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PIF (Pet Industry Federation) Statement on Pet Grooming & Welfare

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The Government website has been updated to include a reference to pet grooming during lockdown and Tier rules in England. It states: Animal grooming facilities may also stay open but must only be used for the purposes of the animal's welfare (and not for aesthetic purposes).

The Animal Welfare Act sets out the 5 welfare needs of animals to safeguard their welfare and one of these is the "need to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease" This is further amplified in the Code of Practice for the Welfare of Dogs (2017) which states under the same heading "you should carefully check your dog's coat regularly and groom your dog as necessary to maintain a healthy coat."

The Pet Industry Federation (PIF) considers that professional pet grooming is essential for a pet's health and welfare and provides many health benefits which may not be immediately obvious. It is not undertaken for aesthetic purposes, which the dictionary defines as: concerned with beauty or the appreciation of beauty.

Regular visits to a professional salon are a fundamental part of a pet's routine care and wellbeing and help keep the coat clean and free from knots and matts, and in so doing help prevent more serious welfare issues building up.

Pet grooming fulfils many functions and professional pet groomers have an important role to play in maintaining pet health and welfare:

- Regular grooming helps to keep coats clean and manageable;
- Unremoved hair from when a pet moults can form matts which can cause discomfort and skin complaints;
- Pet groomers are able to do a quick health check and spot any unusual lumps or bumps which can then be referred for veterinary investigation;
- Pet groomers check for any signs of fleas or ticks, inspect their teeth, eyes and ears and make sure that claws aren't overgrown;
- Pet grooming promotes good blood circulations, keeping grease levels down which can block pores and cause cysts.

Professional pet groomers provide an essential pet welfare service which is important to maintain during a period of lockdown.

PIF would consider aesthetic purposes to be services such as creative grooming, facials, nail painting, and fur-dyeing. These activities should not be undertaken during a lockdown.