

# INTERIM VETERINARY GUIDELINES FOR TESTING COMPANION ANIMALS FOR COVID-19 IN OKLAHOMA

ag.ok.gov | Animal Industry Services: 405.522.6141

## Overview

The decision to test will be made collaboratively between the Oklahoma State Animal Health Officials, Oklahoma State Department of Health Officials, and Oklahoma Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory.

o There currently are no known cases of active infection with SARS-CoV-2 in domestic animals and there is no evidence that companion animals can spread COVID-19 to humans. Because the situation is ever-evolving, public and animal health officials may decide to test certain animals out of an abundance of caution.

o The Centers for Disease Control, United State Department of Agriculture, and American Veterinary Medical Association do not recommend routine testing of companion animals at this time. Testing of companion animals for COVID 19 should be made on a case by case basis based on the level of suspicion.

o Oklahoma Animal Disease Diagnostic Lab will conduct animal testing, but any positive samples will be confirmed through additional testing by USDA's National Veterinary Services Laboratory.

- PCR testing will be run using commercially available kits/reagents based on CDC testing protocols or other FDA-approved protocols.
- Kits/reagents used in the animal COVID-19 test will be different from those needed for the human COVID-19 test (human resources will not be diverted for animal testing).
- SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) detection in any animal is reportable per OIE guidance.

## Criteria for testing

- o Only animals exhibiting clinical signs of illness compatible with COVID-19 infection, including respiratory symptoms, will be considered for testing.
- o Veterinarians requesting COVID-19 testing for an animal must have first performed a thorough and systematic diagnostic evaluation with appropriate testing to rule out common causes based on the patient's clinical signs.
- o At this time, the following animals and situations will be considered for testing:

- Animals that have been in a household with a human with confirmed COVID-19.
- Non-human primates or other species in zoos or other facilities
- Recently imported animals exhibiting atypical pattern of disease suggesting COVID-19
- Animals part of a validated research project.

## Authorization for Testing:

- o Veterinarians who would like to request approval to test a companion animal for COVID-19 should contact the State Veterinarian's Office by calling 405-522-6141 or emailing Dr. Beth Ruby at [beth.ruby@ag.ok.gov](mailto:beth.ruby@ag.ok.gov)
- o Once approved, ODAFF will coordinate with the requesting veterinarian. The State Veterinarian will authorize an accredited USDA veterinarian or Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostician to collect and submit samples through coordination with OADDL and using USDA official guidelines.



**OKLAHOMA**  
Dept. of Agriculture,  
Food and Forestry