

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY
DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER AND NOTICE OF RESCISSION
PURSUANT TO P.L. 2020, c. 18, P.L. 2021, c. 103**

**RESCISSION OF ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER DCA AO 2020-20 REGARDING
VETERINARY PRACTICE**

DCA Administrative Order No. 2021-15

Administrative Order by Kaitlin A. Caruso, Acting Director, Division of Consumer Affairs

Date: July 6, 2021

Authority: P.L. 2020, c. 18; P.L.2021, c. 103

Effective Date: July 6, 2021

* * *

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2020, through EO 103, the facts and circumstances of which are adopted by reference herein, Governor Murphy declared both a public health emergency and a state of emergency throughout the State due to the public health hazard posed by coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19); and

WHEREAS, the public health emergency declared in EO 103 was extended and then was ended on June 4, 2021, as described below; and

WHEREAS, on April 22, 2020, the CDC issued Interim Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Veterinary Clinics During the COVID-19 Response, intended for veterinarians and their staff providing care to animals, recommending that veterinary clinics postpone elective procedures, surgeries and non-urgent veterinary visits, while continuing to support sick and injured animals through telemedicine and/or curbside visits to facilitate preparedness and ensure practices would be in place to help people and animals stay safe and healthy; and

WHEREAS, the initial CDC guidance recommended the adoption of protocols designed to protect staff from the risk of person-to-person transmission, preserve personal protective equipment (PPE) and provide veterinarians with then-current advice with respect to the treatment of animals with exposure to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on April 14, 2020, Governor Murphy signed into law P.L. 2020, c. 18, which permits the Director to issue administrative orders to suspend temporarily any provision of Title

45 of the Revised Statutes or suspend or modify temporarily any rule adopted pursuant to such authority or to adopt temporarily any rule relating to the practice of any profession licensed by a board in the Division, upon concurrence by the Attorney General, after determining that such order is necessary to promote the public welfare and further such other purposes of the state of emergency or public health emergency declared in EO 103; and

WHEREAS, on June 18, 2020, then-Acting Director Paul R. Rodríguez issued DCA-AO-2020-10, to promote the public health, safety and welfare by taking action to establish standards for the safe operation of veterinary offices, in the continued effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 by minimizing person-to-person interaction, limiting unnecessary exposure to COVID-19 for veterinarians and their staff, and ensuring that animals have access to meet all of their health care needs; and

WHEREAS, the CDC has repeatedly issued revisions to the Interim Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Veterinary Clinics During the COVID-19 Response, including in May, June, and August, 2020, updating and clarifying recommendations for PPE use, case management, and isolation guidelines; and

WHEREAS, on November 2, 2020, then-Acting Director Paul R. Rodríguez issued DCA-AO-2020-20, which superseded DCA-AO-2020-10 and relaxed certain restrictions on clients accompanying pets that receive veterinary care, among other things; and

WHEREAS, on May 24, 2021, through Executive Order No. 242, the facts and circumstances of which are adopted by reference herein, in recognition of the progress made throughout the State in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Murphy eliminated, as of May 28, 2021, all requirements to wear masks and engage in social distancing in various indoor settings, except that the affected businesses remain subject to orders and guidance, including from the Division, as may be updated in accordance with that Order; and

WHEREAS, on June 4, 2021, through Executive Order No. 244, the facts and circumstances of which are adopted by reference herein, Governor Murphy terminated the public health emergency declared in EO 103, as extended, and signed into law P.L. 2021, c. 103, which authorized the head of any State agency to modify administrative orders entered while the public health emergency was in place; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the substantial decrease in the number of new COVID-19 infections, it is appropriate to rescind DCA AO 2020-20; and

WHEREAS, the Division will issue guidance, contemporaneous with this Order, to continue supporting best safety and infection control practices in light of the ongoing challenge of COVID-19;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Kaitlin A. Caruso, Acting Director of the Division of Consumer Affairs, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the statutes of this State, and upon concurrence by the Attorney General, having determined that Administrative Order 2020-20 is

no longer necessary to promote the public welfare, hereby ORDER that Administrative Order 2020-20 is RESCINDED.

This order shall take effect immediately.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kait Caruso". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Date: July 6, 2021

Kaitlin A. Caruso, Acting Director