind that the Order allows for essential care but directs veterinarians to “avoid” non-essential care.

Essential Business Does Not Mean “Business as Usual.” Veterinary clinics may remain open for essential treatment, but no clinic should look unchanged or unaffected by the Order. “Essential business” does not mean “business as usual.” The “Safer at Home” Order requires all essential businesses “to the greatest extent possible, use technology to avoid meeting in person, including virtual meetings, teleconference, and remote work (*i.e.*, work from home)...” and requires them to “... comply with Social Distancing Requirements as defined in this Order.”

Veterinary Clinics are Also Workplaces. Each veterinary clinic is also managing the protection of its own staff. Decisions regarding available care in veterinary clinics will also be informed based on the needs and requirements to protect employees during this public health crisis. Some clinics may be affected by staff shortages or may change hours to respond to workers’ needs to be home with children who are out of school. We ask that all those seeking essential veterinary care for their animals be patient with their providers who not only strive to care for your animals, but also care for their own employees.