



Dear valued pet owners of the Avian and Exotic Animal Clinic of Arizona:

This last year has presented numerous challenges for all people across our beloved planet. Here at the AEAC, it has been no different. We have truly missed you; our energy levels have diminished because we cannot engage, communicate and interact with you in the ways that satisfy the “Why” of why we practice exotic animal medicine. We appreciate your trust in caring for your pets during this pandemic. You have been amazing. Please know we have always strived to navigate our way through this pandemic thoughtfully while considering the viewpoints and concerns of our diverse client base.

With that said, **beginning Monday April 5<sup>th</sup>** we will move to the next phase of our COVID Protocols, which will include the following **guidelines**:

- **We will require that all clients and staff inside our building wear masks. Please keep your mask on at all times inside the building, including while waiting in exam rooms.**
- Curbside Check-Ins will remain in place: We request that you call from your vehicle to let us know that you have arrived for your appointment.
- Once we are ready to begin your appointment, you will be called back by a member of our staff who will meet you at the entrance to be escorted into an exam room.
- For now, **the lobby will remain closed** due to the inability to socially distance with each other. So at this time, you will only be brought inside the building when we are ready to begin your appointment.
- **Each appointment may be brought inside by one person/family member.** Additional guests and family members will be asked to wait outside to minimize potential exposure and sources of transmission, as well as not overcrowding our exam rooms.
- If you are showing any symptoms of COVID-19, or have had recent exposure, you will be asked to reschedule your appointment. COVID-19 not only endangers human health but may also expose and kill the very susceptible ferret patients that we treat.
- If you are not yet comfortable with entering our building, you have the option to request continued curbside assistance until you feel more comfortable with the data and trends of this virus.

As many of you are aware, the Governor's announcement regarding masks last week has presented an opportunity for businesses like ours to reevaluate our mask-wearing policy. We also know that case numbers usually lag after restrictions ease so this will require reassessing with the hopefully declining numbers of COVID positives. In an effort to allow more of the vulnerable population to become vaccinated, but at the same time give others a light at the end of the tunnel, we wanted to inform you that we will continue to reassess these protocols as we carefully watch the COVID positive case numbers in our state. It is our hope that by maintaining consistent protocols, we will all be able to be mask-free in the very near future.

This is a complex and divisive issue, and we are striving to find a balanced approach as we move forward. We know that no one answer will please everyone. We are thanking you in advance for respecting the sovereignty of our path forward and out of this pandemic. Should you feel the need to voice your **scientific** opinion, please direct it at me, Todd Driggers at [info@aeacarizona.com](mailto:info@aeacarizona.com), as debates with the staff will only delay the competent care we wish to provide your pets, and other clinic patrons' pets. We have lost several clients which we consider part of our AEAC family and we want you to know; we see you and share in your grief. Thank you for helping us work through the means to the end of this unpredictable disease.

Thank you all for your support during this time. We would not be here if it were not for our caring pet owners and their wonderful pets.

Sincerely,

The Staff of the Avian and Exotic Animal Clinic of Arizona