

Pet cat tests positive for COVID-19 virus

A spokesman for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) said today (March 31) that a pet cat sent to the AFCD has tested positive for the COVID-19 virus. This is the third animal to test positive in Hong Kong, following two earlier cases in which two dogs tested weak positive or positive during repeated tests for the virus.

The current case involves a Domestic short-haired cat that lived in a residence at Aberdeen. 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 yesterday (March 30). The Department has collected samples from the cat for tests, and the oral cavity, nasal and rectal samples were tested positive with COVID-19 virus. The cat has not shown any signs of disease.

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

The AFCD will continue to work together with the Department of Health in handling relevant cases. To ensure public and animal health, the Department strongly advises that mammalian pet animals including dogs and cats from households with persons confirmed as infected with COVID-19 should be put under quarantine in AFCD facilities.

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 there are any changes in the health condition of the pets, advice from a veterinarian should be sought as soon as possible.

The spokesman emphasised that there is currently no evidence that pet animals can be a source of COVID-19. Pet owners should always maintain good hygiene practices and under no circumstances should they abandon their pets.