



TO: All Staff and Volunteers of Paws and Stripes

FROM: Lindsey Kay, CEO

DATE: March 13, 2020

RE: COVID-19

As you all know, The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared the COVID-19 outbreak as a pandemic. Additionally, upon this week's presumptive positive cases of COVID-19 in New Mexico, the Governor has declared a state of emergency, and the NM Department of Health has issued a 30-day ban on gatherings of 100 or more people. For many, this is an uncertain time filled with anxiety and fear. While most of us are not in immediate danger, it is still **everyone's** responsibility to contain this threat to those in our families and communities that are older, immunosuppressed, or otherwise living with chronic health issues.

While Paws and Stripes' staff health risk is low because of its size and level of exposure is small, we are still taking all necessary precautions to participate in the minimization of the spread of COVID-19. Additionally, an Infectious Disease Outbreak Response Plan will be put in place if conditions continue to worsen. As of March 12, 2020, the following protocols will be put into place:

- Daily sanitation of all high-touch surfaces throughout our facility
- All cleaning products used are confirmed effective to kill COVID-19 via the CDC
- All staff and visitors are asked to ensure they wash their hands or use hand sanitizer after all public engagements
- All non-staff personnel will be asked to only enter and exit through the main door and courtyard in the Reception area
- A staff wide training will be held to ensure the accurate dissemination of information regarding this viral outbreak, to include CDC recommendations.
- Communications regarding any programmatic changes or notices will be issued to all necessary parties as they arise
- Any staff that think they may be ill are urged to stay home in order to avoid spreading the virus

### **Travel**

Anyone that may be travelling outside of the state or country in the coming months should be sure to visit the CDC's page (<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>) regarding COVID-19, and take all necessary precautions. If possible, postponing any travel plans is the recommendation. Until further notice, Paws and Stripes will hold off on any travel plans for staff in the near future. At



this time, no staff members have travelled to locations identified to have a high risk of exposure.

### **Social Distancing**

Any staff, volunteers, or clients that think they or a member of their family may be ill are strongly encouraged to stay home. Symptoms associated with the virus include shortness of breath, cough, or a fever of 100.4 or higher. Isolation is the most important weapon to combat the spread of the virus if infection is suspected. In the event that you do think you may be infected, before visiting health care facility, call the **Coronavirus Emergency Hotline at 1-855-600-3453. Healthcare professionals prefer you contact urgent care or other clinic locations prior to being treated, and requested a mask be brought out to you before entering the facility.**

While the COVID-19 state of emergency persists, Paws and Stripes will not require a doctor's note confirming health condition for absences exceeding 3 days. The current health care providers are overwhelmed with this viral outbreak, as well as the even more prevalent cases of influenza. If you think you or a member of your household may be exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, please contact your supervisor at Paws and Stripes.

At this time, given the small size of our team, Paws and Stripes will not be moving to a remote work structure. Staff are still required to report to work as usual unless otherwise specified at a later date.

### **Public Gatherings**

In accordance with the directives issued by the Governor of New Mexico and the State Department of Health, Paws and Stripes will be postponing it's ten-year anniversary Celebration of Heroes Gala scheduled for April 25, 2020 to a later date this year. For any individuals or businesses having already purchased tickets or sponsorships, these purchases will be transferable to the new event date. As soon as the new date is chosen, all constituents will be contacted accordingly.

Any volunteers participating in the planning and execution of the 2020 Celebration of Heroes will receive notifications of a new committee meeting schedule as we move forward.

While this is a momentous event for our organization, it is more important to ensure the health and safety of the public. We look forward to celebrating with everyone later this year.

The best thing we can all do to ensure an effective coordinated response to the COVID-19 outbreak is to remain calm, wash your hands, and stay informed of the current conditions in your area. Please reach out to a Paws and Stripes representative if you have any further questions or concerns.