

North Carolina Has First Reported SARS-CoV-2 Positive Case in Dog

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The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services has received its first reported case of a confirmed SARS-CoV-2 positive dog in North Carolina. SARS-CoV-2 is the virus that causes COVID-19 in humans.

On Monday, Aug. 3, 2020, at approximately 6:00 p.m., a client arrived at the [NC State Veterinary Hospital](#) with their dog who was demonstrating signs of respiratory distress with onset earlier that day. The dog, unfortunately, succumbed to its acute illness. The client alerted staff that a member of the family had previously tested positive for COVID-19 and later was tested negative.

Samples collected from the dog were tested for the SARS-CoV-2 virus with a Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test in the hospital diagnostic laboratory and were then sent to the [National Veterinary Services Laboratories](#) (NVSL) for confirmatory testing. Those tests confirmed a positive result; indicating a confirmed SARS-CoV-2 case per the national case definition developed by the United States Department of Agriculture. A necropsy was performed to try to determine the animal's state of health at the time of death and the cause of death, and the complete investigation is ongoing. The NC State Veterinary Hospital staff notified the family and state health officials from NCDHHS and the [NC Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services](#) (NCDA&CS) of the positive test result.

“Based on the information available, the risk of animals spreading the virus to people is considered to be low,” said Dr. Carl Williams, State Public Health Veterinarian.

If pet owners are concerned about the health of their dog, they should contact their veterinarian and discuss the dog's symptoms before bringing them to the veterinarian office. Additional information regarding SARS-CoV-2 and animals is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/animals.html>.

According to the CDC and the [United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service](#) (USDA-APHIS), there is currently no evidence that pets play a significant role in spreading the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

“There is no indication at this time that dogs can transmit the virus to other animals, so there is no justification in taking measures against companion animals that may compromise their welfare,” said State Veterinarian Dr. Doug Meckes.

NCDHHS' Division of Public Health and [NCDA&CS](#) are closely monitoring the emerging

information about COVID-19 and its consequences for domestic animals. Guidance for pet owners is posted at <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/information/individuals-families-communities/pet-owners>.

DPH, in cooperation with NCDA&CS, the dog owner and their veterinarian, and federal agencies, is planning to evaluate other pets in the home to determine if pet-to-pet transmission may have occurred, however unlikely.

Due to patient confidentiality, no additional information about this case will be provided.