

CHS Group eye testing: guidance for panellists

This guidance has been developed to enable panellists to carry out eye screenings within a non-clinic environment from 20th June 2020, while maintaining the safety of all parties involved. BVA recognises that panellists will need to make changes to their usual working practices according to national legislation and in conjunction with BVA guidance. This document is valid for as long as necessary in line with government advice.

The guidance should be read alongside BVA guidance on working safely during Covid-19.

<https://www.bva.co.uk/media/3500/bva-updated-guidance-for-veterinary-practices-on-working-safely-during-covid-19-final-28-may-2020.pdf>

BVA has also produced guidance for dog owners.

Planning ahead for eye screening:

- **Choose the right venue:** when selecting a venue carry out a full risk assessment and choose somewhere that has parking facilities and enough space so that safe physical distance can be maintained. (See choosing a venue below.)
- **Organise for someone to help on the day:** all panellists must be assisted during appointments. This can be a member of your own household or a veterinary nurse who should be employed for the day, ideally from a practice you normally work in.
- **Think about time and cost:** individual examinations are likely to take longer than usual in order to prioritise social/physical distancing, which means you won't be able to screen as many dogs per day as usual. Consideration should also be given to the cost of screening, as the extra cost for the venue and veterinary nurse/colleague will need to be taken into account. This will need to be clearly communicated to the owner.
- **Arrange contactless payments:** consider how payment could be taken remotely, for example via bank transfer at the time of booking.
- **Order additional equipment:** keep a stock of new pens (to be given, not loaned, to owners), hand sanitiser, sanitiser spray/wipes, a plastic tray for documents, and any other equipment you may need to make sure the screening area can be kept as clean and safe as possible.
- **Booking appointments:** owners must book an appointment in advance and we recommend taking payment at the time of booking, for example by bank transfer.
- **Communicate your plans to owners:** make sure owners know what to expect when they attend, highlighting any different or additional measures you have put in place. The BVA guidance for owners may help with this.

Choosing a venue:

- Venues must be risk assessed before booking.
- Car parks are essential for clients to wait for appointments. You should not book venues where owners will have to queue outside or on streets.
- Make sure the building has good ventilation.
- Toilets and kitchens should only be used by you and your support staff. If there are additional facilities that could be safely used by owners, use signage to clearly indicate which facilities are available. If no facilities are available for owners, they should be informed at the time of booking.
- Identify a handover area near the entrance. Use signage or CHS materials to clearly inform owners where they need to wait.

On the day:

- Consider wearing a cloth face covering while in an enclosed space where social distancing may not be possible. This is different to the surgical facemasks you would normally wear in practice (see the BVA Covid-19 guidance for more information).
- Thoroughly wash/sanitise your hands before and after every interaction with an owner and their dog.
- Owners must wait in their car until the time of their appointment. You or your colleague should collect the dog from the owner in order to administer the eye drops. Any interaction closer than 2m must be kept to a minimum.
- Use wipes/sanitiser to wipe down the dog lead.
- After the eye drops are administered, the dog and certificate should be handed to the owner for them to return to their car and complete the paperwork.
- The owner should bring their own pen to the appointment in order to complete the paperwork while in their car and should be informed of this at the time of booking the appointment. However, we advise keeping a stock of pens that can be given to owners if they have forgotten to bring one.
- Use a plastic tray to collect and handover documentation.
- After the time allocated for the eye drops (approximately 20 minutes) you or your colleague should meet the owner at the entrance and collect the dog and documentation.
- The owner should return to their car during the screening. You should complete the eye examination within the venue with only the dog and your colleague present.
- After the examination, you or your colleague should return to the car park to handover the dog and paperwork to the owner. Keep the interaction to a minimum.
- Wash hands after every examination and sanitise the work area.

Key points to remember:

- Plan exactly how you will work in advance
- Make sure your clients know what to expect and what you expect of them
- Keep any interactions within 2m to an absolute minimum on the day
- Practise good hand hygiene and sanitise work surfaces and equipment after every interaction with an owner or dog
- Consideration should be given to the cost of screening, as the extra cost for the venue and veterinary nurse/colleague will need to be considered. Any additional cost outside of the BVA screening cost will need to be clearly communicated and explained to the owner in advance.