

## **BIAZA Operating Guidelines for Zoos and Aquariums: Covid-19 Management**

Management of zoos and aquariums with respect to Covid-19 risk mitigation must be carried out with careful planning to ensure that all government legal requirements and guidance is followed regarding physical/social distancing and hygiene. Risk of infection to public, staff and animals must be reduced so far as is reasonably practicable. BIAZA continues to liaise with relevant Government departments across the UK and Ireland and to work with a range of other professional associations to align BIAZA's guidance.

**This document does not constitute legal advice. It is important to note that restrictions are regularly being changed on a national and also regional basis, and that it is essential to adhere to the legislation in force in the country in which you are based, as well as any regional guidance.**

Even after legal restrictions are lifted, ongoing Covid risk management of individual zoos and aquariums will be necessary. Each individual site will need to maintain its own site-specific Covid Management Strategy, based on Covid-19 Risk Assessment and appropriate Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). (There is a template risk assessment available to download [here](#) on the BIAZA website and HSE provide examples [here](#)).

Management strategies should plan for the coming months in phases as necessary, with operational restrictions which can be lifted gradually when national/regional restrictions are relaxed, or can be put back in place if the Government of the country in which you are based deem it necessary. More information on localised restriction levels, (which importantly can lead to mandated closure or closure of inside areas) can be found [here](#) for Scotland, [here](#) for Wales, [here](#) for Ireland and [here](#) for Northern Ireland.

BIAZA recommend that all zoos and aquariums which are operating under Covid restrictions should ensure that they have taken the following steps:

- ✓ Carried out and documented thorough Covid-19 Risk Assessment for all aspects of operations and developed appropriate SOPs as necessary to align with this.
- ✓ Produced a site-specific, phased reopening/operating strategy, adhering to the regional government guidance (see references below\*) and also considering the advice within this document.
- ✓ Informed the relevant local authorities regarding status (open/closed/partially open) and the measures taken to ensure the safety of visitors, animals and staff.
- ✓ Shared opening status and mitigation plans with the BIAZA Office (BIAZA members only).

This document provides a list of points to consider whilst operating under a Covid management strategy, and should be used in conjunction with the relevant guidance issued by the Government of the country in which you are based and other sector-specific information (see 'Further Reading and References'). Content will be reviewed and regularly updated as the various Governments' guidelines change. An updated draft will be kept available on the [BIAZA website](#), along with a range of other Covid management resources.

Given the changing nature of the Covid situation, we would recommend reviewing and updating any Covid management strategy on a regular basis. Please don't hesitate to contact the [BIAZA Office](#) for more information, or with specific queries or concerns.

Government Advice\*

**Ireland**

Irish Government: [Covid guidance and Plan for Living](#)

Fáilte Ireland [Guidelines for Reopening Visitor Attractions](#)

Irish Government: [Public health measures](#)

**Northern Ireland**

Northern Irish Government: [Covid guidance, updates and Northern Ireland Recovery](#)

Tourism Northern Ireland: [Guidance for Tourism & Hospitality Businesses](#)

**Scotland**

Scottish Government: [Covid guidance and updates and Scotland's Strategic Framework](#)

Scottish Government: [Sector Guidance for Tourism and Hospitality](#)

Scottish Government: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): local protection levels](#)

**UK**

UK Government: [Covid guidance, updates Recovery Strategy and local alert levels](#)

UK Government: [Safer public places - managing public outdoor settings](#)

UK Government: [Visitor Economy Guidance](#)

UK Government: [Events and attractions guidance \(use from Step 4 onwards\)](#)

UK Government: [Other Working Safely from Step 4 guidance](#)

UK Government: [Advice for people in England with animals](#)

**Wales**

Welsh Government: [Covid guidance, Road Map and updates](#)

Welsh Government: [Coronavirus: guidance for tourism and hospitality businesses for a phased and safe re-opening](#)

Welsh Government: [Covid-19 alert levels](#)

*It is essential that your Covid management strategy addresses the physical/social distancing, cleaning and hygiene requirements of your relevant national legislation. Where the enforcing authority, such as the HSE or your local authority, identifies employers who are not taking action to comply with the relevant public health legislation (e.g. through spot checks), they are empowered to take a range of actions to improve control of workplace risks.*

***Failure to complete a risk assessment which takes account of COVID-19, or completing a risk assessment but failing to put in place sufficient measures to manage the risk of COVID-19, could constitute a breach of health and safety law.*** The actions the enforcing authority can take include the provision of specific advice to employers to support them to achieve the required standard, through to issuing enforcement notices to help secure improvements. Serious breaches and failure to comply with enforcement notices can constitute a criminal offence, with serious fines and even imprisonment for up to two years. There is also a wider system of enforcement, which includes specific obligations and conditions for licensed premises.

*Employers are expected to respond to any advice or notices issued by enforcing authorities rapidly and are required to do so within any timescales imposed by the enforcing authorities. The vast majority of employers are responsible and will join with the UK's fight against COVID-19 by working with the Government and their sector bodies to protect their workers and the public. However, inspectors are carrying out compliance checks nationwide to ensure that employers are taking the necessary steps. [Cabinet Office, June 2020]*

Points for consideration during the development/maintenance of Covid management strategies for each zoo and aquarium include those listed below.

### **Protecting Staff and Volunteers**

- Normal operating workplace risk assessments for staff should be reviewed for Covid-19 conditions.
- Develop a plan for any returning staff and volunteers including a continuation of home working for certain roles. Refer to [events and attractions guidance](#) 'Going to the workplace' and review the guidance for [staff at higher risk](#).
- In England businesses are asked to assist the [Test and Trace](#) service by keeping a temporary record of your staff shift patterns for 21 days and assist NHS Test and Trace with requests for that data if needed. This could help contain clusters or outbreaks. All organisations should provide a [QR code](#) on multiple posters on site for staff and public to 'check in' on the NHS Test and Trace app.
- Redesign working areas e.g. office space to enable social distancing.
- If necessary, change working shift and break patterns to allow social distancing.
- Reduce the number of people each person has contact with by using fixed teams or partnering, so each person works with only a few others.
- Take steps to keep teams separate, such as separate shifts, deep cleaning of staff area between shifts.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers are aware of new social distancing and hygiene measures especially if they have recently return from a period of absence.
- Introduce an effective training programme which covers the organisation's arrangements but that can be adapted departmentally with more specific information.
- Remind staff and volunteers to stay at home and seek testing if feeling unwell. Ensure they are aware of the process to follow if they start displaying symptoms in the workplace and remind them to look out for them in others.
- It should be noted that organisations have a duty of care to volunteers to ensure as far as reasonably practicable, they are not exposed to risks to their health and safety. Volunteers should be afforded the same level of protection to their health and safety as employees. (See [Volunteer Management Tips](#)).
- Scotland has a test and protect system in place that requires businesses to collect details – more information is available [here](#).

### **Communicating that zoos and aquariums are safe environments for the public to visit**

- Demonstrate clear social responsibility and communicate a commitment to supporting the Guidelines on Covid-19 issued by the Government of your country in public messaging.
- Reassure the public with clear information (on website, social media, around site) about the full measures and rules in place on the site, especially those concerning any restrictions on visitor numbers and/or movement, and restricted catering provisions.
- Consider ways of communicating what a visitor may expect from your zoo under Covid restrictions using images or video. This can provide reassurance but also help them visualise what they need to do when they visit.
- Remind visitors (at the entrance, around site, on website, pre-visit emails, on social media) that it is also their responsibility to maintain social distancing, cleaning and hygiene measures, and also to minimise contact, for their benefit and that of other visitors, staff and animals e.g. through a 'Visitors' Charter'.
- Provide regular on-site reminders for visitors about best practice in hygiene (regular effective hand-washing, coughing into a tissue, or into the elbow if no tissue is available etc.).
- Consider the needs of those with protected characteristics, such as those who are visually impaired.

- Ensure staff members are trained to support visitors with social distancing and the new measures that have been adopted.
- Review onsite printed or digital material such as maps or apps to include reminders of social distancing or changes in how visitors will experience the site.
- Include a reminder on website when purchasing tickets to ask purchaser to delay visit if they are feeling unwell, and instructions on what to do if they start feeling unwell during their visit, and clarity over processes around ticket cancellation in the event of changes in restrictions etc.

### Limiting Numbers of Visitors

- Each institution should set a maximum visitor number based on Government guidance if available (i.e. allowing  $Xm$  social distancing, or  $X$  square meters per visitor), or a site-specific Covid-19 risk assessment taking consideration of limiting factors such as pinch points, toilet facilities etc. Set conservative limits initially, and increase those gradually as social distancing practices are tested and found to be effective.
- IAAPA provide further guidance on calculation of capacity in their [Reopening Guidelines](#). If necessary data is not available however then a conservative approach could be initial opening with under 50% normal maximum capacity, increasing to under 75% capacity if the social distancing and safety measures can be safely implemented.
- The calculated capacity should consider both the overall number of people and the number of groups – i.e. a single group of 5 can distance themselves as a single unit where as separate groups of 2 and 3 will distance as 2 units.
- The total figure can be managed across a whole day or in shorter visiting sessions with due consideration given to average dwell time (e.g. morning or afternoon sessions) or with capped, timed entry slots.
- The maximum number of visitors should allow for car parks to be safely managed e.g. taping off every other space if necessary.
- Online ticketing systems can be controlled to only allow a set maximum number of sales for each day/time slot. Tickets should also be made available by telephone for those that cannot access the internet, and the sales of both should be managed together. A proportion of tickets can be withheld to be made available for purchase on the admissions gate if necessary.
- Preferential ticket access may be provided for members by asking them to book free tickets through an online system or by telephone, and ensuring a set proportion of available tickets is reserved for members only.
- Government guidance on social contact varies between nations (e.g. variations between implementation indoors/outdoors and also inclusion of children) so ensure you are up to date with the most recent guidance on this from your region. In regions where legal restrictions remain, any group of individuals breaching the law could face a fine, and businesses will be fined if they have not taken reasonable steps to ensure groups larger than those allowed, do not gather. Cabinet Office have stated that a 'reasonable step' would be asking the party booking to confirm they meet the restrictions. In some tiers/levels tours can continue to operate, but people from different households/support bubbles must remain socially distanced at all times.
- Ensure you are familiar with the level of restrictions in your region, and what that means for both your organisation and your visitors. See the relevant Government advice links on page 2 for up to date information.

### Controlling Ticketing and Admissions

- Online ticket purchase processes should be considered as the primary method of ticket purchase. Tickets should also be made available by telephone for those that cannot access the internet, and the sales of both should be managed together. This is in order to manage number of (and proportion of member:non-member) sales, and to reduce the level of contact between visitors and gate staff. Relaxing any usual restrictions on online/tele tickets purchase (e.g. allowing them to be purchased on the day of the visit) can facilitate this.
- Consider whether/how you can collate and store the names and contact details of visitors buying tickets, along with the date they were due to be visiting. This may be needed for contact tracing and testing. In England the opening up of the economy following the COVID-19 outbreak is being supported by [NHS Test and Trace](#). You should assist this service by keeping a temporary record of your visitors for 21 days, in a way that is manageable for your business, and assist NHS Test and Trace with requests for that data if needed. This could help contain clusters or outbreaks. GDPR requirements will need to be considered, i.e. visitors will need to agree to have their details stored securely. (See [UK Government Guidance on Maintaining Staff, Customer and Visitor Logs](#)).
- Where face-to-face exchanges are necessary (for information, tickets or other purchases), the following measures should be employed:
  - installation of plastic screening or barriers at ticket/information desks.
  - increasing the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning
  - keeping the activity time involved as short as possible
  - back-to-back or side-to-side working (rather than face-to-face) whenever possible
- Cashless card/phone payments should be encouraged, rather than use of cash, and card machines etc. need to be regularly wiped using a suitable cleaning agent.
- Painted lines, decals or other indicators should be used to maintain the required social distancing in queues.
- A safe and managed waiting area may need to be provided if selling timed tickets.
- Depending on weather conditions, a system for people to wait in their cars may be helpful.
- Electronically controlled access systems and/or other forms of personnel control should be used to ensure that incoming visitors are counted and limited to the maximum number of visitors that can safely be allowed on site at any one time.
- Visitors leaving the zoo or aquarium should also be counted to ensure maximum numbers are not exceeded, either manually, using clicker counters or via turnstile exits. If there are multiple admission/exit points, these may need to be reduced to best facilitate this.
- Consider separating entrance and exit routes to assist in reducing congestion.
- If necessary, use staff to manage flow of visitors as they are arriving and departing, ideally along one-way routes.
- Scotland has a test and protect system in place that requires businesses to collect details – more information is available [here](#).
- Where till or admission points are together consider closing every other one to support distancing requirements.
- Consider special opening times for vulnerable people and ensure any changes to entries, exit and queue management take into account reasonable adjustments for those who need them.
- If possible minimize indoor queuing by restricting queue to only one party member per party.
- Provide hand washing facilities and hand sanitizer at entrance.
- It may be worth considering that in visitor attractions reopening in other regions, body temperature checks or thermal scanning are routinely carried out on staff and in some cases, also on visitors (please note this is not a PHE recommendation).

### Controlling visitor flow

- A one-way system around the site (whole or selected areas), clearly communicated through signage, may help reduce visitor to visitor contact. This route should take into account points of interest in terms of exhibits and guest experience, but also availability of facilities such as toilets and catering outlets.
- Pinch points should be managed e.g. with extra barriers, signage or presence of staff.
- Glass windows and exhibit barriers should have prominent signage advising visitors not to touch the surfaces, and explaining extra cleaning protocols.
- Where possible regular hand-washing opportunities or hand sanitiser stations should be provided along the route.
- Group sizes may need to be limited in sites with narrow pathways and multiple pinch points.
- Consider 'family/household groups' (i.e. those individuals living in a safe household who do not need to maintain social distancing from each other) as well as the applicable social contact restrictions in your region where necessary when managing queues and use of facilities etc.
- Consider making regular announcements to remind staff and visitors to follow social distancing and hygiene advice and visitor flow requirements.
- If lifts are in operation, regularly cleaning is required and signage to ensure only one party can access a lift at a time.

### Controlling Visitor Grouping

- Any scheduled activity that draws a crowd, e.g. keeper talks, animal shows or feeding times, should only occur if measures can be taken to enable social distancing between household groups and between public and staff, alongside suitable cleaning and hygiene measures. Where these activities are carried out they should be fully risk assessed, and carried out with support from local authorities.
- Consider installing TVs to provide looped video footage of previous shows/feeding or informing visitors of online content that they can watch on a mobile device.
- Non-scheduled feeding of high-profile animals that are likely to draw a crowd should be done before or after opening hours or as discreetly as possible, unless crowds can be managed.
- Consider whether there is a need to tape off areas providing shelter in inclement weather to prevent crowding. Also consider providing umbrella/waterproof ponchos.
- Play areas (indoor and outdoor) should only be opened if they can be managed effectively whilst supporting social distancing, hygiene and cleaning requirements (see [UK Government Guidance on Managing Playgrounds](#)).
- Clear guidance should be provided to school groups to facilitate their visit whilst ensuring protective measures can be met. Working with the individual schools in advance will be important to also consider schools' own guidance, pupil grouping etc.
- Emergency plans (including fire and animal escape procedures) should be risk assessed to account for social distancing measures.

### Controlled Reopening of Catering and Retail Outlets

- Your country and what tier/level is in place will impact what you are allowed to open, when, and how you should operate (e.g. takeaway/click-and-collect only). Please check the restrictions for your area in regards to hospitality and retail.
- Complete a thorough risk assessment including consulting retail/catering staff about how you will manage the risks.
- Introduce additional hand washing or hand sanitiser stations at entrances and inside shops and restaurants and encourage visitors to use these.
- Place clear signage in and around outlets reminding visitors of social distancing measures and asking them to follow the rules.

- Designate positions from which staff can provide advice or assistance whilst maintaining social distance. Suspend services that cannot be undertaken without contravening social distancing guidelines.
- Providing a limited range of take-away food and drinks only (no self-service food) or pop-up style retailing may be advisable, with fixed menu displays provided on boards (as opposed to smaller menus on tables to be handled by guests).
- Seating immediately adjacent to food outlets should be removed to prevent congregating.
- Consider allowing visitors to bring a picnic and picnic blankets.
- Regional restrictions may require seating areas to be positioned well away from premises serving food. Where allowed by regulations they should be suitably spaced apart and if they are fixed in place, alternate ones should be removed or taken out of action to maintain social distancing. This furniture will need to be cleaned and disinfected appropriately where practical after each use. If wooden furniture cannot be suitably cleaned and dried regularly enough it may have to be taken out of use.
- Introduce additional cleaning measures to high frequency touchpoints such as door handles, pin pads and staff handheld devices.
- Consider leaving non-essential doors open to reduce the number of touch points when using the space. This does not apply to fire doors.
- Review the layout of shops and restaurants to reduce contact between visitors, ensure walkways are as clear as possible removing display fixtures if necessary. Consider one-way systems using floor markings and signage. Move queues outside where safe to do so and add social distancing floor markings.
- Limit the number of visitors allowed in shops and restaurants at any one time such that visitors can follow social distancing.
- Limit handling of merchandise through display methods or rotation of high-touch stock
- Consider implementing online ordering and collection.
- Workstations should be assigned to the smallest possible number of people.
- Keep workstations the required distance apart, where till points are close together consider closing every other one.
- Use screens to create physical barriers at transaction points.
- Wherever possible encourage cashless and contactless payments only.
- If your retail outlet is at the exit of your zoo or aquarium, you should consider moving stock to allow free exit flow.
- Consider reviewing the essential or relief item range and provide options for hand sanitiser, anti-viral wipes and face coverings such as masks, scarfs or snoods.

### **Toilets**

**Toilets are high risk areas with multiple touch points. You must ensure that they are operated in line with the legislation and any guidance in the country in which you are based.**

- Toilets should ideally be permanently staffed in order to limit the number of visitors using them at any one time and also to allow cleaning, ideally after each use.
- Set clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets, with increased frequency of cleaning in line with usage.
- Use normal cleaning products, paying attention to frequently hand touched surfaces, and consider use of disposable cloths or paper roll to clean all hard surfaces.
- Display a visible cleaning schedule and keep it up to date, demonstrating that the toilets are wiped down with a suitable cleaning agent every X minutes/or after every use.
- Consider providing more waste facilities and more frequent rubbish collection.

- Display signage to reiterate that the customer is responsible for washing their hands effectively after using the toilet.
- Wherever possible, motion sensor operated doors, flushes and taps should be used to limit hand contact.
- Where possible, switch off hand dryers and replace with paper towels.
- Hand sanitiser dispensers should be made available outside each toilet facility and use should be encouraged both before and after using the toilet facilities.
- Wherever possible external access doors should remain fully open.
- Queues should be managed with floor markings and signage etc. to maintain the required spaces.
- Consideration may need to be given to provision of extra toilets to facilitate a one-way route if that is deemed necessary.
- Scottish guidance has been issued on the opening of public and customer toilets and can be found [here](#).

### Protecting Animals

- Identify and pay special attention to species which are known to have the potential for infection, i.e. chiroptera, felids, mustelids, ungulates and primates. Covid-19 risk assessments for these groups should include consideration of surveillance and screening as well as the additional points below.
- Preventative and curative veterinary health care programmes should include data collection from clinical or post mortem cases in high risk or other species to demonstrate the consideration of Covid-19, be it stored samples for retrospective assessment or other.
- Refer to [BIAZA Advice on Reopening Walkthroughs, Animal Contact Experiences and Displays](#).
- Consider keeping animal contact areas involving species with known risk of infection closed (e.g. lemur or bat walk-through exhibits).
- Any public close contact animal experiences, including feeding of animals and walk-through exhibits should only be allowed following proper risk assessment (see [BIAZA Advice on Reopening Walkthroughs, Animal Contact Experiences and Displays](#) and [Government advice for people in England with animals](#)).
- Where possible a space should be implemented between stand-off barriers and permeable (e.g. mesh) enclosure perimeters, in line with social distancing requirements. Consider Perspex barriers or closure of sections of the zoo to protect species or individual animals of particular concern.
- PPE should be used as per usual operations, and also where the Covid-19 risk assessment determines that it is necessary (e.g. for staff in close contact with higher risk species).
- Where gloves are not worn, hands should be washed regularly, particularly before and after food preparation.
- Minimise the number of keepers who are in contact with the animals and ensure social distancing is upheld where possible between keepers and animals.
- Reduce contact between keepers and visitors/staff from departments in close contact with the public. This may involve temporary barriers to ensure social distancing whilst work is carried out.
- Disinfect items that are removed and added to enclosures every time they are removed/reintroduced e.g. enrichment and feed dishes.
- Consider reviewing training protocols, e.g. review current requirement for training, the appropriate use of PPE, options for maximising the distance between trainer and animal etc.
- Ensure robust pest control procedures (especially to control wild rodents in animal areas) are in place.
- Although there is no legal guidance specifically referring to zoo and aquarium animal transfers, BIAZA recommends that animal transfers do not take place during periods of

National Lockdown, except in cases where delayed transfer could impact welfare. If animal transfers are necessary, all possible steps should be taken to maintain social distancing as far as possible. International transfers will need special planning to take into consideration quarantine requirements (of animals and personnel), and in some cases may not be possible until borders have reopened.

- Legislation has now come into force in Scotland, England and Wales to make SARS-CoV-2 reportable in all mammals (except man) and so positive test results must now be reported by your vet, or private laboratory, to APHA. Your vet can provide advice on when testing is appropriate and further information can be found here: [SARS-CoV-2 in Animals – Case Definition, Testing and International Reporting Obligations \(defra.gov.uk\)](https://www.defra.gov.uk/animals/case-definition-testing-international-reporting-obligations)
- Due to high reported cases in Mustelinae, UK Government have produced guidance for those who keep and regularly handle ferrets, available [here](#).
- Globally, some zoos, aquariums and range country sanctuaries are taking steps to vaccinate groups of higher-risk species, notably non-human primates. A number of veterinary vaccines are currently under development (although none have yet been licensed for use in the UK or Ireland). BIAZA member zoos and aquariums may wish to review this option and should do so following standard infectious disease risk assessment processes, considering not only species risk level, but also specific facility and husbandry routine. See more information in the [BIAZA Guidance on SARS COV-2 Vaccination in Animal Species](#).
- Refer to the [European Association of Zoo and Wildlife Veterinarians – Transmissible Diseases Handbook for further information](#).
- Refer to the [APHA advice on testing and reporting](#). Testing should only be undertaken where it is in the interest of the health and welfare of the animal. Veterinarians have a professional obligation to report positive test results to the competent authority (Office of the UK Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) in England and respective CVOs in the devolved administrations) to support the UK's international reporting obligations to the World Animal Health Organisation.
- Refer to HSE [Preventing or Controlling Ill Health from Animal Contact at Visitor Attractions or Open Farms](#).
- Refer to [British Veterinary Association's Coronavirus FAQ](#).

#### **Parks with Drive-through Sections or Rides**

- Public should only be allowed to hand feed animals after a full risk assessment has been carried out (see [BIAZA Advice on Reopening Walkthroughs, Animal Contact Experiences and Displays](#)). Remember that where staff/public touch animals without proper PPE, there is not only a risk of infection to the animal, but also a risk of fomite transmission between people (e.g. via fur or saliva).
- Safari parks and others with extensive drive-through enclosures should take into account the possible risk of zoo animals contracting Covid-19 through direct physical contact with vehicles. In practice this low risk is likely to apply mostly to primates which may make contact with vehicles and handle parts that the occupants have recently touched (e.g. door handles). Appropriate cleaning and disinfection of those parts could be considered, or drive-through routes could be amended to exclude primate areas. As with all other stock a robust health surveillance process should be in place.
- Rides or vehicles such as buses, trains or monorails should operate with necessary measures place to maintain distancing and hygiene (e.g. distancing while queueing, rendering some seats unusable to maintain distancing, regular cleaning, controlled exiting etc).

#### **Handwashing Facilities**

- Where possible, regular opportunities for hand washing should be provided along visitor

routes. Public education notices at these stations should remind visitors of the importance of washing hands thoroughly in line with government guidelines.

- Where additional sink areas cannot be installed, sensor-based hand sanitiser stations at the entrance and along routes should be provided, with disinfecting alcohol gels. (Some alcohol-free hand sanitisers are also effective but test data should be checked to confirm suitability against Coronavirus). Notices should remind visitors that 20 seconds is required to effectively sanitise hands with these products.

### **Cleaning**

- Ensure all cleaning regimes are aligned with guidance from those relevant authorities such as [Health & Safety Executive](#).
- Normal opening and closing times may need to be changed to allow staff time to suitably clean visitor areas and safety barriers or carry-out certain animal care duties. This may apply to the whole site or individual buildings.
- Multi-touch areas (e.g. tills, radios, door handles, switches, toilet flushes, hand rails) need regular (e.g. hourly) disinfecting. These high-risk areas should be wiped with disinfectants used at appropriate dilutions appropriate for SARS-CoV-2. Ensure that the manufacturers' guidance on specific products is followed correctly in terms of both dilution and contact time to act effectively against Coronavirus.
- All cleaning product's test data should be checked to ensure they are effective against Coronavirus.

### **Limiting the Spread of Coronavirus**

- Refer to relevant regional guidance for advice on when employees are required to use PPE: UK [Event and attractions guidance](#) and in Scotland [Health Protection Scotland \(HPS\) guidance](#).
- Workplaces should use PPE consistent with local policies and in line with measures justified by a risk assessment.
- A risk-based approach should be taken, focused on a hierarchy of control which seeks to eliminate risks, combat risks at source, adapt workplaces to individual needs, ensure adequate staff training around processes to manage the risk and then use PPE where required.
- Where PPE is deemed necessary, an adequate supply and quality must be maintained which is provided free of charge to workers and which must fit properly.
- Provide regular and visible written/verbal communication of relevant government advice especially when it is updated.
- Provide daily reminders for your staff about hand washing.
- Speak regularly with staff to get feedback on pinch points and issues with customer behaviour etc.
- Provide hand sanitiser in high traffic/visitor interaction areas such as admissions, tickets sales, staff rooms and delivery entrances.
- Regular cleaning of door handles, keypads, stair hand rails etc should be carried out, including deep cleaning of work areas periodically.
- Facilitate regular hand washing breaks for staff.
- Remind staff to not share items for example pens, cups where possible.
- Stagger break times to reduce pressure on staff common rooms, smoking areas, welfare facilities etc; create additional space by converting outside areas or free workspaces and consider social distance marking and one-way systems for staff common areas where there may be queues i.e. toilets.
- Discourage non-essential trips within buildings and sites by restricting access to some areas and encouraging use of radios or telephones.
- Establish safe procedures for those staff regularly handling deliveries, to include suitable

social distancing and cleaning.

### Face coverings

- There are different regulations in different parts of the UK and in Ireland so please check the relevant regional guidance.
- Where face coverings are required, owners of businesses are encouraged to take reasonable steps to promote compliance with the law.
- There are some people who are not required to wear a face covering (such as young children), please be mindful that the reasons for this may not be visible.
- Where there are no legal requirements for face coverings, some sites may still opt to request that visitors wear face coverings in higher risk areas, e.g. indoor areas and pinch points.

### Emergency Procedures and Security

- Follow [Government advice provided for first responders](#).
- Where first aid support is required, social distancing should be maintained if at all possible (e.g. during assessment, triage and advice).
- In an emergency where provision of first aid requiring direct contact is needed, responders are not required to maintain social distancing. Dynamic Covid-19 risk assessment, appropriate PPE and adapted CPR technique (chest compressions only) should be employed, as described by the [Resuscitation Council](#).
- People involved in the provision of assistance to others should pay particular attention to sanitation measures immediately afterwards including washing hands and safely disposing of PPE etc.
- On-site first aid centres should have a quarantine area and clean down processes.
- Consider the security implications of any decisions and control measures to put in place, as any revisions could present new or altered security risks that may require mitigation.

### Enclosed Exhibits (including aquariums)

- Ensure that tier/level restrictions allow opening of indoor areas in your region.
- As with outside sites, a maximum capacity which allows safe social distancing should be identified for all enclosed exhibits.
- As with outside sites, staff can be positioned at entrances and at practical intervals to monitor and control numbers and crowd flow.
- A one-way system should be introduced if the space does not allow suitable social distancing.
- Where exhibits are placed at potential pinch points, it may be necessary to close/relocate these to deter lingering if possible.
- Steps should be taken to stop people from congregating in areas, (e.g. to eat refreshments) such as removal of benches.
- Any smaller indoor areas that cannot be operated on a one-way basis, especially where the entrance and exit are the same door, may need extra restrictions (e.g. one family/household group entry at a time) or may need to be kept closed to visitors for longer.
- Lifts could be limited to use by one family/household group at a time.
- Ensure that all surfaces are cleaned regularly with suitable cleaning agents. Glass and similar surfaces should also be dried where possible, particularly where moistening through condensation or from aquatic exhibits is likely.
- Please consider applying social distancing between humans and animals in the same way as between humans.
- Allow maximum ventilation by opening windows and doors etc. wherever possible and employing air handling systems where appropriate.

Please feel free to contact the [BIAZA Office](#) to discuss mitigation measures.

### Further Reading and Resources

Access – Not for Profit and Visitor Attractions Management – Welcoming your Visitors after Lockdown: [https://pages.theaccessgroup.com/FY20-P11-NFP-CDP-MOF-Resource-Visitor-attraction-covid-guide\\_PDF-downloaded.html](https://pages.theaccessgroup.com/FY20-P11-NFP-CDP-MOF-Resource-Visitor-attraction-covid-guide_PDF-downloaded.html)

APHA Advice for vets - SARS-CoV-2 in Animals – Case Definition, Testing and International Reporting Obligations: <http://apha.defra.gov.uk/documents/ov/Briefing-Note-0921.pdf>

BIAZA Advice on Reopening Walkthroughs, Animal Contact Experiences and Displays: <https://biaza.org.uk/downloader/1827>

BIAZA Covid-19 Guidance: <https://biaza.org.uk/covid-19-guidance-for-zoos-and-aquariums>

BIAZA Top Tips for Reopening: <https://biaza.org.uk/downloader/1823>

Blooloo – Pricing the Guest Experience in a Post Covid World: <https://blooloo.com/ticket-pricing-reopening-covid-19/>

British Veterinary Association Coronavirus FAQs:  
<https://www.bva.co.uk/coronavirus/frequently-asked-questions/>

European Association of Zoo and Wildlife Veterinarians – Transmissible Diseases Handbook for further information:

[https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.eazwv.org/resource/resmgr/files/transmissible\\_diseases\\_handbook/5th\\_ed\\_transmissible\\_diseases\\_handbook/chapters/covid19\\_faqv8\\_5\\_march21.pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.eazwv.org/resource/resmgr/files/transmissible_diseases_handbook/5th_ed_transmissible_diseases_handbook/chapters/covid19_faqv8_5_march21.pdf)

Fáilte Ireland: <https://failtecdn.azureedge.net/failteireland/Guidelines-for-Re-opening-Visitor-Attractions.pdf>

Gateway Ticketing Webinar on reopening strategies:

<https://www.gatewayticketing.com/community/webinar-reopening-strategies-and-transitioning-to->

HSE advice for businesses: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/index.htm>  
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/index.htm>

HSE example risk assessments: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/casestudies/>

HSE Preventing or controlling ill health from animal contact at visitor attractions or open farms:  
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/agriculture/topics/visitor-attractions.htm>

Ireland Government Covid-19 Guidance: <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/c36c85-covid-19-coronavirus/>

IAAPA Reopening Guidance: [https://iaapa.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/IAAPA\\_COVID-19\\_ReopeningGuidance\\_final.pdf](https://iaapa.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/IAAPA_COVID-19_ReopeningGuidance_final.pdf)

Northern Ireland Guidance for Reopening the Visitor Economy:  
<https://covid19.tourismni.com/covid-19/mitigation-recovery/>

Resuscitation Council advice on adapted CPR techniques for Covid:

<https://www.resus.org.uk/media/statements/resuscitation-council-uk-statements-on-covid-19-coronavirus-cpr-and-resuscitation/covid-community/>

UK Government Guidance for employers and businesses: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

UK Government Guidance for first responders:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-interim-guidance-for-first-responders/interim-guidance-for-first-responders-and-others-in-close-contact-with-symptomatic-people-with-potential-2019-ncov>

UK Government Guidance for managing playgrounds and outdoor gyms:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-playgrounds-and-outdoor-gyms/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-playgrounds-and-outdoor-gyms>

UK Government Guidance on Maintaining Staff, Customer and Visitor Logs:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/maintaining-records-of-staff-customers-and-visitors-to-support-nhs-test-and-trace>.

UK Government Guidance for working in shops and branches:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/shops-and-branches>

UK Government Guidance for working at events and attractions::

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-covid-19/events-and-attractions>

UK Government Guidance on working in hotels and other guest accommodation:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/hotels-and-other-guest-accommodation>

UK Hospitality Covid-19 Secure advice and risk assessments for hospitality businesses:

<https://www.ukhospitality.org.uk/page/UKHospitalityGuidanceforHospitality>

Visit Britain Recommendations for Government to support Reopening:

<https://www.visitbritain.org/our-role-during-covid-19-coronavirus>

### Scottish Government Guidance

Guidance for the tourism and hospitality sector: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-tourism-and-hospitality-sector-guidance/> This guidance covers what the Scottish Government requires zoos, aquariums, and other tourism and hospitality businesses to consider as part of their re-opening and operational strategies.

Guidance for retail, tourism and hospitality customers:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-consumers/>

Guidance on opening public toilets: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-public-and-customer-toilets-guidance/>

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Food guidance: <https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/consumers/food-safety/coronavirus>

Coronavirus (COVID-19): retail sector guidance: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus->

21.07.21



[covid-19-retail-sector-guidance/](#)

21.07.21



You are strongly encouraged to make yourselves aware of further Scottish Government guidance on a variety of matters that are likely to be relevant to the zoo and aquarium environment.

<https://www.gov.scot/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance/>

Given the fast pace at which guidance is changing, you should satisfy yourselves that any plans and standard operating procedures that you put in place are consistent with current Scottish Government requirements and guidance. Please check at the website above regularly to stay up to date.

Example overview of phased reopening of a zoo/aquarium (kindly shared by ZSL London Zoo)

<p><b><u>1</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outdoor only</li> <li>• Card only transactions</li> <li>• Online admission tickets only</li> <li>• One way route around site (3 routes)</li> <li>• Indoor animal houses closed</li> <li>• Catering outdoor takeaway only</li> <li>• Retail outdoor vending only</li> <li>• No concessions trading</li> <li>• No talks / animal demos</li> <li>• No animal experiences</li> <li>• No lodges</li> <li>• Toilets with additional sanitiser in/out</li> <li>• Member admissions only to start / trial</li> <li>• No staff comps / sign ins</li> <li>• Capacity built up</li> <li>• Daily Cax 2,000</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>2</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some indoor spaces open (where possible)</li> <li>• Card only transactions</li> <li>• Online admission tickets only</li> <li>• One way route around site (3 routes)</li> <li>• Socially safe indoor animal housing to open</li> <li>• Catering outdoor takeaway only</li> <li>• Retail outdoor vending only</li> <li>• No concessions trading</li> <li>• No talks / animal demos</li> <li>• No animal experiences</li> <li>• No lodges</li> <li>• Toilets with additional sanitiser in/out</li> <li>• Member admissions only to start / trial</li> <li>• No staff comps / sign ins</li> <li>• Capacity built up</li> <li>• Daily Cax 2,000 (+)</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>3</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some indoor spaces open (where possible)</li> <li>• Card only transactions</li> <li>• Walk Up tickets (plus online)</li> <li>• One way route around site (3 routes)</li> <li>• All indoor animal spaces to open - but with corona prevention / social distancing measures</li> <li>• All indoor catering spaces to open - but with corona prevention / social distancing measures</li> <li>• All indoor retail spaces to open - but with corona prevention / social distancing measures</li> <li>• Some concessions to open - but with corona prevention / social distancing measures</li> <li>• No talks / animal demos</li> <li>• Premium animal experiences</li> <li>• No lodges</li> <li>• Toilets with additional sanitiser in/out</li> <li>• Member admissions only to start / trial</li> <li>• No staff comps / sign ins</li> <li>• Capacity built up</li> <li>• Daily Cax 2,000 (++)</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>4</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Normal operations resume</li> <li>• No Daily Capacity</li> <li>• Presale Lodges for next year</li> </ul>
---	---	---	--