

**From:** Allison Cornelius <[allisonc@gbhs.org](mailto:allisonc@gbhs.org)>

**Date:** Tuesday, July 26, 2022 at 10:25 AM

**To:**

**Subject:** Outbreak of H3N2 (Canine Influenza Virus) and Priority 1 Order

Dear Municipal and County Partners:

Beginning tomorrow, the Woodlawn County Impoundment Facility will return to Priority-1 status.

**Diagnostic testing has confirmed positive results for Influenza Strain A, H3N2 (CIV-Canine Influenza Virus) at the Woodlawn Impoundment facility. When these tests were run last week, some of the dogs had just been impounded, indicating that the virus is in our community. We also have positive results for dogs at Snow Drive, and at the GBHS hospital. 93% of the dogs tested from Woodlawn were positive for the virus.**

The virus was first detected in our county by local veterinarians in early July right after the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday, when hundreds of people boarded their pets.

GBHS is working with Cynda Crawford, DVM, PhD, at the University of Florida to manage and resolve the virus in our buildings. Dr. Crawford is the nation's leading expert on the virus. She is currently assisting animal services and impoundment facilities in other states with their management of the virus. In order to stop the spread of the virus in our community, and to protect healthy strays from the disease, Dr. Alverson requested a Priority 1 order for animal services, control and impoundment.

**Last evening Jefferson County Commission President, Jimmie Stephens, approved this request. This recommendation was also reviewed by the state veterinarian who agreed with Dr. Alverson's and Dr. Crawford's recommendations to contain the virus.**

Limiting intake not only protects healthy, lost, pets, it also protects all pets in our area. It also saves tax payers by keeping animal care and control expenses contained. Viral outbreaks and treatment are very expensive.

Many businesses in our community depend on pets and pet owners for their livelihood. You may have seen recent reports in the media about dog daycares, groomers, and boarding facilities that have temporarily closed or suspended services due to the spread of the canine flu in Jefferson County. Many veterinary clinics have resumed curbside services.

Dr. Alverson and Dr. Crawford will meet with any city or law enforcement members to answer questions about the virus and to explain the mitigation actions being taken by GBHS. We are one of the largest shelters in the U.S., and if we do not mitigate now, we will become a source for the spread of the virus.

Immediate mitigation actions are covered in the attachment. Highlights of these actions include:

- Suspension of adoptions of all animals excepting cats.
- Transports are temporarily suspended.
- Staff and non-emergency animals moving between buildings is suspended.
- Non-emergency surgeries are suspended.

Today, Dr. Alverson is emptying the GBHS hospital located at 5220 Princeton Way, Hoover, Alabama 35226. This will make the building a “clean” facility for the purpose of receiving severely injured animals and animals seized by law enforcement.

**All Animal Control Officers should take severely injured animals, severely sick animals, and law enforcement seizures to 5220 Princeton Way, Hoover, Alabama 35226 until further notice. This will enable Dr. Alverson to prevent the spread of the virus to your citizen’s animals.**

**All ACOs may continue to impound dangerous dogs at the Woodlawn facility.**

**All ACOs should disinfect their trucks and boxes between animals and wear PPE.**

**ACOs should familiarize themselves with the symptoms of H3N2.**

<https://www.dogflu.com>

**Please ask your ACOs to observe the Priority -1 pick-up protocols. Only dangerous dogs, severely injured, or severely ill animals should be impounded during this time.**

**The quicker the virus is eliminated, the faster we can all return to normal operations.**

GBHS has ordered the vaccinations for the virus, but currently they are difficult to get due to the outbreaks. Once we receive the vaccinations, we will make them available at cost to all ACOs for their pets. The vaccination will not prevent pets from contracting the virus, but it will lessen the duration and severity of the illness if your pet contracts the illness.

GBHS has issued a press release and is updating all social media to help educate the public about the virus. We have also notified Dr. Frazier (the state veterinarian), as well as the current and former chair of the Jefferson County Veterinary Medical Association, local rescues, other impoundment facilities, local vet clinics, adopters, and other humane societies.

I know these outbreaks are frustrating. They are for all of us. Please call if you have any questions or if you need Dr. Alverson or Dr. Crawford to meet or speak with your leadership.

Thank you,

**Allison**

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