

Dear Client,

The Doctors and team at Alburtis Animal Hospital wanted to take a moment to reach out to you during these tumultuous times to offer our hand in partnership and ask for your help as we work together to care for your animal family. As essential service providers we are happy to be here for you and your pet. Like most practices around the country, we are also experiencing phenomenally high demand. Home-bound people are adopting new pets and have time to pay close attention to the ones they have. They are catching problems early which makes us happy. However, this phenomenon has caused our schedule to be filled to over-capacity and our team to be spread thin as we try to help the most pets possible. It has also caused delays in being able to get pets seen as fast as normal. We just wanted you to know what it is like on our side of the exam table to help you plan accordingly.

First and most importantly, **we understand!** The constant disruption of our routine is taking a toll on us all and like everyone we are feeling the pain. It seems the news is all negative and the rules change daily. The world is being shaken to the core. We are mentally and quite often, physically exhausted. We are supposing you feel the same.

In the face of this pressure, at times individuals are not their normal pleasant selves. If you have experienced folks being more easily infuriated in your life perhaps you can relate. The vast majority of our clients, like you, are wonderful, thoughtful, grateful and patient as we work through new COVID protocols and seemingly daily changes in workflow. A few others are enraged with the changes and restrictions on our availability and team safety protocols. Please know these changes and limitations frustrate us too.

We want to see you. We want to not wear masks. We want to not have to find your car for curbside care. We want to shake your hand. We want to hug you when you are sad. We want our normal back too.

In recent days, exasperated clients have lost their tempers and accused us of not caring because we can't get them in as fast as they desire. They have shouted at, demeaned, and threatened us in their annoyance with world circumstances we can neither control nor fix, even though we are performing care the best we can. As COVID-19 wears on this is becoming progressively worse and more frequent. Fear and frustration are driving this behavior but understanding that does not make it hurt us less.

Because of this, we are reaching out to you for support. When you visit our practice, we ask that you come knowing that we are doing our best and give us grace.

- Our team can identify 200 breeds of dog, but we can't tell an Acura from a Ford. Please let us know what number is on the parking spot sign hung on the wall in front/behind you.
- PLEASE bring your mobile phone as it is the only way we will know you have arrived and how we will communicate with you in the parking lot. If you do not own a cell phone,

please notify us when you schedule your appointment. We will give you directions on how to work around this.

- If your appointment is curbside, it will typically take longer than a normal visit. Please be prepared with something to do in your car as we need you to stay in the parking lot. Know that we are doing our best to keep wait times as short as possible.
- Please avoid making phone calls while you wait. Being able to reach you on the first try, helps keep things running smoothly.
- Follow the instructions we share when you call, so that your visit is as seamless as possible.

When we all work together, we can help you best.

When you have a positive experience, it would mean so much if you would share kudos with our team and in reviews. Kind words and helping our patients are what keeps us going in these crazy days. The generous souls who send us cards or bring us food are our heroes. Thank you, a million times!

If you are unhappy, we do want to know so we can learn and improve, but please share your views in a calm and professional manner so we may address it and solve it if possible. We promise to listen.

Times are hard, but people don't have to be. All we need to do is look to our pets to see how love, kindness and empathy makes the world better and model their behavior.

Thank you for your time and if you, like us, are considered an essential worker, we appreciate your service to our community.

Sincerely,

Dr. Smith and the team at Alburtis Animal Hospital