



Posted March 17, 2020

# COVID-19 UPDATE

With the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) on the rise worldwide, it is important for shelters and rescues including London Animal Care Centre (LACC) to be prepared for the impact this may have on their staff and their community. In consultation with directives from national & international organizations including the National Animal Control Association (NACA), Association for Animal Welfare Advancement (AAWA), Animal Sheltering.Org, the Humane Society of United States (HSUS), Maddie's Fund, the Centre for Disease Control (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO), LACC is providing this message to the public as an update on what steps are being taken to protect the public, LACC staff and the community animals in our care.

## General information on COVID-19

While COVID-19 is contagious for humans and, as of now, is understood to spread primarily from person to person, the WSAVA (World Small Animal Veterinary Association) Global Veterinary Community—an association representing more than 200,000 veterinarians—states that there is no evidence that companion animals can be infected. The association does, however, caution that this is a rapidly evolving situation and updates will be provided as they are received. People confirmed to have COVID-19 should avoid contact with other people as well as pets. [The full advisory document from WSAVA can be found here.](#)

COVID-19 is a newly identified virus that has now been detected in 160 countries internationally, including Canada, which has reported 433 confirmed cases as of March 17, 2020.

## LACC Preventative Measures

Presently, LACC has taken the following actions to flatten the COVID-19 curve:

- Consistent application of our sanitation & disinfection protocols within the shelter environment
- Additional sanitation of public spaces specific to areas of high traffic and potential contact (counter surfaces, doors, door handles, phones, Point of Sale machines)
- Provision of hand washing stations & hand sanitizing dispensers
- Employees have been instructed to practice recommended self-distancing activities and to monitor closely their own health including leaving the workplace or remaining at their home if they are experiencing symptoms relative to COVID-19.



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## LACC Service Adjustments

Until further notice, the LACC shelter located at 121 Pine Valley Blvd will be closed to the public commencing March 18, 2020. Please visit [www.accpets.ca](http://www.accpets.ca) or call 519-685-1330 for additional information.

In following the lead of organizations around the country and throughout North America, LACC at the request of the City of London, has moved to a limited service model as outlined below.

## Hours of Operation

Essential LACC staff will be on duty while the shelter is closed to the public during regular business hours. [See Hours of Operation here.](#)

## Shelter Functions

- Animal care staff will remain on duty to ensure high level animal welfare, care and husbandry services continue.
- LACC will be **closed** to the public for the purpose of stray animal claims and adoptions. Animal claims may be arranged by **appointment only**. If you have lost your pet, please visit our [Lost & Found](#) page to view **all** animals currently in the shelter. These listings are updated regularly, so please check back often. You may also call the shelter to make inquiries. If it is determined your pet is at the shelter, please call in advance to make the necessary arrangements to claim your lost pet. We can be reached at 519-685-1330.
- LACC will suspend the intake of stray and healthy community cats from the public. LACC will still respond to cats that are sick and injured, or are in immediate danger.
- LACC has currently suspended all volunteer programs within the shelter until further notice.



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## Animal Control & By-law Enforcement Functions

- LACC Animal Service Officers & Dispatch support staff will continue to respond to emergency and high priority calls. High priority/emergency calls include law enforcement assistance, injured or sick stray animals & wildlife, bite complaints and stray dogs at large.
- LACC Animal Service Officers suspend non-emergency activity. This includes non-aggressive stray animal pick-up, leash law and licensing complaints, conflict mitigation scenarios and general by-law investigations and follow-up.

## Dog & Cat Licensing Functions

It is the responsibility of all dog and cat owners to ensure their pets are registered with a current City of London pet license. LACC will remain committed to following up via telephone with those owners who have not yet renewed their pet licenses for 2020. If you have received a phone call and/or need to renew your pet's license we would ask that you use the online renewal system found at [www.accpets.ca](http://www.accpets.ca)

## Pet Owners – Action Plan

Having a plan in place for pets is critical; individuals who become sick or require hospitalization will need to have someone to take their animals.

- **Key Points:**
  - People should identify a family member or friend who can care for pets if someone in the household becomes ill.
  - Have crates, food and extra supplies on hand for quick movement of pets.
  - Keep all animal vaccines up to date in the event boarding becomes necessary.
  - Ensure all medications are documented with dosages and administering directions. Including the prescription from your veterinarian is also helpful.
  - Pets should have identification: collar with ID tag and

Every effort should be made to keep pets with their families. The Centre for Disease Control released guidelines for [COVID-19 patients with pets recovering at home](#).

**Resource:** [Make a Disaster Plan for your Pet](#)



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## **Additional Closures**

Until further notice, the Catty Shack adoption centre located at 756 Windermere Ave. will be closed to the public for adoptions.

## **Summary**

LACC recognizes that this is an unprecedented time in our community and throughout the world. At this point, preparations and information is very fluid and we will do our best to update information on service delivery and precautions pet owners can take to protect themselves and their animals as it becomes available. We want to thank you for your support and continued understanding as all of us attempt to make the best decisions for the people and pets of London.

Please check back here periodically for updates and you can also visit the City of London website [www.london.ca](http://www.london.ca) for timely information and updates as decisions are made on the municipal level.

Be safe and care for one another.