

JDPC Coronavirus Policy 3/11/2020

A Message from Carol

When you work with dogs professionally, there are two things you learn quickly:

1. Impeccable standards of sanitation and safety must exist as your number one priority at all times.
2. You gotta think two (twelve?) steps ahead constantly.... 'cause dogs are pretty keen and crafty!

With those maxims in mind, Just Dogs PlayCare is announcing some policies regarding the potential spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and its possible impact on communities, people, businesses, and the economy.

Currently, it seems to me there are two camps surrounding information about the potential spread of the coronavirus in the US: (1) Don't overreact or panic...right now, or (2) Act/react and plan...right now. With what I know about dogs, I believe we—Just Dogs PlayCare as a business—need to be in camp 2.

My concern at this time is NOT about spread of this new coronavirus to dogs. I want to be absolutely sure this is clear!! At this time, there is not evidence that this can happen.

However, I am concerned about humans (employees and customers) as well as the future of our small business, should a “shelter in place” affect workers and businesses in our area. As of this writing, Grinnell College, Drake University, and all three state universities—The University of Iowa, The University of Northern Iowa, and Iowa State University—are cancelling in-person classes until at least April 3. Last Friday Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General, said the window of opportunity is closing to contain the outbreak, after which time the burden on the infrastructure of our healthcare system could impact communities. Today the WHO declared COVID-19 an official pandemic, defined as the worldwide spread of a new disease. And then there's tonight's announcement about March Madness without spectators....so there's that. Too.

All of this said, here are the policies we are implementing at Just Dogs PlayCare as of today, 3/11/2020:

- Spring Break Prepayments—As those of you who have boarded your dogs at JDPC on holidays know, we require prepayment in full to reserve holiday lodging. After a certain date (for Spring Break this year it was Wednesday, 2/26/2020), the entire payment is nonrefundable. We do this because, as a small business, we count on holidays to carry us through the slow times, to be able to pay our property taxes, rent, payroll, training, etc. Late cancellations do not allow us to fill the empty spaces because usually by then anyone on our waiting list has made other arrangements. Lost business (income) on a large scale is difficult, especially for small businesses, so this is a policy I have enforced for the past 16+ years. For less busy holidays, the “no longer refundable” date is typically 5-7 days before the holiday starts. For the biggest holidays—at JDPC, those are Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Spring Break—we make that date about 10-14 days before the holiday starts...because our waiting list is much longer. **New Policy regarding refundability of Spring Break 2020 Boarding Prepayment: If you cancel your dog's**

prepaid lodging trip due to concerns regarding the coronavirus, we will give you a credit for 50% of your prepayment, less the \$15 per dog peak holiday surcharge (always nonrefundable). This credit would be usable for a 6-month period: until September 15, 2020, and then it would expire (no longer be usable). This solution puts half the burden on our business and half on our customers, which we hope you will feel is fair.

- Other Cancellations Outside of Spring Break: If you decide to cancel a daycare or boarding reservation for another time period (outside of 3/14-3/22/2020), there is no fee to you, as we do not require prepayment at any other time besides holidays. But please call (319-545-7111) or email (info@justdogsplaycare.com) to let us know of any daycare or boarding cancellations so we can adjust our numbers and staffing accordingly,
- Doggie Daycare Packages Due Dates—We will extend all of the due dates for doggie daycare packages as needed, for the length of time that vigilance to social distancing is required.
- Health of Humans Who Work at JDPC: We have distributed thermometers to all of our employees and have informed them that if they have a fever, they should not report to work. Since it takes a village to run a doggie daycare, if we have reduced staffing, we may have to reduce the number of dogs we can handle on a daily basis. We will keep customers informed via e-mail and Facebook about this.
- Health of Humans Who Enter JDPC—In this situation, we would ask the same of our customers as we are of employees: if you are not feeling well or are running a fever, please do not come into JDPC, **no matter how much you want your dog to get exercise or worn out.** Additionally, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) is recommending that all older adults should stay home as much as possible during this potential crisis period, so please use your best judgment. **And as always—but entirely unrelated to current coronavirus concerns—if your dog is sick or under the weather, please do not bring them into the JDPC facility, as we are always concerned about the possible transmission of infectious diseases, particularly Canine Infectious Respiratory Disease Complex (CIRD), which could include what is commonly referred to as Canine Cough.**
- Cleanliness of Surfaces & Air—We're constantly washing our hands at JDPC, because we're always getting dirty, so that's not new for us! But starting last week, we began Clorox wiping all surfaces we can think of that may be touched on a daily basis. We also have recently installed air purifiers in each of our rooms and the lobby, which we hope will help, and we are exploring new cleaning agents and products. Dog bowls on each side of the lobby contain alcohol wipes for your convenience. Studies indicate that the new coronavirus may be more dangerous because the pathogens could be more aerosolized (suspended in air until they move) rather than airborne (fall to the surface), so cleaning surfaces, washing hands, and not touching faces may not be enough. But please be assured that we are doing all we can to ensure that JDPC is as sanitary as humanly possible! I feel truly fortunate to have received certification in Infectious Disease Management in pet business settings through the International Boarding & Pet Services Association (IBPSA) last fall, and I will be sharing more. We are also participating in a webinar tomorrow hosted by IBPSA where we will learn more from pet industry experts about how to handle our facilities and address customers' questions at this time.

Today Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy & Infectious Diseases at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), testified before Congress about the seriousness of the current situation and cited a quote attributed to hockey great Wayne Gretzky: "You skate not to where the puck is, but to where the puck is going to be." We hope you will agree that Just Dogs PlayCare is

anticipating—maybe even twelve steps ahead—the course of the puck and will appreciate our proactive steps in decision making and communication. Thank you for your understanding, patience, and dedication to our dog-loving business.