

It's hard to believe there is anyone in California who does not care for animals and their welfare. Pets are an important part of life for many California residents, especially in this time of Shelter in Place. They are our companions and our comfort. We want them to remain healthy and happy. We want nothing but the best for these four-legged family members.

Then why, may we ask, have the health benefits of routine, regular grooming been taken away from them and their owners?

Pet groomers play an integral part in the lives of many California residents by keeping their pets clean and healthy. Grooming is so much more than just a cute haircut and bows. Keeping the pets clean and well-groomed not only helps the pets stay healthy, but aids the owners as well. It is unfortunate at this time that many pets grooming needs are being neglected, as owners lack the appropriate tools and knowledge to carry out the task safely. Many owners who have allergies, asthma or are immunocompromised need their pets to stay clean as not to instigate breathing issues or other health problems. And some residents are being forced to distance themselves from their beloved pets due to their lack of grooming.

Flea and tick season is upon us and pets risk bringing these disease-carrying pests indoors to their owners. Foxtails and burrs are a very real health hazard to our pets and anyone who has had to pick through their pet's coat for these invaders knows the problems that these can cause. Veterinary bills are easily avoided by routine grooming.

The average pet is professionally groomed every four to six weeks. Waiting longer than that compounds simple issues. Small tangles become large mats, pulling at the pet's skin, causing sores and hot spots. Overgrown nails are a discomfort to the pet as well as a health hazard. Ears that are not properly attended to can become painfully infected.

We would like to call your attention to the newest version of the Federal *CISA Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce* guide for essential services, Version 3.0 (April 17, 2020)

Please refer to a new addition on page 16, the last entry of the "Other Community- or government-based operations and essential functions" category, just above the "Critical Manufacturing" category.

It states as essential "Workers performing services to animals in human care, including zoos and aquariums."

Pet grooming falls under this designation of essential, as the pets we serve are, after all, "in human care".

Grooming involves minimal human contact between the owner and groomer and all are well prepared to follow *CDC* as well as guidelines composed and proposed by the *California Professional Pet Groomers Association, Inc*, and protocol for

safe social distancing as well as sanitation. Please see *CPPGA* guidelines on our homepage at www.cppga.org.

We implore you to please, officially, recognize pet grooming as the essential service it is and allow the professional groomers of California to do their work and help the citizens of California keep their pets clean and healthy. Shelter in Place with a dirty pet is not only unpleasant, but is unhealthy for the pet and human alike.

Pet Groomers exemplify small business. Many “Mom and Pop” grooming businesses are confused as to why the larger chain stores are permitted to groom, while they are forced to close. **There is no consistency in this mandate.**

Independent groomers want, and need, to get back to work and help the pets.

We do not understand why this important piece of the average pets life has been taken away. Please officially deem us the essential business we are so we can continue to care for the pets we all love.

Respectfully,

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President

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