

American Ferret Association Statement on COVID-19 and Ferrets

COVID-19 is a novel virus in the Coronavirus family of viruses. Anytime a novel (i.e. new) virus appears, it is common for individuals to worry, not only about what would happen if they became infected, but also if they could transmit the infection to their pets, including ferrets, and what would happen if their ferrets became infected. Armed with knowledge, individuals will be best prepared to care for themselves as well as their ferrets during these uncertain times.

Here is useful advice prepared by the American Veterinary Medical Association, "What veterinarians need to know" (Updated as of 4:30 pm on March 15, 2020)

"Although there have not been reports of pets becoming sick with COVID-19, out of an abundance of caution, it is recommended that those ill with COVID-19 limit contact with animals until more information is known about the virus. If you are ill with COVID-19, be sure to tell your physician and public health official that you have a pet or other animal in your home. Have another member of your household take care of walking, feeding, and playing with your pet. If you have a service animal or you must care for your pet, then wear a facemask; don't share food, kiss, or hug them; and wash your hands before and after any contact with your pet or service animal. You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home. Additional guidance on managing pets in homes where people are sick with COVID-19 is available from the CDC.

For responsible pet owners, preparing in advance is key. Make sure you have an emergency kit prepared, with at least two weeks' worth of your pet's food and any needed medications. Usually we think about emergency kits like this in terms of what might be needed for an evacuation, but it's also good to have one prepared in the case of quarantine or self-isolation when you cannot leave your home.

While we are recommending these as good practices, it is important to remember there is currently no evidence that pets can spread COVID-19 to other animals, including people."

<https://www.avma.org/resources-tools/animal-health-and-welfare/covid-19>