Criteria for boarding facilities to house COVID-19 exposed pets- 4/8/20

Fundamental Requirements:
1. Abide by federal/state/local directives regarding the categorization of essential businesses
   • If considered an essential business, each boarding facility should make an individual decision if it is appropriate for them to remain open
     o This should be based on
       ▪ Staff safety & ability to maintain social distancing requirements
       ▪ Staff training to handle exposed pets
       ▪ Availability of appropriately designed pet housing enclosures
       ▪ Ability to restrict access to the boarding facility to only essential personnel (caretakers, medical staff)

2. A veterinarian must develop intake, animal handling and care protocols and should have authority to oversee implementation of those practices.

3. A direct relationship with a veterinarian must exist for medical concerns of pets that may arise; telemedicine should be used when possible.

4. Animal handling, care and release protocols should be developed in accordance with Interim recommendations for intake of companion animals from households where humans with COVID-19 are present created by the CDC, AVMA, and national shelter medicine programs.

Facility & Operational Requirements
1. The facility should be able to separate exposed pets from non-exposed pets.
   • If non-exposed pets are present in a different area within the facility, ideally separate staff and dedicated equipment should be used for each population
     o If separate staff is not possible, non-exposed pets should be cared for prior to exposed pets, and all PPE should be removed after handling exposed pets.

2. The facility preferably would have double-compartment housing for improved welfare and to minimize the handling of exposed pets.

3. Arrangements need to be available to accommodate intake that may not have advance notice.

4. Arrangements need to be made for prompt completion of intake exam and treatments. This may involve a stop at animal shelter prior to delivery to boarding facility.

5. Soft bedding, food and water bowls must be available at all times.

6. Must have a cleaning and disinfection SOP in place using appropriate disinfectant products as described in recommendations.

7. As described in recommendations washable PPE such as washable gowns/coveralls, dedicated footwear, etc. should be used except for gloves. To conserve PPE for human health care disposable PPE should not be used.

8. Ideally the facility would have a dedicated area to walk exposed pets and allow them to play outside safely, without encountering other humans and non-exposed pets. Feces should be promptly picked up and disposed of.

9. The ability to separate animals with signs of infectious disease from others, e.g. respiratory disease. Or a plan for transfer to an alternative facility for care.

10. Behavioral enrichment for pets should be maintained
    • Dogs should be walked and exercised, avoiding close contact (snuggling, kissing)
    • Cats can be socialized while wearing PPE, avoiding close contact.