

Executive Order 20-17 and Non-essential Veterinary Surgeries and Procedures Occurring in **Research Settings**

On March 23, 2020 Governor Walz issued Executive Order 20-17, clarifying the application of Executive Order 20-09 in relation to veterinary surgeries and procedures. Executive Orders 20-09 and 20-17 indefinitely postpone non-essential surgeries and elective procedures in medical, dental, and veterinary settings. Non-essential surgeries and procedures are defined as surgeries or procedures that can be delayed without undue risk to the current or future health of a patient.

Executive Orders 20-09 and 20-17 were issued to conserve critical resources, such as ventilators and personal protective equipment (“PPE”). The conservation of this equipment is critical to address the unprecedented challenges the COVID-19 pandemic poses.

Veterinary procedures require equipment, including PPE, and may occur as part of research programs found in businesses and academic research institutions. This guidance clarifies how research programs that require veterinary care should comply with Executive Order 20-17.

- Veterinary surgeries and procedures that cannot be delayed without undue risk to the current or future health of the animal may be considered essential and are allowed under Executive Order 20-17.
- Non-essential veterinary surgeries and procedures that **use PPE and are related to COVID-19 research** may occur while Executive Order 20-17 is in effect.
- Non-essential veterinary surgeries and procedures that **use PPE and are not related to COVID-19 research** should be postponed for the duration of the peacetime emergency declared in Executive Order 20-01 expires or until Executive Order 20-17 is rescinded.