

My name is Elaine Dawson and I am the owner and operator of Paws-on Grooms. Dog grooming may seem to be purely indulgent because some breeds only need to be brought in a couple times a year; other breeds need professional care once a month. A sizable percentage of my clients have limiting physical abilities and cannot brush, wash or trim the nails on their animal which can directly impact the health of a dog. Nails are the most common that I've received calls for recently since the vets have been turning away any case that isn't an emergency; this strands pet owners with nails that will continue to grow into their paw pads which makes walking for the dogs painful. There are other dogs that have skin conditions and need timely baths with medicated shampoo, as well as general upkeep in hygiene. Brushing is the most important, though it is difficult for owners to do at home without the right equipment and restraints for some dogs. If they are not brushed or shaved on a steady schedule it can cause matting which can irritate the skin, cause sores, or cut off circulation in whole limbs. Tails have had to have been amputated because of long term matting.



I have had many clients contact me in hopes of getting in for a groom for their dogs and I haven't had a lot of clear answers to give to them in the past month. I have gotten mixed messages from the couple times I have contacted CBJ on the subject; I was told grooming is unessential, so closed my shop during the passing of the CBJ Hunker Down mandate. I reopened after that with a change in drop off, pick-up and payment to where there is no contact whatsoever, and was still told to shut down. I think there has been a definite confusion in where the line is drawn and I would like to help in aiding in finding ways to start opening small businesses again. Dog grooming should be considered essential but subject to following social distancing rules.

I have recently received new guidance from CBJ permitting me to work under the social distancing plan I outlined with absolutely no face to face interaction: I have a kennel placed in the hallway of the building that I am renting, the pet owner will place their dog inside when dropping off, and where they will be picking up once the groom is completed. I take instructions and payment over the phone so there is no immediate contact. Because the virus is thought to possibly be airborne for a few hours, to combat that between customers I spray Lysol Air Disinfectant Spray in the hallway and disinfecting the kennel between each use to prevent spread of virus on the fur of the dog. I also wear a cloth facemask and gloves until the dog has been properly bathed.

I am doing everything in my power to keep my shop safe, sanitized and running for the safety of clients with and without fur! I appreciate the CBJ in working with me to determine a path towards reopening my business.

Sincerely,

Elaine Dawson

Owner, Paws-On Grooms