



## **ANKC Health & Wellbeing Committee COVID 19 advice to breeders**

Realising that bitches were mated or whelped prior to the introduction of travel and social distancing restrictions, the CHWC hopes that the following advice will help in the process of transferring puppies to their new owners.

In addition the ANKC has received many inquiries in regard to continuation of breeding during this time of Government limitations, this of course is a personal choice but the ANKC recommends that before you mate a bitch, you give serious consideration to difficulties that may be encountered in relocating puppies to their new homes, transporting puppies both inter and intrastate can be a problem as are limited flights between states.

### **COVID 19 – the basics**

COVID 19 is one of a large group of Corona viruses that affect many species. These viruses, like most, are generally species specific and rarely transfer to or affect any other species.

Both dogs and cats have corona viruses, but these are genetically very far removed from COVID 19. There has been no recorded transfer of dog and cat Corona viruses to humans and vice versa.

### **Socialising during the COVID 19 pandemic**

Because of the limited movement and social distancing of people during the COVID 19 lockdown, breeders will have to be more inventive with their puppy socialisation, particularly if there are no children around.

Lots of play activity, try having different outfits, hats, noises, toys; most of which are usually done anyway. Take a few puppies out at a time in a trolley or pram to walk around the park or the block to see different places, people running past etc.

Do more one on one handling, particularly in those breeds that really need the individualisation (GSD, Rottweiler, etc). Stress to new owners that they will need to keep up this socialisation after they leave your care.

## **Placing a Puppy during COVID 19 – Safety Advice**

1. Do most of your normal checks, talking to prospective owners by phone, email, Facebook etc, ahead of time. Send photos, videos of the puppies, how they are being kept and raised, shots of the parents etc.
2. Check the credentials of the new owners, safe yards and fencing, members of the family, young children etc. Give copies of the relevant health certificates to people you expect to take a puppy. Have your puppy pack ready with dietary advice, spare puppy food, vaccination certificates etc, all ready to go before people arrive to see the puppy (or puppies).
3. Explain to prospective owners ahead of time what to expect. Ask whether anyone has had contact with anyone with COVID 19 or whether they have a cold or flu. Ask that older and/or compromised people and young children do not come to view the puppies. Only allow 1-2 people to come at any one time. Have everyone use a hand sanitizer or soap and water before handling the puppies.
4. Put the puppies to be viewed in a playpen, preferably outside, where the puppies can be placed into before the people arrive. Limit the number of puppies brought out. Prospective owners can then handle the puppies without direct contact with you. Any puppies not going can be wiped over with disinfectant (or washed) after the other puppy has gone.
5. Have all the paperwork ready, if anything needs signing, use a pen that they can then keep or you wipe it down with disinfectant/hand sanitizer. Keep the time spent with prospective owners to a minimum. Wash your hands and all open surfaces around the puppy area after the people leave.
6. With the restrictions on travel and only for essential business, it becomes quite difficult to sell puppies and comply with the necessary requirements. All the advice that we can give is how to limit your exposure to the virus when people come to view puppies.

**[Note: It has been brought to our attention that in some jurisdictions people visiting your home, to pick up a puppy may be considered to be non-essential and therefore a finable offence, please check you State or Territory COVID 19 Regulations before arranging for puppies to be viewed or picked up.]**

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