

For Immediate Release

January 27, 2023

Canine Influenza Outbreak leads to Temporary Changes at Plano Animal Shelter

An outbreak of canine influenza has necessitated several temporary changes at the Plano Animal Shelter. On January 17, a dog was identified as having a cough and was immediately placed in the shelter's Dog Isolation ward. The following day three more dogs with similar symptoms started treatment. It is not uncommon to have dogs break with a bordetella infection (commonly called kennel cough). Normal protocols the shelter employs have always stopped mass breakouts and limited it to a few dogs. In this case, the infection continued to spread despite all preventive measures and now all but four of the 102 dogs currently being housed are ill and being treated.

Testing was done to determine the cause and it was found that the dogs have canine influenza. It is a highly contagious disease among dogs but there has never been a reported case of transmission to a human in the US or worldwide. While not as well-known as other canine diseases, canine influenza is now considered to be endemic in dogs in the US. However, few dogs have naturally acquired or vaccine-induced immunity so most dogs who are exposed end up getting sick. Similar to other flu variants, it is an airborne disease that is spread via contact to respiratory droplets which makes it easily spreadable in a shelter environment. Dogs are most contagious during the incubation period when they are exhibiting no symptoms. They may still be contagious for up to twenty days post infection.

In response to this outbreak, all owner surrender appointments have been canceled and at-large dogs will be picked up only as a last resort. Also, due to the highly contagious nature of the disease, no dogs will be allowed to leave the shelter via adoption, fostering, or other means until further notice. Plano Animal Services feels it is irresponsible to put potentially sick dogs out into the community when it would likely spread the disease to dogs in neighboring households.

Plano Animal Services strongly encourages local dog owners to contact their veterinarians to discuss getting a canine influenza vaccination for their pets. They also highly recommend that any dog exhibiting unusual coughing, lethargy, or other signs of an upper respiratory illness contact their veterinarian as soon as possible.

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Editor's Note: Go to [Plano.gov](https://plano.gov) for comprehensive information about the City of Plano.

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About Plano

Plano, Texas, is the largest city in Collin County with a population of 290,850 as of January 2022. Incorporated in 1873, the city is located 20 miles north of Dallas. Niche and AreaVibes recently named Plano as one of the Best Cities to Live in America. Forbes designated Plano one of America's safest cities. The City offers a high quality of life that includes nationally recognized schools, award-winning parks, and sustainability initiatives and a wide variety of multi-cultural neighborhoods appealing to families, young singles and retirees. Plano is home to the headquarters or regional operations of major corporations such as Toyota, Liberty Mutual, JPMorgan Chase, Boeing Global Services, Fannie Mae, FedEx Office, JC Penney, Rent-A-Center, Cinemark Holdings, Peloton, Denbury Resources and Samsung. Our dynamic community features excellent restaurants, vibrant shopping and entertainment venues, a lively historic downtown district and active local arts scene. Easy access to DART light rail and major highways makes Plano a convenient place to live, work and visit. To learn more about Plano, go to our website at plano.gov.