



**HUMANE
SOCIETY**
OF BOULDER VALLEY

Canine Infectious Respiratory Disease Complex (CIRDC) FAQ

Recent news stories have reported concerns about an increase in severe respiratory illnesses in dogs in our region.

Infectious respiratory diseases in dogs can be caused by a variety of viruses and bacteria. At this time, the underlying cause(s) for the illnesses reported is unknown.

Veterinary and animal training experts from the Humane Society of Boulder Valley (HSBV) answered some frequently asked questions about respiratory illness and steps pet guardians can take to protect their dog(s).

What is Canine Infectious Respiratory Disease Complex (CIRDC)?

- CIRDC is the term used to describe suspected infectious respiratory cases in dogs when we don't know the specific underlying cause.
- Historically known as "kennel cough".
- There are multiple viruses and bacteria that can cause respiratory illness (CIRDC) in dogs.
- CIRDC is contagious, and some dogs can be contagious before they have symptoms.
- Monitoring your dog for symptoms and keeping them up-to-date on their vaccinations is key!

Last updated: 12.8.2023

www.boulderhumane.org

(303) 442 - 4030



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What can/should people do to protect, their pets against respiratory illnesses?

- Pet guardians can help reduce their dog's risk of infectious diseases with vaccinations.
- People should talk with their veterinarian about recommended vaccinations, especially if their dog will be boarding, if they visit daycare or grooming facilities, or have contact with other dogs in the community.
- Anyone with a dog that isn't feeling well, or who has respiratory symptoms, should contact their veterinarian and their dog should stay home/away from other dogs until they are well.

Has HSBV seen increased cases of severe respiratory disease in dogs?

- Fortunately, HSBV's Veterinary Hospital, Shelter teams and Training programs have not seen increased cases of severe respiratory disease recently.
- We also have not seen any unusual trends in respiratory illness in dogs entering our facility.
- HSBV maintains vigilant standards of care, processes, and protocols to keep animals safe and healthy.

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Has HSBV seen increased cases of severe respiratory disease in dogs?

- Managing animals who come to our facility, with a focus on disease control, is an important and daily act of our staff, volunteers and visitors.
- We work diligently to identify animals with signs of respiratory illness and take appropriate action when needed, which can include:
 - Putting them in safe quarantine.
 - Providing them with the veterinary treatment they need to get healthy.
- Consulting with our diagnostic lab, and/or other area shelters if we do see changes.

What if my dog is signed up for group training classes or services at HSBV? Is it safe?

- Because there are always infectious diseases circulating in the community, we have always been committed to disinfecting the training center space and supplies before the arrival of each and every class.
- We are very committed to your dog's mental and physical health and having a safe space to hold classes is a priority!

Last updated: 12.8.2023



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What if my dog is signed up for group training classes or services at HSBV? Will they be safe?

- All public training classes and Puppy Club services require proof of current vaccinations, prior to class attendance.
- Each dog will continue to have their own water bowl, which is sanitized prior to each use. We have discontinued the use of shared water bowls in puppy programs.
- There is no physical contact between dogs, except in our puppy programs.

What if I'm still uncomfortable with my dog in a group setting?

- If your dog is between the ages of 8-16 weeks, we believe it is **CRITICAL** for them to continue to participate in group classes (or Puppy Club), where off-leash socialization is a component.
- Behavioral issues continue to be a leading cause of death in dogs, and a dog who has not been adequately socialized is at risk for developing behavior issues that greatly comprise their mental wellness, safety and possibly life.

Last updated: 12.8.2023



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What if I'm still uncomfortable with my dog in a group setting?

- If your dog is older than 16 weeks and it would make you most comfortable, you could choose to seek support through our one-on-one behavior consultations. Your dog would be the only dog in the room during this service.
- We will also be bringing back our virtual group training classes. Stay tuned for more info soon!

What we ask of you

- Please do not bring your dog to class if they are not acting like themselves (even slightly), as they may be sick.
- If your dog has symptoms of illness, please keep them home.
- Please do not bring your dog to class if they have been around another dog who is known to be sick.
- Please tell us if your dog becomes ill within 3-5 days of attending a class or service.
- If your dog has been around a dog with an unknown vaccination status (dog park, shelter, transport, rescue, breeder, groomer, daycare, etc.) they should not attend group classes (especially puppy services!) for 10 days after exposure to the dog of unknown vaccination status.

Last updated: 12.8.2023



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I'm hearing that I shouldn't take my dog to the dog park. Why is coming to class any different?

- There is no way to tell if dogs at the dog park are vaccinated, which makes it more risky.
- This is not the case for our group class settings, and is something we will continue to closely monitor before dogs are admitted to classes.
- Additionally, unlike a dog park, we can (and do!) disinfect the environment between classes.

Additional Information and Notes from HSBV

- We know that coming to class is not (and has never been) without risks. We are doing everything within our power to make sure that the risk is as little is as possible.
- We care deeply about your dog's safety and wellness and feel strongly that this includes appropriate socialization and training opportunities.
- We are so grateful for your trust in us and for your commitment to supporting your dog's training and behavior needs!
- Ultimately, we support the decisions you and your veterinarian make for your dog(s).
- Please contact us with any questions!

Last updated: 12.8.2023