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Pet Care Community Adapts to COVID-19 ‘New Normal’ With Additional Safety Measures to Ensure Our Nation’s Pets are Cared For

-Businesses focus on serving customers, pets, employees and communities safely and effectively as closure mandates lift-

[Washington, D.C.] – June 8, 2020 – The responses from a nationwide survey of pet businesses show a pet care community that quickly adapted to the “new normal”; effectively balancing the need for workplace and customer safety with the ability to offer products and services to help America’s pet owners ensure the health and well-being of their animal companions.

Over 500 retailers, manufacturers, distributors, groomers, boarding providers, veterinarians, and more responded to the online state-of-the-industry survey conducted in May 2020 by a coalition of pet industry associations.

“This survey shows the pet care community is finding innovative ways to responsibly serve pets and pet owners with the products and services they need to ensure their continued well-being,” said Mike Bober, PIJAC president and CEO.

The American Pet Products Association (APPA), the Pet Industry Distributors Association (PIDA), the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC), and the World Pet Association (WPA) surveyed their members in order to better understand the current circumstances and challenges facing pet businesses during the unprecedented COVID-19 health emergency.

Over 75% of the survey respondents reported that they remained open for business in some capacity. In doing so they changed the way they conduct business to focus on safety. Of those who said they are taking measures to protect the health of customers, employees and the animals in their care, 76% are increasing sanitization and cleaning, 72% are providing personal protective equipment to employees, 61% are utilizing hand sanitizer

stations, and 56% are limiting the number of customers or visitors allowed in the business at any one time. In addition, respondents said they have increased workspace distancing, are rotating employee hours, and are reducing operating hours to allow more time for cleaning.

An infographic depicting how the pet care community is taking measures to protect their customers, employees and pets is available for download [here](#).

“The new and extensive protection measures being implemented throughout the pandemic aptly demonstrate the ongoing commitment of the responsible pet care community to the safety and well-being of humans and pets,” said APPA CEO Steve King.

Respondents also relayed how they were giving back to their communities during this time of need. Activities include supplying care packages to pet families who are struggling due to COVID-19, using 3D printers to make faceguards for first responders, and leveraging the supply chain to offer hand sanitizer to pet specialty retailers and distributors.

“Pet stores are more than just a place to shop for their customers but also provide a much-needed sense of community for pet owners,” said Vic Mason, president of the World Pet Association. “As the public emerges from quarantines, they can be confident that the responsible pet care community has put in place extensive safety protocols to ensure safe shopping experiences for all.”

Looking at how business operations could change following the public health crisis, both retailers and manufacturers report that they expect the accelerated demand for new e-commerce options and emphasis on curbside pickup and home delivery options will extend well beyond the quarantine, further expanding their options for reaching customers. Others indicated they would focus on disaster and emergency planning and adding financial reserves to better meet challenges in the future.

“The pet industry is essential to the daily life of millions of American households and their pets,” said Celeste Powers, president of PIDA. “By responding quickly to the crisis and ensuring continuous and safe access to essential pet products and services, we have shown the way forward for the economy at large.”

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Additional information and interviews available upon request. Proudly supporting responsible pet ownership, this survey was conducted by [American Pet Products Association](#) (APPA), [Pet Industry Distributors Association](#) (PIDA), [Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council](#) (PIJAC), and [World Pet Association](#) (WPA).