



To Our Valued Clients,

Spring is on the way, and we are excited to share some upcoming changes here at Sand Road Animal Hospital. Of course, with change comes some short-term challenges and we want to prepare you for those as well.

The veterinary industry continues to experience significant supply and demand issues. There is unprecedented demand for and a shortage of veterinarians and skilled support staff that is required to meet the need of the growing pet population. We are a 5-doctor practice but in the next few months, we will be considerably short staffed.

As many of you know, Dr. Dave has achieved his well-deserved retirement. Though it is a bittersweet transition for us, we couldn't be happier for him as he begins this next chapter. Additionally, Dr. Dana will be welcoming her baby girl into the world any day now and she will be taking some leave to adjust to this new responsibility and spend time with her baby.

While these are wonderful changes, the reality is that we will be less able to accommodate the usual flow of a 5-doctor practice. Throughout the spring, Drs. Amy, Jen, and Brittany will be here to support our clients and patients daily. Only having 3 full time veterinarians running a practice of our size is stressful, but we know they are up for the challenge. Please be mindful that due to less veterinarians practicing, we may not be able to accommodate late arrivals for appointments or unanticipated walk-ins. We ask for your patience and consideration during this time.

To help keep up with patient demand, we do have some relief planned. Dr. Dave will fill in when he can during the next few months, as he knows that running Sand Road is extremely demanding even when we are fully staffed. Dr. Stephanie James will also be filling in on some Saturdays in the upcoming months, and we couldn't be happier to have her expertise!

In July, we look forward to welcoming a new associate veterinarian, Dr. Skylar, to our practice. We will have Dr. Dana back among our ranks at that time as well. We hope to be running back at our usual capacity by July.

To help manage our caseload while we are short-staffed, we've made the following changes:

OVERNIGHT CRITICAL PATIENTS

We will not be hospitalizing critical patients overnight or through the weekend. Any animal requiring intensive care will need to be transferred, by the owner, to a facility that provides 24-hour care. Alternatively, the pet can be discharged home overnight for home care, if appropriate, and return in the morning when needed.

While this is a departure from the way we have operated for decades, we are not, and never have been, a 24-hour care facility. We do not have any medical staff overnight, and we recognize that it is the standard of care for critically sick animals to be hospitalized where they can have around-the-clock care, and we only want the best for our patients. Medical boarders and stable patients can continue to be hospitalized on weeknights with your understanding that we do not have nursing care between 7pm and 7am. No patients can remain in the hospital over the weekend.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

We will always strive to be available for you during business hours but there will inevitably be times when we are over capacity and cannot accommodate your pet's emergency needs. We urge you to have a plan in place for when this scenario occurs. We have provided a list of referral and emergency hospitals on our website, and we recommend that you familiarize yourself with this list, including the locations. Should you need to seek emergency care, it is advised that you call ahead as there are times when the emergency clinics are overcapacity or have long wait times, while others may have no wait at all.

If you are unsure if the issue your pet is facing is a true emergency, we provide an after-hours phone service that is staffed with a licensed veterinary technician who can answer questions and guide you over the phone. You can reach the Guardian answering service by calling our hospital number after regular business hours.

PET POISONING

Please store the pet poison control numbers into your cell phone for easy access. A veterinary toxicologist can guide you on whether or not you need to seek emergency care if your pet ingests something questionable.

- Pet Poison Helpline (855) 886-7965
- ASPCA Animal Poison Control (888) 426-4435

CHANGE IN HOURS

We will also be reducing our Saturday hours to accommodate our shortened staff. As of March 1st, our Saturday hours will be from 8am to 12pm. On weekdays when we only

have two veterinarians on staff, we will close at 5pm instead of our usual 6pm. We intend on increasing hours again once we are fully staffed.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Please be kind to our staff. They are good people with big hearts who work harder and longer than is reasonable. Rudeness to the staff will not be tolerated. Please pay attention to reminders that may give you important instructions such as fasting your pet prior to sedation or certain lab tests so that you are not turned away unnecessarily. We also ask that you be patient with call back times, call at least 48 hours in advance for prescription refills, and be aware that our doctor's time for multiple phone calls and lengthy discussions will be limited. Any extensive phone time that is needed with a doctor should be set up as a telemedicine consultation through our Client Services Representatives.

Your pet's health continues to be our priority and we are committed to providing the best possible care for your pets. Thank you for taking the time to read this, and for your patience and understanding!

Sincerely,

The Doctors and Staff at Sand Road Animal Hospital