

Animal shelter remains open for adoption despite COVID-10 concerns

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In the wake of the COVID-19 health emergency, the Del Norte Animal Shelter has canceled its once a month, Saturday adoption events.

But Justin Riggs, Director of Animal Control, said this is due to concerns of the spread of the coronavirus from humans and not pets.

“Under the latest guidelines from the Del Norte County Public Health officer, we’ve canceled all Saturday adoption events until we receive further guidance that dictates it’s OK to do so,” Riggs told The Triplicate. “I’ve checked with all three vets in town. They’ve all said there is not a risk of this spreading from dogs to humans, but who knows at this point.”

The World Health Organization reported on its website www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses while there has been one instance of a dog being infected in Hong Kong, to date, there is no evidence that a dog, cat or any pet can transmit COVID-19.

“COVID-19 is mainly spread through droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or speaks. To protect yourself, clean your hands frequently and thoroughly. WHO continues to monitor the latest research on this and other COVID-19 topics and will update as new findings are available,” WHO stated.

For now, the animal shelter remains open for appointments to view adoptable dogs. Riggs said his staff will practice social distancing guidelines.

“They can still show dogs, but it was not wise to encourage a bunch to come out at a time at the adoption events,” Riggs said.

The Del Norte County Animal Shelter, located at 2650 Washington Blvd., lifted its quarantine last month due to an outbreak of giardia in December.

Riggs planned to move the shelter’s once-a-month adoption events from the second to the third Saturday of the month as this would conflict less with other regional public events.

He said the shelter has been operating continuously “over building capacity” with every available space filled by rescued dogs.

The shelter remains open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with viewing time ending at 4 p.m.

Petfinder.com has a link to photos and bios for many of the dogs available for adoption.

Riggs said the shelter recently switched to a flat \$75 adoption fee, which comes with a home visitation check first in some cases.

During the giardia outbreak, Riggs said the shelter had to shut down volunteer training, to minimize the number of people coming out. Although social distancing guidelines are still in place, the shelter still needs volunteers. Riggs said if you have signed up in the past to volunteer, call the shelter at 464-7235 to verify staff still has your application on file or they can email you a new one.

Riggs added anyone looking to support the animal shelter beyond volunteering, it has a “wish list” for what of needed donations from gift cards, can food and leashes. Contact the shelter and staff can email you the list.

Hector Santos Ortega, of CC Mobile Technology Repair, is also looking to help the animal shelter. He told The Triplicate in addition to the usual percentage of his sales he donates to help the animal shelter purchase food and supplies, this month he is donating \$5 for every screen protector sold to help them purchase a picnic table.