

Wellness is Allowed

Alabama: The original EO did not appear to include veterinary services and the current EO expired 4/30, so Alabama is fine either way.

Medical procedures. Effective April 30, 2020, at 5:00 P.M., dental, medical, or surgical procedures may proceed unless the State Health Officer or his designee determines that performing such procedures, or any category of them (whether statewide or regionally), would unacceptably reduce access to personal protective equipment or other resources necessary to diagnose and treat COVID-19. Providers performing these procedures shall follow all applicable COVID-19-related rules adopted by a state regulatory board or by the Alabama Department of Public Health. In the absence of such rules, providers should take reasonable steps to comply with applicable COVID-19-related guidelines from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the CDC, including “Re-opening Facilities to Provide Non-emergent Non- COVID-19 Healthcare: Phase I” from CMS, available at <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/covid-flexibility-reopen-essential-non-covid-services.pdf>, and “Infection Control Guidance for Healthcare Professionals about Coronavirus (COVID-19)” from the CDC, available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infectioncontrol.html>

Alaska: According to HM15, after April 20th, 2020, veterinarians will be able to resume low-risk, routine-type services which require minimal protective equipment. Furthermore, starting on May 4th, 2020, veterinarians will be able to resume surgeries and intensive procedures.

Arizona: 4/22 Elective surgical procedures may resume on May 1st. according to the AzVMA veterinarians are allowed to resume procedures and are not bound by the guidelines published by the governor’s office that list the conditions towards reopening.

Delaware: No restrictions on elective procedures but we are confirming with the board.

Florida: Restrictions did not include veterinarians but VMA did recommend restrictions. Florida has lifted their restrictions on the human side, so veterinarians should be fine with wellness exams now.

Georgia: Removes the ban on elective procedures. Opening theaters, social clubs and dine-in restaurants on 4/27 with restrictions. Must screen workers, enhance sanitation, wear masks and gloves (if appropriate), staggered shifts, teleworking. Governor announced. [Link](#).

Illinois: There is a restriction on elective procedures on the human side that will be lifted on 5/11 under specific conditions. Additional EO removes We have contacted the board to clarify if this applies to veterinarians and if wellness exams would be included.

Indiana: Governor issued EO 20-24 on 4/24 which allows elective and non-urgent procedures to resume starting 4/27. Executive Order 20-24

RESUMPTION OF ELECTIVE AND NON-URGENT MEDICAL PROCEDURES

Kentucky: Elective surgeries can resume, as clinically appropriate, on an outpatient basis at facilities that adhere to CMS guidelines. [Link](#).

Minnesota: Effective Sunday, May 10, 2020 at 11:59 PM, Veterinarians May Resume Elective Surgeries and Procedures Only if the Criteria in the Order Are Met. [Link](#).

Mississippi: EO 1484 also permits pools to open between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m., subject to limitations by local authorities. Non-emergent and elective health procedures may resume.

Missouri: No restrictions on elective procedures. Confirmed with board.

Nebraska: Today, the State will issue a new Directed Health Measure to allow elective surgeries to resume on May 4th under certain guidelines.

Hospitals can resume elective surgeries if they maintain 30% general bed availability, 30% ICU bed availability, 30% ventilator availability, AND have a two-week supply of necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) in their specific facility.

Procedural guidelines for resuming elective procedures will be at the discretion of the hospital or health clinic.

New Mexico: GOVERNOR LUJAN GRISHAM'S GUIDELINES – VETERINARIANS

Effective May 1, 2020, Governor Lujan Grisham is no longer confining veterinary medical services to emergency only i.e., curbside. Veterinarians will be able to provide all veterinary medical services; however, they must continue to adhere to the social distancing and sanitizing/disinfecting guidelines for all veterinary facilities. [Link](#). 04/30

New York: Discussions are in progress the NY State Government about when to permit veterinarians to perform elective surgeries and wellness visits. NYSVMS has written a detailed proposal that is being discussed with the officials involved in the decision making.

Ohio: Gov. Mike DeWine's announcement yesterday cleared the way for all veterinary medical procedures to restart this Friday, May 1. This expansion includes elective procedures, all vaccines, and wellness checks, among other activity related to the animal's current and future health.

Oklahoma: Via board email, elective surgeries can continue starting 4/24.

Oregon: Elective & Non-Emergent Procedures Can Resume as of May 1 if OHA Criteria Met

On April 27, 2020, Governor Brown issued [Executive Order 20-22](#), which allows veterinary facilities to resume elective and non-emergent procedures that require PPE, starting today, May 1, 2020, provided that criteria in this Oregon Health Authority (OHA) guidance is met.

- [Read OHA Guidance on the Resumption of Non-Emergent and Elective Procedures in Veterinary Facilities](#)

Pennsylvania: Examples of non-essential services include: wellness exams, routine vaccinations (except as specified below), routine heartworm tests for animals with a history of prevention and testing, routine spay/neuter surgeries, routine dental cleanings (e.g., no expectation of extractions), routine senior bloodwork, reproduction cases (excepting production animals), stable chronic cases that are due for a recheck (e.g., rechecking an ultrasound or echocardiogram, neurology recheck, orthopedic examination, etc.), and most rehabilitation appointments. [Link](#).

Rhode Island: Governor Raimondo issued [Executive Order 20-32](#) on May 8, 2020 that goes into effect on May 9, 2020 and does several things, including partial relaxations on the Stay at Home Order:

- The portion of [Executive Order 20-14](#) that required all Rhode Island residents to stay at home unless traveling to work, traveling for medical treatment or obtaining necessities is hereby repealed. All “vulnerable populations” identified by the CDC are “strongly advised” to stay at home unless they must go out.
- All non-critical retail businesses with a physical location in Rhode Island shall be permitted to re-open for in-store pickup and limited browsing only. Only one customer per 300 square feet of store area is allowed in. These retail businesses must operate in accordance with social distancing protocols, guidelines and regulations set forth in [Executive Orders 20-24](#) and [20-30](#).
- Employers must still encourage working remotely to the greatest extent possible. Any Rhode Island employer with employees who live in other states shall use all means available to enable these employees to telecommute or make other work-from-home arrangements. This does not apply to public health, public safety, or healthcare workers.
- State parks shall start to re-open in a graduated manner.
- Any person coming to Rhode Island from another state for non-work related purposes still must self-quarantine for 14 days. This does not apply to anyone traveling for medical treatment, to attend funeral/memorial services, to obtain “necessities,” dropping off/picking up children from day care, or anyone who must work on their boats. Any person who lives in Rhode Island and works in another state who can work from home is required to do so. This shall not apply to public health, public safety, or healthcare workers.
- Social gatherings of more than five people in any public or private space is still prohibited.
- The requirement that a Class B license must be held to sell alcohol for consumption only on the premises shall continue to be suspended. A Class B licensee will now be permitted to sell, with take-out food orders, up to two bottles of wine, 144 ounces of beer/mixed beverages in original factory sealed containers, and 144 ounces of draft beer or 72 ounces of mixed beverages containing not more than 9 ounces of distilled spirits in growlers, bottles or other containers sealed in such a way as to prevent re-opening without obvious evidence that the seal was removed or broken. Restaurants, bars and establishments that offer food and drink shall continue not to permit on-premises consumption of food or drink except in outdoor portions of the licensed premises.

- Elective medical procedures and other medical services shall be allowed to resume pursuant to plans submitted by healthcare providers and approved by the Rhode Island Department of Health.

South Carolina: No restrictions on elective procedures. Confirmed with board.

Utah: The updated order allows for the resumption of some elective procedures pursuant to guidelines established in consultation with the Utah Hospital Association, the Utah Medical Association, the Utah Dental Association, and other medical providers."

UVMA- At this time we encourage all veterinarians and veterinary practices to follow the required procedures in the executive order

Tennessee: The original order expires, and elective procedures can begin May 1.

Washington: On May 18, Gov. Inslee announced [plans](#) to resume non-urgent elective procedures, effective immediately, provided practitioners follow a specific set of criteria to protect workers and clients. The plan requires that hospitals and clinics assess their own readiness as well as their communities' COVID-19 activity to determine to what degree non-essential services should be provided. [Proclamation 20-24.1](#) also requires hospitals and clinics to have enough personal protective equipment to keep workers safe, employ social-distancing policies, and check visitors and patients for symptoms of COVID-19.

Criteria for Resuming Non-Urgent Procedures – *Some of the criteria are geared towards human healthcare, but veterinary hospitals should extrapolate and adapt the information as necessary.*

West Virginia: Governor Justice issued an order last night allowing "more urgent" elective medical procedures to resume at hospitals and ambulatory surgical centers regulated by the state Office of Healthcare Facility Licensure and Certification. Facilities resuming elective procedures must first certify that they have a plan in place to ensure they maintain at least a 14-day supply of PPE. The original order did not specifically call out veterinary so veterinary is not mentioned in this order. [Link](#).

Wisconsin: Wisconsin has not yet prohibited elective surgeries. Guidance from the Wisconsin Department of Health, [DPH Numbered Memo 2020-14](#) does recommend that dental practices postpone all elective and non-urgent care treatment.

Wellness is Unlikely or Not Allowed

Michigan: Deemed essential but has not yet lifted elective procedure ban. We have a message into the board to see how they interpret wellness exams under the following language.

Beginning as soon as possible but no later than April 2, 2020 at 5:00 pm, and continuing while the declared emergency is in effect, all veterinary facilities must implement a plan to temporarily postpone all in-person non-essential veterinary services until the declared emergency has ended ("plan").

2. A plan must provide that all veterinary services, essential and non-essential, must be performed by telemedicine to the fullest extent possible while the declared emergency is in effect. If a non-essential service cannot be performed by telemedicine, a plan must require that it be postponed. If an essential service cannot be performed by telemedicine, a plan need not postpone it and may allow it to be performed in person.
3. A plan must require that, in performing veterinary services, the use of personal protective equipment that could be used for the care of humans must be minimized to the fullest extent possible while the declared emergency is in effect.
4. A veterinary facility must comply with the restrictions contained in its plan.
5. For purposes of this order, “non-essential veterinary services” means all non- agricultural veterinary services other than those that are:
 - 1) necessary to preserve the life of an animal, as determined by a licensed veterinarian;
 - 2) necessary to treat serious pain that threatens the health and safety of an animal, as determined by a licensed veterinarian;
 - 3) necessary to euthanize an animal, as determined by a licensed veterinarian; or
 - 4) necessary to treat or prevent the transmission of any infectious disease that can be transmitted between animals and human beings, as determined by a licensed veterinarian.

Pennsylvania: The state COVID staffers responded and said only emergency cases. No wellness exams. PVMA advises all veterinary practices to use their best medical and professional judgement to determine which services can be safely provided to their clients while minimizing the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Medical and professional judgement can and should evolve as the situation changes. Procedures that could be delayed in mid-March may be more urgent now. For example, vaccinations that are becoming severely overdue, such as Lyme, leptospirosis and rabies, may be considered essential at this time. As spring progresses, spaying/neutering becomes more urgent to controlling the feral cat population, which increases the risk of human exposure to unvaccinated animals. Prolonged absence of grooming can lead to severe matting and nails that break or become ingrown, leading to lameness.

New Jersey: May 11, 2020 NJVMA supports the AVMA position that resuming non-urgent/elective veterinary services is appropriate and that veterinary practices should continue to use strategies that conserve PPE and support social distancing as appropriate and practical. NJ Executive Order 109 does not specifically mention veterinarians and to date there has not been a directive from the State prohibiting the provision of any veterinary services. NJ veterinarians have been postponing non-urgent/elective procedures to keep with the spirit of the Executive Order to preserve PPE and maintain safe work environments. At this time, it is the position of the NJVMA that veterinarians may resume elective procedures and wellness visits as long as PPE supply exceeds demand, and social distancing guidelines continue to be strictly maintained.

Please click [here](#) to view the AVMA’s Talking Points on Resuming Non-Urgent/Elective Services. The Governor also signed an EO directing elective procedures to begin 05/28 for the human side.

On Friday, May 15, Governor Murphy signed [Executive Order No. 145](#), which ends the general suspension of elective surgeries and invasive procedures on Tuesday, May 26th.

Wellness is Uncertain / DVM Discretion

North Carolina: They have details on their ban in their FAQs. [Link](#). The board responded that they will let everyone know when the ban is lifted. "Veterinarians are reminded that under the recommended COVID-19 "shelter in place" protocols, visits should be limited only to those patients requiring frequent follow-up care, and sick or emergency patients. **It is up to the DVM in charge of the case to determine if treatment and services are essential for that animal.** Non-essential visits (those that can be reasonably postponed given the health of the patient) and elective procedures should be delayed."

Virginia: Should I be rescheduling routine wellness exams to comply with Governor Northam's Executive Order #55 (Temporary Stay at Home Order)?

The overarching goal of the Governor's Executive Order (full text of order available [here](#)) is to limit person-to-person contact. Businesses offering professional services, such as veterinary practices, should adhere to [social distancing](#) and enhanced sanitizing practices on common surfaces. In addition, gatherings of more than 10 people are prohibited and retail businesses that will remain open need to limit in person shopping to no more than 10 patrons.

Veterinary practices are using various strategies to increase [social distancing](#) such as rescheduling routine appointments and offering "curbside" service as part of an overarching strategy to keep the number of clients in the clinic at a minimum (below 10). Many practices are also rescheduling routine appointments and prioritizing sick and injured animals. The main goal is to limit the number of people you come into contact with on any given day.

I read the above to mean it is up to the veterinarian to decide. I also listened to a VMA podcast with a local vet and they said they are trying to be as full-service as possible, just with curbside check-ins. He did not specifically say wellness exams, but did mention spay/neutering and a bunch of other things. He added that the restrictions were intended to the human side to prioritize COVID patients and reserve PPE. They donated their extra PPE.