

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture wanted to share a daily update of information related to coronavirus (COVID 19), and the Wolf Administration's efforts to mitigate its effects in the commonwealth.

Earlier this week, the Governor ***issued an order*** for all non-life sustaining businesses in Pennsylvania to close their physical locations as of 8 p.m., March 19, to slow the spread of COVID-19. Enforcement actions against businesses that do not close physical locations will begin at 12:01 a.m. Saturday, March 21. **Attached are Updated Life Sustaining Business Guidelines and Updated Industry Operation Guidance.**

Governor Tom Wolf also ***announced the availability of low-interest loans*** for small businesses and eligible non-profits in all 67 counties in Pennsylvania through the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). This is an evolving situation and decisions will continue to be made and revisited as needed. If a business listed for closure believes it could help mitigate this crisis by providing a life sustaining service, it can seek an exemption. Businesses can get a waiver application through the ***Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) website***. or may contact the Department of Community and Economic Development at ***ra-dcedcs@pa.gov*** or by calling 1-877-PA-HEALTH and selecting option 1.

Financial Resources for Pennsylvanians Impacted by COVID-19

The Department of Banking and Securities (DoBS) collaborated with state agencies to develop resources available for Pennsylvanians financially impacted by COVID-19.

Topics covered in the ***press release*** include accessing your financial institution, unemployment and workers compensation, credit card payments, mortgage and rent, emergency loans, utility bills, insurance issues, and financial scams.

Guidance to Ensure Continuity for Animal Shelters and Boarding Facilities and Advice for Pet Owners

In recognition of the critical role boarding kennels, doggie daycares, shelters, sanctuaries, and rescues play in ensuring essential workers and at-risk individuals have a safe place to house dogs and the need for continued care for Pennsylvania's strays, the Department of Agriculture today issued guidance for protecting staff and volunteers of such facilities.

Boarding kennels, doggie daycares, shelters, sanctuaries, and rescue facilities are encouraged to continue operations, but the decision is a voluntary, business-by-business decision. Those that remain open should apply this guidance to their operations in an effort to minimize risk for exposure to COVID-19 for employees, volunteers, and Pennsylvanians using their services.

The ***Guidance for Boarding Facilities and Shelters*** includes procedures for preparing the employees and volunteers, preparing facilities, and how to intake animals being received from COVID-19 positive homes.

Pennsylvania pet owners were also offered the following advice:

- Identify a family member or friend who can care for pets in case of illness.
- Have crates, food, and extra supplies on hand for quick movement of pets.
- Be sure all vaccines are up to date, in the event boarding becomes necessary.
- Make sure you have proof of current vaccinations.

If you do not have paperwork, reach out to your veterinarian for a copy (a digital version on a mobile device is acceptable proof).

Failure to have proof of current vaccinations could result in your dog needing revaccinated.

Ensure all medications are documented with dosages and administering directions, including the prescription and contact information for your veterinarian.

Pets should have identification: collar with dog license and rabies tag, or any other vanity style tag with owner information. Information can also be placed on the pet's cage depending on the type of pet.

Place a list of pets in the home on your front door for emergency responders. Include a description of each animal, location in home or on the property, and any other pertinent information specific to each animal.

According to the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, COVID-19 is not zoonotic and cannot be contracted or transmitted by cats and dogs.

General Information on COVID-19

*For the most up to date news and information related to agriculture and services from the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture during COVID-19 mitigation, visit agriculture.pa.gov/covid. You can also **sign up for the PDA newsletter** and stay connected through **Facebook** and **Twitter**.*

As the situation evolves related to COVID-19, you can get up-to-date information along with the **Pennsylvania Department of Health, Governor Tom Wolf**, and all of Pennsylvania's state agencies. In the meantime, please continue to:

-  wash your hands for at least 20 seconds using soap and hot water
-  avoid coughing or sneezing into your hand
-  stay home whenever possible

For the most timely and reliable information, visit the ***Department of Health's page.***

For ag information related to COVID-19, visit ours: ***agriculture.pa.gov/COVID***

For agriculture business, please call (717) 787-4737

Stay calm. Stay home. Stay safe.