

Pet dog tests positive for COVID-19 virus

A spokesman for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) said today (March 19) that a pet dog sent to the AFCD has repeatedly tested positive for the COVID-19 virus. This is another infected case following an earlier case in which a 17-year-old Pomeranian dog tested weak positive during repeated tests for the virus.

The current case involves a German Shepherd dog that lived in a residence at Pok Fu Lam. When the owner was confirmed with COVID-19, the dog was sent for quarantine with another mixed breed dog from the same residence to the animal keeping facility at the Hong Kong Port of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge yesterday (March 18). No positive results were obtained from the mixed breed dog and neither dog has shown any signs of disease.

The Department will continue to closely monitor both dogs and conduct repeated tests on the animals.

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, or close contacts of COVID-19 infected persons, 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 for humans or that this virus can cause the disease in dogs. Pet owners should always maintain good hygiene practices and under no circumstances should they abandon their pets.