

Pets and Coronavirus (COVID-19): Walking someone else's dog

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Pets provide invaluable companionship, especially at this time. For many dogs, going out for a walk is an important part of their daily routine. However, measures introduced to reduce Coronavirus mean that lots of owners won't be able to do this so may be relying on others to help them. If you have offered to walk someone else's dog, here's some guidance to help keep everyone safe.

You should only be walking someone else's dog if, due to their individual circumstances, they are unable to do so themselves. This includes people who are key workers (NHS staff or similar), [shielded](#) (at particular risk from Coronavirus) or the [vulnerable and over 70s](#) or people from a self-isolating [household confirmed or suspected of having Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).



When walking someone else's dog:

- Consider each individual situation and how to safeguard the person you are assisting.
- Agree the process in advance including time and duration of walk.
- Walk the dog in the surrounding area of the owner's home and ideally on a lead. You should not drive to a location to walk.
- Find a way to collect and return the dog securely, in a way which maintains a two-metre distance between you and minimises any time spent in the owner's home.
- Never walk dogs from different households at the same time.
- Wash your hands for 20 seconds using soap and water before leaving your home.
- Wear gloves for the duration of any contact and dispose of them after use.
- Use a different lead to the owner's.
- Ask someone from the household to open and close the doors for you.
- Don't handle anything else, such as your phone, during any time of contact.
- Where possible, minimise touching the dog.
- Maintain your social distance while walking, keep to quiet areas and don't allow other people or pets to come into contact with the dog.
- Wash the lead with soap and water once the dog has been returned.
- Wash your hands for 20 seconds using soap and water as soon as you get home.

There are no confirmed instances of transmission of Coronavirus (COVID-19) from pets to people. However, the virus could be passed from person to person via a surface such as a dog's fur, collar and lead.

In addition, when walking a shielded person's dog, it is especially important to protect their already compromised health:

- Avoid any contact with the occupants of the home – maintain at least two metres distance.
- Keep the dog on a lead to avoid them coming into contact with anyone or other pets.
- Wipe the dog with a disposable pet-safe wipe or clean, damp cloth before returning to reduce the risk of transmitting the virus to the owner.

In addition, when walking a dog from a household where people have or are suspected of having Coronavirus, it is especially important to protect yourself and others:

- Avoid any contact with the occupants of the home – maintain at least two metres distance.
- Wipe the dog with a disposable pet-safe wipe or clean, damp cloth before the walk.
- Keep the dog on a lead to avoid pets and other people touching them in case the virus is on their fur.
- Take care when cleaning up after them; use a sturdy poo bag and dispose of it as soon as possible.

To find out more visit: www.cfsg.org.uk/coronavirus

This information may be subject to change so please regularly check Government guidance.