

# Indiana Pet Grooming Safety Standards Covid-19

## **Problem:**

Pet grooming was deemed non-essential in the State of Indiana on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020. Without much argument most grooming establishments closed their doors. However, many remained open serving the public in whatever manner suited their business. Some have been reported, some closed, while others reopened. According to the State of Indiana, the COVID-19 virus could be spread via the pet's hair and groomers were told to close.

*The CDC statement is as follows;* Although we know certain bacteria and fungi can be carried on fur and hair, there is no evidence that viruses, including the virus that causes COVID-19, can spread to people from the skin, fur, or hair of pets. However, because animals can sometimes carry other germs that can make people sick, it's always a good idea to practice healthy habits around pets and other animals, including washing hands before and after interacting with them.

Pet groomers from around the nation are having similar issues in their respective states. California, and some other states have deemed Pet Grooming essential.

Groomers are the first line of defense for a pet's health. While not veterinarians, they detect lumps, bumps, ear infections, anal gland issues, and various other concerns many pet owners never see. Groomers see these pets 8-10 times per year on average and vet may only see them once or twice. It is a crucial business to the well-being of the nearly 190 million cats and dogs in the United States.

## **Solution:**

While we feel pet grooming is essential, we recognize as an industry, that is it not the same as healthcare, food, and shelter essentials. However, there is a place and with reasonable protocol that groomers can safely abide by in order to return the nearly 1400 groomers in the State of Indiana back to work. Many of which are self-employed and receiving little to no unemployment.

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## Covid-19

### **Procedure: Salon Groomers**

Pet drop-off/pickup: While we recognize the validity of the efforts for curbside pick-up/drop-off, it is a safety issue for the pets that we cannot execute. The American Kennel Club recommends that you have two stops between the pet and the outside. In some instances, this is unavoidable. Collecting a pet outside with the chance for it to run is not ideal nor safe.

Pet groomers will communicate to their respective customers that only one customer(human) is allowed within their salons at any given time for drop off/pickup or unless 6ft social distancing measures can be taken and the floor marked with places to stand.

Staggered grooming times can allow for the above policy to be effective.

Leashes: Upon the customer entering, the groomer will address the customer wearing a mask. They will approach the animal with a slip lead provided by the employer that is of a nylon material capable of being disinfected. These leashes will only be used by the groomer. The groomer will leash the pet and the owner will remove their leash and collar and take with them upon leaving. Once the pet has been transferred to the groomer, they can step away from the customer maintaining social distancing to discuss the groom.

Pet Groomer will take pet directly to the tub and bathe. In the event a tub is not available the pet will be placed inside a kennel. Free run salons must purchase kennels to house pets in. Once the pet is placed into the tub, the kennel will be immediately disinfected.

Upon completion of the pet, the groomer will call the customer and take a credit card payment over the phone or on a credit card terminal within the salon that can then be disinfected after the customer leaves. Cash can be accepted per W.H.O.

Hand sanitizer will be provided by the employer to be located at each checkout for the groomers to use to sanitize their hands before, during, and after interactions.

### **Procedure: Mobile Grooming**

Groomer will meet customer at the home entrance wearing a mask. Groomer will place leash around the pet while the customer removes their leash and collar. Once complete groomer may step away to the recommended six feet and discuss the groom or return to their vehicle and call to discuss the groom. At no time may the groomer enter the customers home.

Pet will be placed directly in the tub.

Upon completion of the pet, the groomer will call the owner and take a credit card payment over the phone or on a credit card terminal at the door that can then be disinfected after use.

Hand sanitizer will be provided by the employer to be in each mobile grooming van for the groomers to use to sanitize their hands before, during, and after interactions.

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### **Procedure: In Home Grooming (Customers home)**

No in-home grooming will be done at this time for the safety of the customers and groomers.

Employers are to provide adequate training for hand washing and disinfecting of tools, tables, kennels, tubs, customer areas, etc. Employers are to provide necessary disinfectant and PPE for groomers.