



MEMPHIS ANIMAL SERVICES
2350 APPLING CITY COVE
MEMPHIS, TN 38133
EXECUTIVE DIVISION

May 7, 2024

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Memphis Animal Services Reopens to the Public After Canine Distemper Outbreak
Launches Free Dog Adoptions to Prevent Further Transmission

(Memphis, Tenn.) - May 7, 2024 - [The Memphis Animal Services](#) (MAS) has reopened its doors today after a temporary closure due to the discovery of canine distemper virus (CDV) and canine infectious respiratory disease complex (CIRDC) among its residents.

With the safety of over 250 animals at the forefront, MAS took swift action on May 3 to contain the spread and is appealing to the public for assistance in safeguarding the pet population and the community.

As of the latest May 6 update, 14 confirmed cases of CDV have been identified. To prevent further infections, MAS has implemented rigorous measures including separating exposed and non-exposed dogs, deep cleaning, mass testing, medical treatment, staff training for public education on adopting dogs with CDV, and comprehensive contact tracing efforts.

“Shelters around the country are seeing an uptick in viruses like CDV and CIRDC. When you have so many animals in one place coming from different circumstances with varying health challenges it can happen,” said Ty Coleman, Director of Animal Services. “Our team is understaffed, but we work diligently to continuously improve intake processes, increase positive outcomes, and find forever homes for all pets under our care.”

Until further notice, MAS will continue to operate on an emergency intake basis, prioritizing animals in situations posing public safety risks. This includes animals needing urgent medical attention, and those facing injury, illness, or active cruelty cases.

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MAS is now launching an adoption drive to rehome animals and mitigate the risk of further transmission. From now until May 21, all adoption fees will be waived, with additional support provided to prospective pet parents including education, indoor crates, dog beds, and dog food (while supplies last). It is recommended that dogs should only go to environments with no dogs or fully vaccinated adult dogs, not boarding or shelter environments.

For those unable to adopt, fostering is encouraged for a minimum of four weeks to alleviate shelter congestion. MAS commits to providing food and essential resources throughout the fostering period. Anyone interested in adoption or fostering can view our available pets [here](#).

If anyone has a dog they need to surrender or has found a stray, we ask the public to please keep the animals if possible and email our Pet Resource Center at mas.petresourcecenter@memphistn.gov for support with food, supplies, or veterinary care.

“Helping us clear our overcrowded shelter can go a long way in helping sick dogs get well faster and safeguard those yet unaffected,” Coleman said. “Our dedicated team remains steadfast in prioritizing the safety, health, and overall welfare of every animal entrusted to us. We persistently explore avenues to enhance their quality of life and facilitate their journey to loving homes.”

MAS hours for adoptions, reclaims, and rescues are Monday – Friday from 1-6 p.m., and Saturday – Sunday from 12-4 p.m. Stray or owner surrenders are by appointment only. For more information, please visit www.memphisanimalservices.com, email MAS@memphistn.gov, or call 901-636-1416.

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About CIRDC

Canine infectious respiratory disease complex (CIRDC), also known as “kennel cough,” is a highly contagious illness that affects the respiratory tract of dogs. While all breeds and ages of dogs are susceptible, dogs housed in multiple dog settings such as shelters, kennels, and doggie daycares have a higher risk. Several different types of bacteria and viruses can lead to CIRDC. Dogs can even be infected with two or more of these organisms at the same time.



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About CDV

CDV causes a myriad of symptoms including fever, upper respiratory signs, pneumonia, vomiting, and diarrhea. Some pets may develop neurological signs, such as seizures or tremors, usually around one month after showing respiratory signs. Neurological signs can even occur one to three months after infection for pets that never showed clinical signs of illness.

About Memphis Animal Services

The Memphis Animal Services (MAS) is dedicated to providing compassionate care, shelter, and adoption services for homeless, abused, and neglected animals. Committed to the welfare of animals and the community, MAS continues to uphold the highest standards of animal care and advocacy.