

Faecal sample from pet cat tests positive for COVID-19 virus

A spokesman for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) said today (July 17) that a faecal sample of a pet cat sent to the AFCD had tested positive for the COVID-19 virus.

The current case involves a Domestic short-haired cat that lived in Choi Hung. When the owner was confirmed with COVID-19, the cat was sent for quarantine at the animal keeping facility at the Hong Kong Port of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge on July 10. The Department has repeatedly collected oral cavity, nasal, rectal and faecal samples from the cat for tests these few days. The faecal sample collected on July 13 was tested positive with COVID-19 virus. However, subsequent samples taken were all tested negative. The cat has not shown any signs of disease at present.

The AFCD will continue to closely monitor the cat and conduct repeated testing.

The spokesman reminded pet owners to adopt good hygiene practices (including hand washing before and after being around or handling animals, their food, or supplies, as well as avoiding kissing them) and to maintain a clean and hygienic household environment. People who are sick should restrict contact with animals. If any changes in the health condition of the pets are spotted, advice from a veterinarian should be sought as soon as possible.

The spokesman emphasised that currently there is no evidence that pets are playing a role in the spread of human infections with COVID-19 virus. Pet owners should always maintain good hygiene practices and under no circumstances should they abandon their pets.