AC-18 CROSS CONTAMINATION

**Purpose**

The purpose of this procedure is to detail proper protocol for limiting the possibility of cross contaminating disease, causing illness between animals in our care.

**Policy**

All staff will follow all cleaning protocols to avoid spreading illness at all times.

**Staff /Areas Affected**

All Staff

Volunteers

**Definitions**

**ShelterLuv** – Database used by HSWM for all tracking of customers, animals and associated service

**Responsibilities**

Director of Animal Logistics, Director of Animal Care and Adoptions Manager are all responsible for assuring cleaning protocols and all other Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and best practices are followed in their areas of responsibility, to avoid exposure and cross contamination to other animals. All staff members and volunteers are responsible for using best practices at all times when coming in contact with any animal. Disease may be present without clinical diagnosis, and sanitation protocols should be followed at all times.

If any animal is undiagnosed but experiences multiple episodes of diarrhea, submit a fecal sample to vet staff for testing.

**Common Illnesses**

**Giardia** is the most prevalent and easiest to transmit in the shelter environment. Giardia is a microscopic parasite that causes diarrhea and is found on surfaces or in soil, food or water that is contaminated with feces from the infected animal. Giardia can spread from dogs to cats and vice versa.

**Coccidia** - are tiny single-celled parasites that live in the intestine. They are found more often in puppies, but they can also infect older dogs and cats. They become infected by ingesting items or feces that contain the parasite. Infected animals shed cysts contain the parasite in their stool, and can live in the environment for up to one year. Coccidia species for dogs is different than in cats.

**Ringworm** – is not a worm, it is a fungal skin infection that can affect humans and many animal species. The infection is contagious and transmission occurs by direct contact with the fungus. It may be passed by direct contact with an infected animal or person, or by handling contaminated objects or touching contaminated surfaces.

**URI/Upper Respiratory Infection** – Most common in the feline population.  is a very common disease that can vary considerably in severity, and on occasions can even be life-threatening. Clinical signs include sneezing, nasal discharge, conjunctivitis (inflammation of the lining of the eyes), ocular discharge, loss of appetite, fever and depression. Very young, very old and immunosuppressed and cats under stress are more likely to develop severe disease and possibly die as a result of their URI.

**Parvo** – Parvo is a concern, primarily when new puppies are admitted. Parvo is a highly contagious virus. It causes an infectious illness in puppies and young dogs, and without treatment, it is potentially deadly. Part of what makes the virus so dangerous is the ease with which it is spread through the canine population. The virus spreads either by direct contact with an infected dog, or through feces. They will continue to shed the virus while sick and for up to 14 days after recovery. Quarantine and avoiding cross contamination is essential for the health of the dog and others.

**Panleukopenia** - can spread from cat to cat in several ways. The virus is shed in all bodily secretions such as urine and vomit, and largely shed in the stool. Direct contact with an infected cat is one mode of transmission; the virus is also spread through contact with fomites (contaminated objects) such as hands, instruments, clothing, food and water dishes, toys and bedding.

**General Procedures**

Spread of transmittable disease is very easy in a shelter environment. WE are the leading cause of sick animals due to spreading illness from one to another, by not using gloves, shoe covers, and hand sanitizing.

* Anyone working with sick animals should make every effort to avoid areas housing and healthy animals
* Sick animals should be cared for AFTER healthy animals
* Dog care staff should stay away from cat areas and vice versa whenever disease is present, and it is practical
* All contaminated or suspect contaminated (with Giardia, Coccidia, URI) linens and/or soft toys should be put in trash bags, tied shut and taken to the laundry or dumpster as soon as possible. If disease contaminated linens are put in the laundry room they should be put in bags and labeled with the suspect disease. Parvo or Parvo suspect linens should always be bagged and taken immediately to the dumpster.
* Staff caring for puppy room puppies should not handle any sick dogs in medical isolation.

Assume all animals have a potentially communicable disease.

**\*\*Use of proper handwashing with soap and water, hand sanitizer or new gloves between contact with each animal is required.**

**Hand washing** is the next best choice when gloves are impractical. Proper hand washing has the significant advantage of removing even the most resistant pathogens, and is therefore required under certain circumstances (e.g. when hands are contaminated with feces, blood or bodily fluids, are visibly soiled, or after suspected exposure to a durable pathogen such as parvovirus or ringworm). Proper hand washing technique consists of:

1. Wet hands with warm running water
2. Lather with soap
3. Scrub all surfaces for a minimum of 20 seconds
4. Rinse
5. Thoroughly dry hands using two single use paper towels for 10 seconds each – if cloth towels are used, a fresh one must be used for each hand washing episode. Hands should be dried for 10 seconds on one area, then 10 seconds on a fresh area of the towel.

Moisture on hands may actually facilitate illness transfer.

**Hand Sanitizer** can be used in place of soap and water washing between animals. Rub your hands together, covering all surfaces of both hands, including between your fingers and up around your fingertips and nails. Rub hands together for 30 seconds to allow your hands to completely absorb the product and the hand sanitizer to completely dry.

**Gloves** are a fool-proof choice for preventing germ transfer on hands, provided they are actually changed before and after every animal. A change of gloves between every animal is required when handling animals that may be infected with particularly environmentally resistant germs, when a zoonotic infection is suspected, or during any outbreak of unknown disease. For handling that does not require great dexterity (such as carrying cats) a cheap, relatively easy alternative to latex gloves are lightweight food preparation gloves. Wash hands after removing gloves, if you have been handling an animal with a known illness (hands can become contaminated through small breaks in the gloves or in the process of taking them off).

If you opt to wear gloves when interacting with animals, do NOT touch any surfaces after interacting with the animal or their environment while wearing the gloves

**Shoe covers** should be worn inside kennels, lobby rooms or colony’s suspect of any disease. Diarrhea being the first symptom. Immediately start use of shoe covers and obtain a stool sample for review. Do NOT wear the shoe covers outside the infected area. Always remove them inside, and step out into a clean area.

**General Cleaning**

*\*\*Rescue solution should be a 1:64 ratio with water. (2 oz per gallon of water.) When filling a 32 oz. spray bottle, ½ oz. of Rescue should be added. Contact time is FIVE minutes. \*\**

Any gloves, shoe covers or linens or toys that are suspect of Giardia or any other contagious disease should be put directly into a trash bag. Trash bags should be tied up and taken to the dumpster outside as soon as possible.

All floors in rooms with animals (kennels, cattery, lobby rooms, colonies, holding, ISO, consult rooms and hallway outside rooms must be mopped with MicroChem daily.

Public areas that dogs travel (hallways, lobby, consult rooms) are mopped with MicroChem regularly based on schedules assigned to various departments.

Family Room in Admitting area is mopped with MicroChem after each animal leaves.

The Admitting Vaccine Room floor is mopped after each animal. The exam table and scale is spray cleaned with MicroChem after each animal. Deep cleaning of the Vaccine Room is done on Sundays.

Human traffic in any Holding or ISO should be reserved for necessary visits only. Anyone entering or leaving these areas should properly wash hands before entering and after touching any animal.

Infected linens should be placed directly into trash bags, not on the floor or should not touch any other linens.

**Dog Areas** –

* Puppy laundry should be put into a trash bag and taken to the dumpster. Do not put puppy laundry in the laundry room, for puppies housed in any area, especially puppy room.
* All aspects of care for a contaminated dog should be done at once whenever possible. Walk, scoop, feed, spot clean, etc., then remove gloves/wash hands before moving on to the next.

**Cat Areas** –

* Litter boxes should never be put on tables or counters. Scoop directly into a trash bin.
* Porthole cover for use in the condos should be sanitized after every use, before coming in contact with anther condo
* Bowls/hard toys from a contaminated cat area should be put into a trash bag for holding until they can be sanitized after all other noninfectious items have been washed/sanitized.
* Litter box/scoops from a contaminated cat area should be put into a separate trash bag until they can be sanitized after all other items are washed, including contaminated bowls/toys

**Cleaning Chemicals**

MicroChem – will be used in the kennels when foaming and to mop lobby, consult rooms, bathroom and hallway floors

Rescue – will be used for sanitizing dishes

Bleach – will NOT be used for general cleaning. Laundry is the only place bleach will be used regularly

Bathrooms – Disinfecting spray cleaner and/or sanitizing wipes are used for all surfaces

**Reference Documents**

SOP AC-11 Kennel Processes

SOP A-12 Cat Care Processes

AC-12 Addendum – Rescue Disinfectant

SOP AC-10 Canine Parvovirus

SOP CS-06 Cleaning

M-01 Reporting Sick Dogs

M-02 Giardia

M-03 Parvovirus – Dogs

M-04 Reporting Sick Cats

M-05 Diarrhea – Dogs & Cats

M-06 Ringworm

**Revision History**

V1 - Created 7/6/20

V2 – Revised 4/29/21