



To our valued clients,

Your health and well-being are important to us. In light of COVID-19, we at Desert Paws want to share some protocols we have enacted, that may affect you. We have been receiving a large influx of client appointment requests because the chance of spread is less for a home visit versus an in-clinic visit. While this may be true, we can only ensure that we are around if we are strict about hygiene and social distancing.

As of April 1st 2020, we have NOT had any known exposure to the Coronavirus in our facility or with our staff members. However, given the evolving circumstances with COVID-19, we are taking extra precautions to help ensure a safe and healthy environment for our clients, their pets, and our practice staff.

Effective immediately, to decrease risk of exposure; we are implementing the following safety protocols in accordance with the CDC guidelines for social distancing (minimum 6 feet)

Protocol changes

- Clients** - If you have tested positive for COVID-19, are in quarantine after exposure to a person who tested positive, are displaying any symptoms of the virus (fever, cough, or shortness of breath) or traveled internationally in the last 14 days please reschedule your appointment. **If you need to cancel or reschedule an appointment due to illness, there will be no cancellation fees assessed during this time.** You may ask, "What if my pet has an issue, what am I supposed to do?" Email or call us. We have telemedicine options in place and can still likely assist you in your pets time of need.
- Staff** - If one of our staff members is sick or has been exposed to a sick individual, they will not be on the job and will be on a company mandated home quarantine.
- Social Distancing** - We will practice social distancing by maintaining a distance of 6 feet between ourselves and anyone not walking on 4 legs. We realize this is awkward because, especially in times of letting an animal go, we tend to be hugging-type people. However, this is recommended by the CDC to curtail the spread of this virus.
- Dog Appointments** - Canine appointments will take place either outside or in a garage if possible. If we are performing the exam in your backyard, we would prefer to enter through a side gate etc., as to limit exposure by walking through your home.

5. Cat Appointments - For feline patients we are advising the cat be placed in a carrier and handed off to our staff to be examined in the van or in a garage. If that is not possible and an exam needs to take place inside the home it is important to have your cat isolated in an area where we can access your cat(s) easily and quickly. We will not be able to participate in any "cat wild goose chases." We REALLY want to avoid entering homes right now so other options listed above are preferred. If we do have to enter the home we will be wearing masks/gloves and limiting the amount of equipment that comes inside. We will not enter a home for a preventative care or wellness appointment. If your cat cannot be placed into a carrier and is not sick their appointment should be rescheduled to a later date.

6. During your appointment - To get a pet's history and talk about your concerns prior to the appointment, we may call you the morning of your appointment or at your appointment time. We may also elect to call you after we examine your animal to discuss the plan/treatment. If so, we hope you understand that this is done in the spirit of minimizing contact time without sacrificing patient care.

7. Nursing homes / Senior Living facilities - Residents in nursing homes/senior living facilities are high risk. We will only be able to see pets at nursing homes and assisted living communities if someone is able to physically bring the pet out to us in the parking lot. If so, we will be happy to see your pets in our van and perform any services they need.

8. Medications - Our surgery center (1106 N. El Dorado Place) is open for medication pick ups Monday-Friday 8-5pm, but will not be allowing visitors inside the building at this time. We ask that you call ahead to make sure we have your medication in stock and allow us time to fill it prior to your arrival. Please ring the doorbell and step away from the door and we will come outside to assist you. You can pre-pay for your meds online at www.desertpaws.com or you can pay over the phone at the time you place your order.

If your prescription pick up is not urgent and you are ordering ahead of time you can utilize our online pharmacy. Please be aware that all online pharmacies are currently experiencing delayed shipping times which is out of our control.

https://desertpaws.vetsfirstchoice.com/?practice_uuid=6d5b0205-7039-4012-b524-f815a4419a8e

9. Emergencies - True life threatening emergencies will be directed to our local ER's which are open. For urgent care appointments we would prefer to see those out of our surgery center because oftentimes these patients need same day labs and diagnostic imaging which needs to be done at the center. (see curbside service below)

10. Curbside Service - Please call our office at 833-2134 when you arrive in the parking lot for an appointment or med pick up. One of our staff members will come to your car and assist you. If

you are here for an appointment they will retrieve your pet for the exam while you wait comfortably in your vehicle. After your pet is safely inside our center the doctor or technician will communicate via phone or text regarding treatment recommendations and/or results.

11. **Payments** – credit card numbers will be taken over the phone or by a staff member typing in the card number, maintaining 6ft distance, and processed immediately after the appointment. There will be no exchange of cards or having clients sign any papers/documents at this time. We accept Visa, MasterCard, Discover, American Express and Scratchpay. If you need to pay with cash or check, one of our staff members will retrieve payment from you.

12. **Spays/Neuters/Dentals** – Governor Ducey issued an executive order that halts all elective surgeries in the state of Arizona to free up medical resources and maintain the capacity for hospitals and providers to continue offering vital services. We have a list of clients waiting for these procedures and when we are able to resume these we will call clients on the waiting list. Please call us at 833-2134 if you would like to be placed on our list.

13. **Telemedicine** – We are excited to offer telemedicine to our clients/patients. Telemedicine is more important than ever given the COVID-19 pandemic. Please visit the Anippanion site to learn more about how telemedicine works. You will want to download the anippanion app on your phone and you can easily video call or chat with one of our doctors.

<https://anippanion.com/pet.html>

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we do our best to help keep you and your pets safe and healthy

The Desert Paws team
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520-833-2134
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www.desertpaws.com

Online pharmacy – https://desertpaws.vetsfirstchoice.com/?practice_uuid=6d5b0205-7039-4012-b524-f815a4419a8e