

**From:** Redacted SG Staff **On Behalf Of** Minister for Rural Affairs and the Natural Environment

**Sent:** 16 July 2020 15:01

**To:** Redacted SG Staff; Minister for Rural Affairs and the Natural Environment

**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Tourism; Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform; DG Economy; Director of Sustainable Land Use and Rural Policy; Voas S (Sheila); [Redacted SG Staff](#) ; Redacted SG Staff ; [Redacted SG Staff](#); [Redacted SG Staff](#); Redacted SG Staff ; [Redacted SG Staff](#) ; [Redacted SG Staff](#); Communications Covid-19; Economy Covid-19 Hub

**Subject:** RE: COVID-19 - Submission to Ministers - Guidance for Animal Keepers - July 2020

Thanks Redacted SG Staff

Ms Gougeon has noted.

Redacted SG Staff

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**From:** Redacted SG Staff

**Sent:** 15 July 2020 11:40

**To:** Minister for Rural Affairs and the Natural Environment

**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Tourism; Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform; DG Economy; Director of Sustainable Land Use and Rural Policy; Voas S (Sheila); [Redacted SG Staff](#) ; Redacted SG Staff; Communications Covid-19; Economy Covid-19 Hub

**Subject:** COVID-19 - Submission to Ministers - Guidance for Animal Keepers - July 2020

Redacted SG Staff

Please find attached Routine submission inviting the Minister to note the content of the revised advice for animal owners that will be placed on the Scottish Government website.

Best wishes

Redacted SG Staff

ARD – Animal Health & Welfare; P Spur; Saughton House; Broomhouse Drive; Edinburgh; EH11 3XD

From: Redacted SG Staff

Animal Health and Welfare Division  
XX July 2020

Minister for Rural Affairs and the Natural Environment

## **COVID-19 – UPDATE OF ADVICE TO ANIMAL OWNERS**

### **Purpose**

1. To inform you that the advice for animal owners hosted on the Scottish Government website will be updated in the next few days. This will also be amended to include advice for those offering services for companion animals such as dog trainers and groomers now that restrictions on those services have been relaxed.

## **Priority**

2. Routine.

## **Background**

3. The current advice hosted on the Scottish Government website has not required update since it was published on 14 April 2020. This is now required following the changes approved by the First Minister on 9 July 2020 and the subsequent amendment of The Health Protection (Coronavirus) (Restrictions) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 (“the Regulations”).

4. Redacted

5. Redacted

## **Discussion**

### *Professional Dog Walkers*

6. Redacted.

7. Redacted.

### *Dog Groomers*

8. Redacted.

9. Redacted.

### *Dog Trainers*

10. Redacted.

11. Redacted.

### *Animal Physiotherapy and Hydrotherapy*

12. Redacted.

13. Redacted.

## **Communication**

14. We will update our guidance on gov.scot for owners of companion animals and livestock (see Annex A).

**Recommendation**

15. You are invited to agree to:

- **Note the content of the revised advice for animal owners that will be placed on the Scottish Government website.**

Redacted SG Staff  
 Animal Health and Welfare Division  
 Directorate for Agriculture and Rural Delivery

XX July 2020

Copy List:	For Action	For Comments	For Information		
			Portfolio Interest	Constit Interest	General Awareness
Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform			X		
Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy and Tourism			X		

DG Economy  
 Andrew Scott  
 Sheila Voas  
 Redacted SG Staff  
 Comms Covid-19  
 Covid Economy Hub

## **ANNEX A - UPDATED ADVICE FOR ANIMAL OWNERS**

### **Advice to owners of pets, companion animals and livestock who may be required to self-isolate as part of government advice on coronavirus (COVID-19).**

The following advice provides information for livestock keepers and those with pets on maintaining the health and welfare of their animals during the coronavirus pandemic.

There is limited evidence that animals, such as dogs and cats, can be infected with COVID-19, and no evidence that livestock can be infected, or of animals being involved in the transmission of the virus to humans.

In line with general advice, you should wash your hands regularly with soap, including before and after contact with animals and animal products. You should avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth until hands have been thoroughly washed.

### **Animal owners in self-isolating households**

If you are self-isolating you should ensure that all animals you are responsible for continue to be cared for.

Where possible, you should make arrangements in advance with friends, family or neighbours, which can be put in place if the need arises.

There is limited evidence of companion or other animals becoming sick with COVID-19, and currently there is no evidence that they play a significant role in this human disease.

It is recommended that those who have COVID-19, or are displaying symptoms, adopt hygiene measures when handling their pets.

### **Dog walking and social distancing**

#### **Advice if you do not have symptoms of coronavirus**

Dogs may be taken out as frequently as necessary to toilet. Restrictions on leaving your home for exercise were relaxed on 29 May although you are advised to stay at home as much as possible and maintain strict physical distancing when outdoors.

You must:

- follow the guidance on social distancing so that you do not come within 2 metres of people not part of your household
- keep your dog on a lead if necessary to avoid coming into contact with other people or dogs
- wash your hands when you return home

### **Advice if you are self-isolating or in the extremely vulnerable group**

If you are self-isolating or in the extremely vulnerable (shielding) group, you should not walk your dog outside. Instead, you should ask someone outside your household to walk your dog for you.

The person who walks your dog should avoid coming into your home, and ensure that dogs are kept on a lead to avoid contact with other people and dogs.

### **Advice if you are walking dogs or caring for pets for someone not able to**

You may leave your house to walk a dog for someone who is unable to leave their house because they are self-isolating or being shielded.

You should avoid going into their home and remember to wash your hands before and after contact with animals.

Ensure that dogs are kept on a lead to avoid contact with other people and dogs.

Where practical, pets should be cared for away from the person's home for the isolation period to avoid repeat visits.

### **Professional dog walkers**

It is acceptable for a dog walker to continue working, provided the guidance on physical distancing can be adhered to. This would include:

- remaining at least 2 metres from the owner at pick up and drop off; and from other walkers when out
- practicing good hygiene at all times, with regular handwashing both before and after contact

- dogs from infected households being kept on a lead to avoid contact with other walkers or their dogs, and you may need to review walking groups of dogs together to achieve this
- dogs may be walked in a group as long as they are kept on a lead to avoid contact with other people and any dogs not in the walking group
- walking groups should not include any dogs from self-isolating or shielding households as these animals should be walked separately and kept away from other people and dogs whilst walking.

Any dog walker who intends to conduct group walks should make their clients aware of this. This will allow the clients to make an informed decision as to whether their dog(s) should be walked on a single household basis or if they could be walked in a group.

No person should meet more than 4 other households per day in total.

### **Professional Dog Trainers**

Professional dog trainers may offer commercial training, provided the guidance on physical distancing can be adhered to. This would include:

- remaining at least 2 metres from the owners of dogs under training
- practicing good hygiene at all times, with regular handwashing both before and after any contact
- dogs being trained should be kept on a lead to avoid contact with other clients or their dogs

In an outdoor setting, dogs from 4 households may be trained together; and no more than 15 persons may participate in an outdoor training session.

In an indoor setting, dogs from no more than 2 households may be trained together at a time; and no more than 8 persons may participate in an indoor training session.

No person should meet more than 4 other households per day in total.

### **Professional dog grooming**

Professional dog grooming services may be provided as long as the guidance on physical distancing can be adhered to.

No person should meet more than 4 other households per day in total.

## **If you are self-isolating and need help caring for animals**

If you are too unwell to care for your animals and do not have anyone nearby who can help, for further advice and support please phone:

- for pets and companion animals – the Scottish SPCA animal helpline on 03000 999 999.

<https://www.scottishspca.org/news/coronavirus-and-your-pet>

- for livestock – the Royal Scottish Agricultural Benevolent Institution on 0300 111 4166 (7 am - 11 pm).

<https://rsabi.org.uk/Home-Page>

## **Taking your pet to the vet**

Vets will continue to provide emergency, and some other, services. You should contact your vet before travelling to check that a visit is essential and to ensure you understand the arrangements for social distancing at the surgery.

## **Animal Physiotherapy or Hydrotherapy**

Animal physiotherapy and hydrotherapy may take place either indoors or outdoors, provided the guidance on physical distancing can be adhered to. This would include:

- remaining at least 2 metres from the owners of animals being treated
- practicing good hygiene at all times, with cleaning of any equipment used before the next appointment, and with regular handwashing both before and after any contact

In an indoor setting, animals from no more than a single households may be treated together at a time.

## **Boarding kennels and catteries**

Boarding kennels and catteries can provide a valuable service, caring for pets of those who become seriously ill and have no-one else to look after their pet.

Boarding kennels and catteries may operate normally, provided they follow the guidance on social distancing for their staff and owners when animals arrive or are collected.

## **Travel**

## **Travelling to care for animals such as horses**

The initial 5 mile guidance on travel for leisure purposes has been relaxed. People are still requested to stay local as much as possible for goods, services and activities.

Where travelling to meet the welfare needs of an animal you must follow social distancing guidance so you don't come within two metres of people who are not part of your household.

Remember to wash your hands before and after returning.

If possible, try to minimise the number of people who need to visit each day by sharing the care of animals at stables etc.

## **Farm animals and livestock**

### **The role of local authorities in farm animal welfare during the COVID-19 outbreak**

Local authority staff are well placed to support the farming industry in these difficult times, due to the obvious advantage of local knowledge.

In the event of illness or isolation having a detrimental impact on a business, a local solution e.g. neighbours notified and help targeted via industry groups such as RSABI, NFUS, SAC is generally the best. Local authority Animal Health and Welfare staff often know the individuals involved, which can speed up response and action to correct any animal welfare concerns.

### **Livestock**

On-farm welfare problems will only result in a visit from the local authority (almost certainly with APHA staff) in the case of serious welfare difficulties. Ongoing welfare issues will be addressed (in the main) through multi-agency agreement and non-face-to-face interaction with the farmer.

During the current situation, elderly and vulnerable farmers may be isolated from outside contact, from contract assistance and from the monitoring and assistance of friends and family. With good local knowledge of the situation, local friends, relatives, or neighbours can assist the livestock holder if necessary (compliant with Scottish Government social distancing guidelines for minimising the risk of transmission of COVID-19) to improve animal welfare.

It may be appropriate to introduce public health and/or social work support for vulnerable farmers, and this can and will be done subject to the current (and updated) guidelines.

Contact with the local authority Animal Health and Welfare Service will be made by normal communication channels.

It may be of assistance to farmers encountering difficulties to refer to the Farm Advisory Service (FAS) via <https://www.fas.scot/publication/farm-emergency-plan/>.

### **Lantra Scotland Skills Matching Service**

Lantra Scotland have launched a new Skills Matching Service to respond to the urgent need for skilled workers and volunteers in the land-based industries and animal welfare sector.

If anyone needs help with animal welfare work, or if people are struggling to look after their animals due to ill health or the current COVID-19 restrictions they can visit [Lantra Scotland's website](#) to register their details. Individuals can also register if they wish to offer their labour, skills and knowledge to others.

They can also phone Lantra Scotland on 01738 310164 or email [SMS@lantra.co.uk](mailto:SMS@lantra.co.uk).

### **Rights of Access for members of the Public**

Should you have concerns about accessing recreational areas, utilising by-ways and rights of way, the local authority will be able to advise you in respect of any closures and alternative routes. This will be via General Enquiries to the officers responsible for rights of way and public access under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003.

Rights of responsible access to most land in Scotland, including paths, continue to apply during COVID-19. It is important to emphasise that, as always, these rights depend on responsible behaviour, both by the public and land managers. This is particularly important at this time when many people are using new and unfamiliar local areas for daily outdoor exercise. This is also an important time of year for farmers and other land managers, in particular, because lambing is taking place and many fields will contain young livestock and newly planted crops. It is therefore essential to comply with the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

Please read [access to the outdoors during the current coronavirus outbreak: guidance for the public and land managers](#).

[Outdoor access contacts](#).

Please read [the ministerial statement on access rights during COVID-19](#).

### **Equine owners**

Commercial equine business can take place, provided social distancing rules are adhered to.

Further useful information including an equine care plan is available on the [British Horse Society website](#).

### **General precautions to take with live animals or animal products**

General hygiene measures should be applied, including regular handwashing with soap and water after touching animals and animal products.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth until your hands have been thoroughly washed.

As per general good food safety practices, raw meat and dairy products should be handled with care. Meat from healthy livestock that is cooked thoroughly remains safe to eat.

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**From:** Redacted SG Staff  
**Sent:** 23 July 2020 16:21  
**To:** Redacted Name @hotmail.com  
**Subject:** RE: E - Dog boarding in Scotland - is it allowed yet? - Redacted Name

Dear Redacted Name

Thank you for your e-mail to the Scottish Government on the subject of dog boarding at the current time.

The Scottish Government has provided information for the owners of animals on its website - <http://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-animal-owners/>. This guidance is currently being updated to reflect the latest position in respect of the Scottish Government's Routemap through and out of the Covid-19 crisis. This revised guidance will be published in due course.

Boarding kennels have been open throughout the Covid-19 period to provide an alternative for those undertaking essential work or ill persons who were unable to care for their pet. With the relaxations announced by the First Minister on 9 July 2020, boarding kennels and catteries may now operate normally, provided they follow the guidance on social distancing for their staff and owners when animals arrive or are collected. The current guidance on keeping safe and protecting others is at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-phase-3-staying-safe-and-protecting-others/pages/overview/>

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Redacted SG Staff

ARD – Animal Health & Welfare; P Spur; Saughton House; Broomhouse Drive; Edinburgh; EH11 3XD

**From:** Redacted Name  
**Sent:** 22 July 2020 20:06  
**To:** Covid Exit Strategy  
**Subject:** Dog boarding in Scotland - is it allowed yet?

Hello,

I've looked through your guidance and can't find anything relating to dog boarding and the relaxation of lockdown.

We are based in England but will be coming up to Northumberland next week and our dog is booked into board at a house in Scotland.

The owner is unable to let us bring our dog up at present as there has been no updated guidance for dog boarding.

Please can you confirm that dog boarding is now allowed?

Many thanks,

Redacted Name

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**From:** Redacted SG Staff  
**Sent:** 05 February 2021 09:56  
**To:** Redacted Name @gmail.com  
**Cc:** 'bruce.crawford.msp@parliament.scot'  
**Subject:** RE: Your recent correspondence with Scottish Government and partner agencies - 202100136526

Dear Redacted Name,

Thank you for your follow up email.

Redacted

With regard to your question on support for animal-related businesses, the Scottish Government recognises that many businesses may be facing difficulty as a result of COVID-19, or as a result of measures designed to inhibit its spread, but may not meet the criteria of the Strategic Framework Business Fund or other Scottish or UK Government support but all are unequivocally facing difficulties as a result of the pandemic.

As such, the Scottish Government recently announced an additional £45 million in funding to local authorities to support businesses impacted by COVID-19. This includes £30 million of discretionary funding to enable local authorities to provide additional support for businesses where they consider it to be necessary or justified. Work is ongoing with local authorities to develop this fund.

You may wish to consult the [findbusinesssupport.gov.scot](https://findbusinesssupport.gov.scot) website where the most up to date information on eligibility and availability is published for this and all current support options. The Scottish Government will continue to listen to businesses to better understand the challenges and to investigate how they might realistically be supported in future, if they have not received assistance to date.

Redacted

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Redacted SG Staff  
Animal Health and Welfare Division  
The Scottish Government  
P Spur – Saughton House  
Broomhouse Drive  
EDINBURGH  
EH11 3XD

**From:** Redacted Name @gmail.com  
**Sent:** 28 January 2021 12:06  
**To:** Central Enquiry Unit <[CEU@gov.scot](mailto:CEU@gov.scot)>; Redacted SG Staff  
**Cc:** MSP Crawford B <[bruce.crawford.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:bruce.crawford.msp@parliament.scot)>; Alyn Smith MP

<[alyn.smith.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:alyn.smith.mp@parliament.uk)>

**Subject:** Re: Your recent correspondence with Scottish Government and partner agencies - 202100136526

Good afternoon Redacted SG Staff

I appreciate you taking the time to reply to my correspondence.

A little information about my facility and my concerns:-

I have a licence for 60 dogs a day within my facility. We can have over a hundred clients in and out of our building. I think this is a little different from dog walker or kennels. Please note we do not collect animals.

Redacted.

With the rapid explosion of new viruses of which we have minimal scientific guidance, perhaps a more risk averse approach should be taken by the Scottish government and provide the support for this very damaged industry.

Redacted.

I look forward to your thoughts.

Regards  
Redacted Name

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**From:** Kate Forbes MSP <Kate.Forbes.msp@parliament.scot>

**Sent:** 14 December 2020 11:08

**To:** Scottish Ministers <Scottish\_Ministers@gov.scot>

**Subject:** Animal Board Licensing (Case Ref: KF10314)

AO – Redacted SG Staff

Good morning,

I am writing on behalf of my constituent (Redacted Name) regarding dog home board licensing.

(Redacted Name) has written to me to raise concerns about the home boarders license renewal which, I am informed, is due at the end of the year.

(Redacted Name) contacted Highland Council Redacted regarding this and he confirmed that authority to grant any discretion with licensing regulations lies with the Scottish Government under the Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963 and that no temporary amendments were granted for animal boarding licensing in the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020.

I understand that in England and Wales local authorities have discounted or extended the term of their current licenses.

(Redacted Name) has explained to me that established home boarding businesses remain in a precarious position with most of them receiving no support from governments due to the home-based nature of their businesses. Most of their clients are working from home or not going on holiday, and (Redacted Name) has explained that her takings are running at 25% compared to last year.

I understand there are general concerns in this line of work that many boarders will not renew licenses and will choose to operate unlicensed and therefore unregulated and often uninsured.

I am writing to ask if the Scottish Government would consider an extension of the license period or a reduction in the cost of obtaining a license?

I am grateful to you for giving this your consideration.

Kind regards,

Kate

Kate Forbes MSP  
Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch  
(inc. Dingwall, Black Isle & Loch Ness)

Redacted

Minister for Rural Affairs and the Natural  
Environment  
Ben Macpherson MSP



T: Redacted0300 244 4000  
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Kate Forbes  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

Our ref: 202000127199  
Your ref: KF10314  
11 January 2021

Dear Kate,

Thank you for your e-mail of 14 December 2020 on behalf of your constituent Redacted Name who has asked about the licensing of home boarding for dogs.

In Scotland, it is the local authorities who license animal boarding establishments under the Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963, after carrying out statutory checks on both potential licensee and premises, to ensure the welfare of any boarded animals.

Boarding licences, under the terms of the 1963 Act, relate to the year of operation for which they are granted. The 1963 Act permits local authorities to extend the licensed period by a further 3 months, but this only applies where a licensee has died.

The 1963 Act also empowers the local authority, rather than the Scottish Government, to determine the application fee for a boarding licence that it applies. In the current challenging times it is possible that local authorities, if contacted, may choose to vary the fees they charge.

I hope this is helpful to you and your constituent.

**BEN MACPHERSON**  
Minister for Rural Affairs and the Natural Environment



From: Redacted Name @gmail.com>  
Sent: 05 January 2021 10:19  
To: Central Enquiry Unit <CEU@gov.scot>  
Subject: Business opening clarification

Good morning,

Could someone please confirm whether my business has to close or whether we can still remain open please.

We own a large commercial dog day care, training centre and dog park in Stirling. The council unfortunately is still waiting for further guidelines to confirm either way, hoping you might be able to advise me meantime.

Kind regards  
Redacted Name

Agriculture and Rural Delivery Directorate  
Animal Health and Welfare Division



T: 0300-244 «Ext» F: 0300-244 «Fax»  
E: <email>@gov.scot

Redacted Name @gmail.com

Our Reference: 202100136526  
27 January 2021

Dear Redacted Name,

Thank you for your email of 5 January 2021 to the Scottish Government regarding the opening of your business during the current restrictions.

The advice and rules in Scotland are contained on the Scottish Government website at <https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>. This Advice for Animal Owners at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-animal-owners/> provides information for the owners of boarding kennels and professional dog walkers.

The guidance notes that boarding kennels and catteries may operate normally, provided the rules on physical distancing are followed and measures are taken to minimise the risk of the incidence and spread of coronavirus on the premises, for example limiting close face to face interaction and maintaining hygiene.

Redacted

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Redacted SG Staff  
**AHW : Animal Welfare**

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**From:** Redacted Name @btinternet.com>  
**Sent:** 05 January 2021 14:54  
**To:** Central Enquiry Unit <CEU@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** Lockdown

I own a dog kennels and day care facility, not an essential business. Should we remain open?  
Kind regards  
Redacted Name

Agriculture and Rural Delivery Directorate  
Animal Health and Welfare Division



T: 0300-244 «Ext» F: 0300-244 «Fax»  
E: <email>@gov.scot

Redacted Name @btinternet.com

Our Reference: 202100137105  
25 January 2021

Dear Redacted Name,

Thank you for your email of 5 January 2021 to the Scottish Government regarding the operating of your dog kennel and day care facility during the current restrictions. The advice and rules in Scotland are contained on the Scottish Government website at <https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>. This contains Advice for Animal Owners at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-animal-owners/> which was updated on 11 January 2021.

The guidance notes that boarding kennels and catteries may operate normally, provided the rules on physical distancing are followed and measures are taken to minimise the risk of the incidence and spread of coronavirus on the premises, for example limiting close face to face interaction and maintaining hygiene.

This should include maintaining physical distancing for their staff and owners when animals arrive or are collected.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Redacted SG Staff  
**AHW : Animal Welfare**

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