



For Immediate Release  
July 8, 2020

## Household Dog Confirmed with Virus That Causes COVID-19

AUSTIN, TX – A Tarrant County dog was confirmed to be infected with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19 in humans, on July 7, 2020 by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Veterinary Services Laboratories. The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) and the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) are working together using a One Health approach by providing guidance in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The private veterinarian chose to test the dog for SARS-CoV-2 as a precautionary measure after its owners were confirmed to have COVID-19. All veterinary clinic staff reported wearing personal protective equipment including face masks when in contact with the owner and handling the dog to limit any potential spread of the virus. The veterinarian reports the two-year-old dog is healthy at this time.

“Based on current knowledge, there is no evidence that pets play a significant role in spreading SARS-CoV-2 to people,” said Dr. Andy Schwartz, State Veterinarian. “It’s always important to restrict contact with your pets and other animals, just like you would other people, if you are infected with COVID-19 in order to protect them from infection.”

While this is the first confirmed animal detection in Texas, this is not the first in the United States. The USDA is tracking all positive results in animals on its website: [https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/sa\\_one\\_health/sars-cov-2-animals-us](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/sa_one_health/sars-cov-2-animals-us). At this time, routine testing of animals is not recommended.

If you are sick with COVID-19 or suspect you are infected, restrict contact with your pets and other animals, just like you would other people. Ask another member of your household to care for your pets while you are sick. Avoid contact with your pet, including petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, and sharing food or sleeping in the same bed. If you must care for your pet or be around animals while you are sick, wear a cloth face covering and wash your hands before and after you interact with them. For more information about the virus in animals and recommendations for pet owners, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/animals/pets-other-animals.html>.

The decision to test an animal, including companion animals, livestock, and wild or zoo animals, should be agreed upon using a One Health approach with the appropriate local and state public health and animal health officials. For more information about testing animals visit [https://www.tahc.texas.gov/covid19/TAHCVeterinaryGuidance\\_COVID\\_CompanionAnimalTesting.pdf](https://www.tahc.texas.gov/covid19/TAHCVeterinaryGuidance_COVID_CompanionAnimalTesting.pdf) or <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/animals/animal-testing.html>.

For human health questions, please contact [DSHS](#), your [local public health entity](#), or doctor.

###

*The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) was established in 1893 as the Livestock Sanitary Commission and charged with protecting the state’s domestic animals “from all contagious or infectious diseases of a malignant character.” TAHC remains true to this charge while evolving with the times to protect the health and marketability of all Texas livestock and poultry. Learn more about the TAHC by visiting [www.tahc.texas.gov](http://www.tahc.texas.gov).*