



Canine Pneumovirus

3/2/20

A few dogs in our care have developed pneumonia which is relatively uncommon in our shelter population. Respiratory testing was submitted to determine what virus or bacterium was causing this illness. Four of the dogs tested were positive for pneumovirus. This is a virus that we have not seen previously in our shelter. Pneumovirus is contagious, but is rarely fatal. All dogs that have been diagnosed with pneumonia have been successfully treated and no deaths have occurred from pneumovirus.

There is not a vaccine to protect dogs against pneumovirus so preventing it from spreading and eliminating it from the shelter is our priority. We know this will be a challenge, but with support from the community and pet placement partners we are hopeful we can effectively contain and eliminate pneumovirus. At this time a majority of the 236 dogs currently residing in our shelter are being considered as potentially exposed.

After consultation with the University of Florida, we have made the decision to limit shelter intake to dogs that pose a risk to public safety, sick or injured strays, and abuse/neglect/cruelty cases. Healthy strays and owned dogs that are not a threat to public safety will not be admitted. This decision will allow us to isolate and quarantine our exposed population of dogs while minimizing the risk of healthy dogs being exposed.

If you find a stray dog, please commit to helping it find its way home. Post flyers in the area in which it was found, have it scanned for a microchip, ask around in the neighborhood to see if anyone knows who the dog belongs to, and post on social media sites such as facebook and nextdoor. Please do not bring healthy stray dogs to the shelter. If you feel a stray dog is in danger or poses a risk to public safety, please call 630-CITY so we can assess the situation and determine the best course of action.

The adoption center will remain open, but public access to dog housing areas will be limited. Adopters will be made aware of the possible pneumovirus exposure, educated on symptoms to watch for (coughing, sneezing, nasal and ocular discharge), and instructed on how to receive follow up medical care should it be needed. Adopters and fosters will also be counseled on separating their new dog from other dogs as well as avoiding dog parks, pet stores, and other areas frequented by dogs.

Our greatest need right now is foster homes for about 100 medium and large adoptable dogs that may have been exposed to pneumovirus. If you have no dogs, we need you! Foster homes should be able to commit to caring for a medium or large size dog for a minimum of two weeks. All supplies and medical care will be provided. The body's ability to fight illness is greatly compromised by stress so exposed dogs are best supported by being cared for outside of the stress of the shelter.

If you have adopted a dog from our shelter in the last two weeks and have noted coughing, sneezing, or discharge from the eyes or nose, please contact the adoption center by emailing JaxPets@coj.net.

For general questions regarding canine pneumovirus, please contact our shelter staff by emailing JaxPets@coj.net. We appreciate your patience and understanding while we take the necessary steps to ensure the health and safety of the pets and people in our community.