FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Wolf Administration Updates Veterinarian Guidance to Include Routine or Elective Surgeries

Harrisburg, PA – The Wolf Administration today updated the [Guidance on Veterinary Practices amid the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) to allow for non-essential services and routine or elective surgical procedures, like spaying and neutering, to take place.

"Veterinary medicine services are life-sustaining businesses and have been permitted to continue to operate throughout the COVID-19 pandemic," Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine said. "As veterinarians continue to provide services through the phased reopening, it is important to promote public health practices and align with efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19. The Department of Health, along with the departments of Agriculture and State, appreciate the cooperation of the veterinary community and have made the decision to allow for routine or elective surgical procedures to now take place."

Veterinarian practices were allowed to stay open according to the Pennsylvanian State Board of Veterinary Medicine and the American Veterinary Medical Association's COVID-19 guidelines. Throughout the pandemic, the Pennsylvania Department of State suspended requirements related to telemedicine and reactivation of retired practitioners.

"I want to thank veterinarians throughout Pennsylvania who have continued to provide essential services throughout the COVID-19 emergency," said Secretary of State Kathy Boockvar. "Thanks to their dedication, we have been able to ensure that Pennsylvanians receive the services they need in this unprecedented time and are now safely able to expand those services as Pennsylvania continues its reopening process."

Pennsylvania's Dog Law requires shelters and rescues to have dogs and cats spayed/neutered before adoption. Effective April 2, 2020 the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture has temporarily waived this requirement. Shelters must keep a running list of pets adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic and follow up with adopted pet owners to make sure the procedure takes place. Pet owners who adopted a pet have up to 120 days from the time of adoption to have a procedure completed.

"Veterinarians, technicians and others in their practices are a vitally important part of our agriculture workforce," Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding said. "As we reopen businesses and begin to seek a new normal, we must continue to balance protecting

the lives and health of our workforce, and meeting the needs of the people who rely on their services to care for and protect the animals we all care about."

As of 12:00 a.m., June 23, the department has confirmed 510 additional positive cases of COVID-19, bringing the statewide total to 82,696. All 67 counties in Pennsylvania have cases of COVID-19.

There are 6,464 total deaths attributed to COVID-19, an increase of 38 new deaths. County-specific information and a statewide map are available here.

The Wolf Administration stresses the role Pennsylvanians play in helping to reduce the spread of COVID-19:

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Cover any coughs or sneezes with your elbow, not your hands.
- Clean surfaces frequently.
- Stay home to avoid spreading COVID-19, especially if you are unwell.
- If you must go out for a life-sustaining reason, please wear a mask.

Updated Coronavirus Links: Press Releases, State Lab Photos, Graphics

- Daily COVID-19 Report
- Press releases regarding coronavirus
- Latest information on the coronavirus
- Photos of the state's lab in Exton (for download and use)
- Coronavirus and preparedness graphics (located at the bottom of the page)
- Community preparedness and procedures materials
- Map with the number of COVID-19 cases

All Pennsylvania residents are encouraged to sign up for AlertPA, a text notification system for health, weather, and other important alerts like COVID-19 updates from commonwealth agencies. Residents can sign up online at www.ready.pa.gov/BeInformed/Signup-For-Alerts.