

## **Guidance on Housing and Monitoring Pets After Exposure to Persons Undergoing Monitoring for Ebola Virus Disease and Persons Suspected or Confirmed as Having Ebola Virus Disease**

Wyoming Department of Health

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This document provides the Wyoming Department of Health (WDH) policy on the handling of pets of persons undergoing monitoring for Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) and housing and monitoring of pets after exposure to a person suspected or confirmed as having EVD. This policy will be updated as new information becomes available.

If a person develops illness that is suspected or confirmed to be EVD, public health officials will obtain information regarding the presence or absence of pets or other animals that have been in close contact with the ill person. If such a pet or animal is identified, the following measures are recommended and may be enforced by public health officials.

**I. Persons undergoing direct active monitoring for EVD by public health officials** (meaning that public health officials directly observe the individual at least once a day to review symptoms and check temperature because they may have been exposed to Ebola and who have not yet become ill) **should avoid close contact with dogs, cats, and other mammals out of an abundance of caution to prevent possible transmission of EVD from people to animals and also to prevent the need for quarantine of an animal due to contact with a person with symptomatic Ebola.** It is recommended that dogs or cats be removed from the residence and be cared for by someone who does not reside with the monitored person until the direct active monitoring period ends. Other types of pets in the home should be evaluated for risk on a case-by-case basis. This recommendation does not apply to persons only undergoing active monitoring.

**II. If a person who develops illness that is suspected or confirmed to be EVD has had close contact with pets while symptomatic** (fever or other symptoms compatible with Ebola), **then the pet should be monitored for signs of illness for 21 days after the last contact with the ill person.**

**III. If the person suspected or confirmed as having EVD has other exposed household members who will now be monitored for illness for 21 days after the last contact with the ill person** (as a result of having had close contact to the ill person) **and who can care for the pet, then the pet can stay with that household for the pet's 21 day monitoring period as long as pet is not ill. The pet shall not be moved from the original location to any other location unless approved by public health officials.**

A licensed veterinarian wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) appropriate for Ebola (see PPE section below) should examine the pet at the beginning of the pet's 21 day monitoring period (after the

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pet's last contact with the ill person). If there are no signs of illness that could represent EVD in the pet, then household members can observe the pet for signs of illness throughout the monitoring period. If at any time during the 21 day monitoring period the pet becomes ill, then the pet must be examined by a licensed veterinarian, wearing PPE appropriate for Ebola. If it is believed the illness could be related to EVD, then the pet must be removed from home and isolated in an appropriate facility as described below (see Isolation Procedures below). Waste generated by a healthy animal during the home monitoring period should be collected as soon as possible after creation and deposited in a plastic trash bag. The trash bags should be stored in a rigid container away from public access until the end of the 21 day monitoring period. At the end of the monitoring period the trash bags can then be disposed of along with other landfill trash.

**IV. If the person suspected of or confirmed as having EVD does not have exposed household members who could care for the pet during the pet's 21 day monitoring period, then the pet will have to be cared for elsewhere. Human and animal health officials must perform a risk assessment of the pet to determine its risk for exposure to Ebola and to determine if quarantine is required. The pet cannot be moved from the home prior to completion of a risk assessment.** If quarantine is required, the pet should be placed in a controlled environment with monitoring and appropriate PPE available, should the pet become ill (see quarantine procedures below). During the 21 day quarantine period, a licensed veterinarian wearing PPE appropriate for Ebola should examine the pet daily.

If at any time during the 21 day quarantine period the pet becomes ill with an illness that could be EVD, animal isolation procedures should be followed (see Isolation Procedures below).

#### **Quarantine Procedures (animal that is not showing signs of illness but has possibly been exposed to Ebola)**

Individuals handling animals under quarantine, including the removal of the animal from its home, should wear PPE appropriate for EVD. The pet should be monitored for any change in health status for 21 days. Signs of illness could include decreased appetite, lethargy, blood in urine or feces, vomiting, or diarrhea. If illness is observed, the temperature of the pet should be monitored daily. Illness in any quarantined animal should be reported to the State Veterinarian (Jim Logan, DVM, 307-857-4140) and State Public Health Veterinarian (Karl Musgrave, DVM, 307-777-5825 or 1-888-996-9104), who will determine the next actions to be taken.

Pets placed into quarantine should be decontaminated. Wyoming Regional Veterinary Coordinators (RVCs) and County Veterinarians (CVs) will follow animal decontamination protocols and guidance provided by the State Veterinarian and State Public Health Veterinarian in decontaminating pets before they enter the quarantine facility. The animal must be kept apart from other animals. The State Veterinarian or State Public Health Veterinarian will provide additional guidance and approve the quarantine facility.

Waste generated by a healthy animal under quarantine should be collected as soon as possible after creation and deposited in a plastic trash bag. The trash bags should be stored in a rigid container away

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from public access until the animal is released from quarantine. The trash bags can then be disposed of along with other landfill trash. If an animal becomes ill and is diagnosed with EVD, then special handling of animal waste may be required. The State Veterinarian and State Public Health Veterinarian, with consultation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), will provide guidance on special handling requirements.

### **Release from Quarantine**

Animals may be released from quarantine after 21 days if clinically well as determined by a licensed veterinarian, and release is approved by public health officials. Currently there are no recommendations for testing of an animal for Ebola virus before release from quarantine. If testing guidelines or recommendations are developed, they will be provided to quarantine staff.

### **Isolation Procedures (animal with illness that could be due to EVD)**

Any pet that becomes ill with an illness that could be EVD should be handled under isolation procedures. Isolation can take place at the quarantine facility site but stricter infection control procedures will need to be followed. Animals should be placed in a room with the door closed, and access should be limited. PPE will be required before entering the room housing the animal, handling the animal or any materials that have come into contact with the animal, and cleaning up blood, vomit, feces, or other body fluids. Special attention should be paid to proper PPE donning and doffing procedures. Any aerosol-generating procedures performed on the animal should also be performed with appropriate PPE and infection control procedures. Waste removed from the isolation room, as well as any material objects removed for cleaning or disposal, should be considered potentially infectious and handled as regulated medical waste under protocols that will be provided by the State Public Health Veterinarian and State Veterinarian.

### **Pre-Identification of Quarantine Sites**

Wyoming Regional Veterinary Coordinators (RVCs) along with County Veterinarians (CVs) and other Veterinary Reserve Corps members with assistance from the Wyoming Livestock Board/State Veterinarian, County Emergency Coordinators, and State Public Health Veterinarian will pre-identify potential quarantine sites in regions/counties.

### **Ready Quarantine Sites**

The RVCs and CVs will develop plans for equipping quarantine sites on short notice with PPE, pet food, feed and water containers, decontamination supplies, thermometers, trash bags and other supplies. These plans will identify staff to work in the quarantine facility.

### **Personal Protective Equipment**

PPE shall consist of, **at a minimum**, double gloves with outer glove taped to the suit with waterproof tape, splash-resistant disposable hooded suit with foot covers impervious to fluids, eye protection (goggles or face shield), and an air purifying respirator (N-95 or equivalent level of protection). Additional protective equipment might be required in certain situations (i.e., heavy duty or puncture-resistant outer gloves, head or neck protection if not sufficiently provided by the protective suit).

### **Animal Testing**

Currently, routine testing for EVD is not available for pets. Ebola virus testing of animal samples will be limited to cases where testing is specifically warranted, based on the type of exposure and assessment in consultation with CDC on a case-by-case basis. No samples will be tested without pre-authorization from CDC. In the event that an animal has a confirmed positive RT-PCR for Ebola virus RNA, the animal should be euthanized and the body incinerated.

For additional guidance or questions please call Karl Musgrave, DVM, State Public Health Veterinarian, 307-777-5825 or email [karl.musgrave@wyo.gov](mailto:karl.musgrave@wyo.gov).