**COVID-19 New Policy Guidelines:**

If you are experiencing an urgent/life-threatening emergency with your cat, or having a problem outside office hours, we encourage you to seek care at any of our local veterinary specialty/emergency care centers (<http://www.catmobilevet.com/Services.html>).

Limited in-home (house-call) visits to our CURRENT clients/patients, ONLY, will begin June 1, 2020.

If you:

> are experiencing (or have within the last 15 days) a fever, symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as: sneezing, cough, body aches, malaise, headache, rash, red eyes/conjunctivitis, or difficulty breathing (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>);

> have been exposed to a COVID-19 patient within the last 15 days;

> have traveled within the last 15 days to any area that is classified as high-risk by the CDC,

Please, **cancel/reschedule your appointment** as we will **NOT** do an onsite visit. **Temperature screening will be done PRIOR to entry into the home**. If you are experiencing respiratory illness or you’re not sure if you need an in-home visit, we offer video, email, text, and telephone visits (Telemedicine) to allow you to connect easily to your veterinarian to address concerns from your home. Telemedicine appointments allow you to access care, but ONLY if you are an existing client with a patient we have seen within the last year (12 calendar months).

**HOUSE-CALL VISIT POLICY & Format Changes:**

As recommended by the CDC & VDH (Virginia Department of Health- <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/>) guidelines, we are attempting to LIMIT in-person/home contact and adhere to appropriate social distancing recommendations. We strive to NOT LIMIT your usual appointment access time to your veterinarian to answer your questions and address concerns. The format as to how that time is structured is what is changing.

**When scheduling your appointment**:

You will receive an email with our updated policy guidelines and a CHECK-IN questionnaire. Please fill out the questionnaire and email back to our office **BEFORE your appointment**. You will be asked credit card information to secure your appointment.

**The day of your appointment:**

**Pre-visit contact:**

At the scheduled time of your appointment, you will receive a telephone call from the doctor. This call (~ 10-20 minutes) will entail:

* Going over the questionnaire you have submitted and asking historical/background questions to help understand the problem(s) you are having with your cat in order to develop a plan/course of action for the next phase of the appointment. (This replaces our previous 10 minutes of sitting down to get to know you and what is wrong with your cat.)
* At the conclusion of the call, you will be asked to pay the estimated cost of services **IN FULL** by credit card BEFORE the examination in person will begin. Failure to pay the fees in full PRIOR to the visit will terminate the rest of the appointment and result in a house-call mileage charge, No-Show, and billing fees.

**The in-home visit:**

Dressed in full PPE (Personal Protective Equipment), the doctor will then: **temperature screen** you before entering your home for the next phase of the appointment (~10 minutes). While attempting to maintain appropriate social distancing (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html>), as appropriate, the visit will be strictly limited to:

* examination of the cat(s)
* collection of diagnostic samples
* performance of testing/treatment/care/end-of-life services, as required
* dispensing of pertinent medications from our mobile pharmacy unit

You will be required to have:

* your cat(s) ready and available for examination. We will NOT search for or detain cats for the exam.
* the cat in a well-lit, well ventilated, easily cleanable, and easily accessible area with a STURDY surface (ideally a counter-top) free from dangers such as breakable objects, etc. Examination of cats will NOT occur on the floor or outside (unless in a screened/enclosed porch). Please be aware and prepared for cats that scratch/shred surfaces they are restrained on, and the potential for the cat to urinate/defecate or attempt to flee during the procedure/exam.
* only ONE member of the household & WEARING A MASK designated to assist the doctor with the exam/procedures, as required/needed, while being mindful of proper social distancing
* a large clean freshly laundered towel for restraint purposes.

PPE will be scary for the cats and difficult on the doctor to have on for the visits. There is an additional charge for the PPE for in-home visits.

**Post-visit contact:**

At the conclusion of the in-home visit, you will receive another phone call from the doctor approximately 10-15 minutes later (~10-15 minutes in duration) to:

* summarize the visit,
* advise when diagnostic testing results will be available for discussion,
* offer advice/recommendations for further medications/treatments/follow-up appointments which may be necessary for your cat(s) and,
* collect/credit any remaining balance due via credit card if there are further charges/credits due to your account.

You will still receive the customary post-visit email summary, copy of invoice, and follow up emails with lab results/summaries, as relevant. We ask to please be respectful of PPE, time constraints, the requirement for wearing a mask during the visit, and social distancing/illness precautions as we want a successful, but healthy environment for all concerned.