

PetCheck 2017

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is PetCheck?

A: Each year, CVMA partners with 9News KUSA and News 5 KOAA to bring 9PetCheck and 5PetCheck to Colorado. CVMA member veterinarians generously donate their time and open their clinics to provide free wellness exams and rabies vaccinations to pet owners across the state who are facing economic adversity. The event not only helps give back to local communities, it provides an unparalleled opportunity to underscore the importance of preventive pet healthcare as well as the veterinarian's crucial role in public health protection. The coverage 9News and News 5 provide – before, during, and after the event – puts veterinarians on the air and in the public spotlight in a way we've only been able to dream about!

Q: How do I participate?

A: Fill out and turn in an enrollment form to add your clinic to the appointment schedule. The weekend of the event, member volunteers provide pre-registered dogs and cats a basic physical exam and rabies vaccination as well as counsel pet owners on any additional veterinary care the animal may need (dentals, x-rays, blood work, etc.). Participating clinics are responsible for opening and staffing their clinics during the voluntary event and providing the complimentary exam and rabies vaccination (if appropriate).

Q: How will the public know about the event?

A: 9News and News 5 will be promoting the event on-air and on their websites for several days prior to the event, as well as actively promoting the appointment phone bank. Every effort will be made to get publicity in cities outside the reach of 9News (Denver Metro Area) and News 5 (Southern Colorado). CVMA sends press releases to local newspapers, radio stations, and other media outlets throughout the state, in each city/county where there are participating clinics. In addition, each clinic is encouraged to promote their participation on social media, and in local community centers by using posters and flyers provided by CVMA—please help spread the word in your community!

Q: How will scheduling appointments for PetCheck work?

A: When you complete the enrollment form, your clinic's openings become part of a statewide inventory containing all of the appointments available during the event. All appointments will be made during a live phone bank on Monday, April 3. When people call in to make appointments, they will be asked to choose a city/county and then they will be entered into the spreadsheet at a specific appointment time and notified of the clinic they will be visiting. By April 5, your clinic will receive a roster of your scheduled appointments, complete with the client's name, pet's name, and phone number so your clinic can make reminder calls.

Q: What if my clinic wants to only offer appointments to pets of people within, or very near, my town or city?

A: When a caller gets through to a volunteer at the phone bank, the volunteer makes every effort to get the client scheduled with a clinic as close as possible to the client's residence. Because of how quickly appointments fill and how badly these pets need to be seen by a veterinarian, geographic matching may not always happen.

Often times, the PetCheck appointment is the only time the animal has had a chance to see a doctor, so the client is willing to travel to meet that desperate need.

Q: What will be included in each appointment?

A: The appointment will include the basic wellness exam routinely conducted at your clinic (lab analysis does not need to be included). If deemed appropriate by the veterinarian, the pet will also be given a rabies vaccination (**FREE vaccines are provided to each participating clinic from Merial**). The veterinarian is encouraged to counsel pet owners on any health issues that may require further tests or treatment; however, testing or treating additional issues is not included in the complimentary exam. Appointments made through the phone bank will not be made for emergency purposes, only wellness exams.

Q: What if follow-up treatment is needed but the pet owners cannot afford it?

A: If your clinic identifies a health issue that should be addressed but the pet owner is financially limited, please refer them to PetAid Animal Hospital (formerly Harrison Memorial Animal Hospital). PetAid Animal Hospital provides donor-subsidized services to pet owners based on income. Referral information for the hospital will be made available to participating clinics. If the distance to PetAid Animal Hospital is a barrier, then please refer the pet owner to the local resources in your area. For spay/neuter only, they can also be referred to Spay Colorado at 1.877.654.SPAY or spaycolorado.org for a list of donor-subsidized, reduced fee spay/neuter programs across the state.

Q: How do people qualify for appointments?

A: PetCheck will be promoted as an event for pet owners facing economic challenges (low-income, those who have lost jobs, etc.). We will be unable to screen appointment seekers on economic need and thus we focus pre-event messaging on the community in need.

Q: How is this event not undermining the value of veterinary care?

A: PetCheck is an opportunity for CVMA members to educate the public about the importance of veterinary care and to help pets that may not regularly see a veterinarian because of financial constraints. The messages will be focused on the importance of regular veterinary care and public health protection, and will provide an opportunity to some pet owners who care deeply about their pets but can't afford to pay for a regular visit right now. The event will be promoted through 9News and News 5 as a goodwill gesture by the veterinary profession and a mechanism for veterinarians to help those who are struggling financially. The event provides CVMA an extraordinary opportunity to reach the public with messaging about the importance of regular veterinary care, through both media promotion and coverage and during the in-clinic exams. In addition, the free rabies vaccinations provided are vital in furthering public health protection and awareness.

Q: What information will be communicated to the pet owner when the appointment is made?

A: The phone operators (CVMA staff and volunteers) will cover the following topics with each client making an appointment:

- Appointments are for cats and dogs only
- Animals must arrive on leashes (dogs) or in carriers (cats)
- Clients must arrive 15 minutes prior to the appointment to complete clinic paperwork
- Name, address, and phone number of the clinic at which their appointment is scheduled
- Clarification about the purpose of the appointment (not for emergency services!)

