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**ANIMAL WELFARE BOARD OF INDIA**

Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Govt. of India

(Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying)

NIAW Campus, 42 Mile Stone, Delhi-Agra Highway

NH-2, Ballabhgarh, Haryana-121004

Email: [animalwelfareboard@gmail.com](mailto:animalwelfareboard@gmail.com) : Website: [www.awbi.in](http://www.awbi.in)

No. 9-16/2019-20/PCA

Date: 01.06.2020

**CIRCULAR**

To

The Chief Secretary of all States/ UTs

Sir/Madam,

**Subject: Request to allow pet owners to take their pets out for nature's calls and walks/exercise due to the COVID19 – reg.**

The Animal Welfare Board of India is receiving number of representations from various organizations and pet owners informing that the local administration is not allowing the pets to go outside for nature's call / exercise/ walk etc. During the COVID-19 lock down this situation has further aggravated and the local administration / RWAs are hindering the pet owner to come out from the home for nature's call.

2. In this regard it is clarified that stopping pet animals and other animals for nature's call and exercise is a part of offense as accumulation of body excretion in the body creates physiological changes and toxicity in the animal body. This may lead to change of normal behaviour of animals and even the animal may die. Further, keeping these animals in the home without exercise also creates metabolic disturbances in the animal body like human being. Hence, the animal owners need to take their animal out from their home and no body cannot stop these animals.

3. It is further clarified that cruelty to animals in this kind is an offence under Section 3, Section 11 (1) of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 and other Rules made thereunder. Hon'ble Supreme Court of India has upheld the five freedoms of animals in SLP(C) 11686 of 2007 in the matter of Animal Welfare Board of India vs. A. Nagaraja and Others and directed all the State Governments to take proactive steps to prevent unnecessary pain and sufferings to animals. Therefore, it is also violation of the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

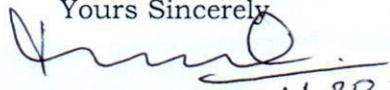
4. The Board vide its letter dated 11.03.2020, 24.03.2020 and 25.04.2020 issued advisories to take steps for the welfare of animals including allowing of pet animals for nature calls (urinate/defecate) and exercise, it is the responsibility of District Authorities and other local bodies to ensure the same and take appropriate action if any one stops the pet owner to carry out such things. The Copies of the same is enclosed herewith for kind information and further action.

5. It is further clarified that most of the pet animals kept by people have small bladders and their bodies are not designed to hold urine and poop for unnecessary long period of time. The pet animals although domesticated still need minimum physical activities such as walk to keep them in good health physically as well as mentally. Also, keeping an animals constrained, not letting him go on a walk or for exercise is an offence of cruelty under Section 11(1)(g) "being the owner, neglects to exercise or cause to be exercised reasonably any dog habitually chained up or kept in close confinement".

6. In view of the above, it is requested to kindly direct the local administration to create at least 3 time slots of 20 minutes each in all the zones during which pet owners can take their animals out to urinate or defecate and for walk/exercise provided they adhere to the "Board's Guideline for pet owners and caregivers to be followed during this period of COVID-19 pandemic 2020" issued by the Board. The Copy of the Guideline is enclosed herewith for your information.

With Regards

Encl: As above

Yours Sincerely  
  
(Dr. O.P Chaudhary) 1.6.20  
Chairman

Copy to

All the Director of Animal Husbandry of States and UTs.



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**Guidelines-with respect of pet animal owners during pandemic of COVID-19.**

1. Pet owner are requested to buy pet food as per their requirement and not to stockpile to avoid any unnecessary shortage of pet food and to avoid difficulties for other pet owners.
2. Pet food supplier and distributors are requested to maintain regular supply of pet food through shop or online portals after maintaining COVID guidelines.
3. Pet owner are to identify nearest person or contact of dog shelter or day-care who can take care for their pet in case of pet owner or their family member infected with COVID.
4. Limit the pet walks or exercise and take their pet out for natures call during time slot specified by the local authorities or police. They should strictly maintain social distancing norms and any other precautions as specified by the Government at the time of taking their pet for walk and natures call.
5. Pet owner are strictly advised to avoid any unnecessary contact of their pet with other humans and animals. If their pet came into contact with any person suspicious of COVID-19 it should be first isolated and then with proper precaution to be taken like proper bath with soap / shampoo and also take advise of their veterinarian.
6. Pet owners are advised to get their pets vaccinated and keep vaccination record readily available.

These guidelines are in addition to the already existing guidelines issued by AWBI on 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2015 and are to read with keep principle of harmonious construction in mind. These guidelines are to be followed during this period of COVID-19 pandemic and this in no way override and supersedes previous guidelines of 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2015.