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EXECUTIVE ORDER

Ordering the Temporary Suspension of Statute to Allow the Use of Telehealth Services for Veterinarians Due to the Presence of COVID-19

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Governor of the State of Colorado and, in particular, pursuant to Article IV, Section 2 of the Colorado Constitution and the relevant portions of the Colorado Disaster Emergency Act, C.R.S. § 24-33.5-701, *et seq*., I, Jared Polis, Governor of the State of Colorado, hereby issue this Executive Order ordering the temporary suspension of statute to allow the use of telehealth services for veterinarians due to the presence of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Colorado.

I. Background and Purpose

On March 5, 2020, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's (CDPHE) public health laboratory confirmed the first presumptive positive COVID-19 test result in Colorado. Since then, the number of confirmed cases has continued to climb, and there is community spread throughout the State. I verbally declared a disaster emergency on March 10, 2020, and on March 11, 2020, I issued the corresponding Executive Order D 2020 003, as amended by Executive Orders D 2020 018, D 2020 032, D 2020 058, D 2020 076, D 2020 109, D 2020 125, D 2020 152, D 2020 176, D 2020 205, D 2020 234, D 2020 258, D 2020 264, D 2020 268, D 2020 284 and D 2020 290. On March 25, 2020, I requested that the President of the United States declare a Major Disaster for the State of Colorado, pursuant to the Stafford Act. The President approved that request on March 28, 2020.

My administration, along with other State, local, and federal authorities, has undertaken a wide array of actions to mitigate the effects of the pandemic, prevent further spread, and preserve our health care resources. COVID-19 is a highly contagious viral disease that has spread throughout many Colorado communities, across the country, and across the world. To protect the public health and mitigate exposure to and the spread of COVID-19, Colorado veterinarians, must be able to use telehealth services whenever possible. These services, including low-cost telephone, internet, audio-only, and live video.

This Executive Order orders the temporary suspension of statute to allow the use of telehealth services for veterinarians due to the presence of COVID-19 in Colorado.

II. Directives

A. I temporarily suspend the requirement in C.R.S. § 12-315-104(19)(b) that a veterinarian-client patient relationship is established when the veterinarian has recently seen and is personally acquainted with the keeping and care of the animal by virtue of an examination of the animal or by medically appropriate and timely visits to the premises where the animal is kept.

III. Duration

This Executive Order shall expire thirty (30) days from December 29, 2020, unless extended further by Executive Order.

GIVEN under my hand and the Executive Seal of the State of Colorado, this twenty-ninth day of December, 2020.

Jared Polis
Governor