

**News Release****For immediate release: April 26, 2023****Contact: Michael Crusan (<mailto:michael.crusan@state.mn.us>)**

# **New guidance for pet owners to combat community spread of canine influenza virus**

Saint Paul, Minn - The Minnesota Board of Animal Health is releasing new canine influenza guidance for dog owners, dog care facilities, and veterinarians as it continues to track more confirmed and suspected cases of this contagious canine disease. Four more cases of canine influenza have been confirmed outside of the original outbreak the Board announced on April 6 ([https://www.bah.state.mn.us/news\\_release/suspected-canine-influenza-outbreak-prompts-quarantines-in-multiple-metro-animal-shelters/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://www.bah.state.mn.us/news_release/suspected-canine-influenza-outbreak-prompts-quarantines-in-multiple-metro-animal-shelters/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)). There are also strong indicators of community spread of canine influenza in the Twin Cities. Additionally, the Board has been inundated with calls from veterinarians on suspected cases of canine influenza when testing is either denied or results are inconclusive.

“Unfortunately, testing for canine influenza is cost prohibitive for many dog owners, and we aren’t receiving as many confirmed positive results as the numbers of sick dogs veterinarians are reporting at their clinics,” said Senior Veterinarian in charge of Companion Animals, Dr. Veronica Bartsch. “If a dog is symptomatic and an owner elects not to test or a test comes back negative, we’re still encouraging veterinarians to treat and advise patients for canine influenza out of an abundance of caution.”

The Board recommends the following precautions until the outbreak subsides:

## **Dog owners**

- Avoid direct dog-to-dog contact with dogs outside of your household or dogs known to have been boarded, attended dog day-care, or visited a dog park in the last seven days.
- If your dog is sick, keep them at home, away from other animals, and call your veterinarian.
- Consider avoiding dog parks and other locations with uncontrolled dog-to-dog contact.
- Keep your distance (six feet) at places where dogs congregate like dog parks and while on walks with your dog.
- Canine influenza can also spread via contaminated surfaces, including skin and clothing. If your dog is sick or you have contact with dogs outside of your household, wash your hands and change clothes before interacting with other animals.

## **Dog day-cares, kennels and shelters**

- Direct staff to be on alert for clinical signs.
- Immediately separate symptomatic dogs from others and contact your veterinarian. Signs of influenza include coughing, runny eyes or nose, hard swallowing or throat clearing, fever, and lethargy. Signs often appear suddenly, and a dog that appears healthy in the morning may show signs in the afternoon.
- Any dog showing signs of respiratory disease should be immediately sent home and not allowed to return to the facility for 30 days. Even a dog that appears to have recovered can continue to shed infectious virus for 30 days.
- Increase cleaning and disinfection measures and frequency. Advise staff to wash hands and clean their clothes between dog interactions.
- Consider reducing the number of dogs in play groups and keep group membership consistent.
- Screen new arrivals for upper respiratory symptoms.

## **Veterinarians**

- Report positive canine influenza test results to the Board via our online case report form (<https://admin.govdelivery.com/www.bah.state.mn.us/canine-influenza-report->

form?utm\_medium=email&utm\_source=govdelivery). Once the Board receives a case report, our agents conduct all follow-up investigations and quarantine procedures with your client.

- Treat symptomatic patients with caution and advise a 30-day in-home quarantine even without a positive influenza test.
- Practice good biosecurity in the clinic. Isolate dogs with respiratory illness and thoroughly clean and disinfect surfaces and instruments used during the exam. Wear full PPE when treating these patients.

When canine influenza is confirmed, the Board of Animal Health works with the reporting veterinarian and dog owner to initiate an in-home quarantine of the affected animal(s) to stop the spread of the virus. Additionally, the Board works to trace back any known direct contacts the dog has had with other dogs to monitor for disease spread. Symptomatic dogs often exhibit a cough, low grade fever, tiredness, disinterest in food, sneezing, runny nose, and shortness of breath.

Find additional canine influenza updates and guidance documents on the Board's website ([https://www.bah.state.mn.us/dogs-cats/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery#canine-influenza](https://www.bah.state.mn.us/dogs-cats/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery#canine-influenza)).

--30--

**Healthy animals** for healthy people and communities.

All modern and up-to-date browsers are supported, which include: Google Chrome, Safari, Microsoft Edge, and Mozilla Firefox.

Minnesota Board of Animal Health  
625 Robert Street North  
Saint Paul, MN 55155  
Ph: 651-296-2942  
Fax: 651-296-7417  
TTY: 800-627-3529

Animal Bytes (/animal-bytes)  
News Releases (/news\_release)  
Rabies Alerts (/rabies\_alert)

[Contact Us \(/contact-us\)](#)

[Partnerships \(/partnerships\)](#)

[Program Directors \(/program-directors\)](#)

[Board Members \(/board-members\)](#)

[Our Mission \(/our-mission\)](#)

[Request Data \(/data-request\)](#)

[Annual Report \(/media/annual-report.pdf\)](#)

[Affirmative Action Plan \(/media/Aff-Action-Plan2018.pdf\)](#)

[Privacy Policy \(/website-policy#privacy-policy\)](#)

[Terms of Use \(/website-policy#terms-of-use\)](#)

[SharePoint \(login required\) \(https://mn365.sharepoint.com/sites/BAH/SitePages/Home.aspx\)](#)

[Exhibitions \(/exhibitions\)](#)

[Imports \(/imports\)](#)

[Livestock Auction Markets \(/livestock-auction-markets\)](#)

[Official ID \(/official-id\)](#)

© 2023 Minnesota Board of Animal Health