

ZOOS VICTORIA

COVID-19 SAFE PLAN

COVID Safe Settings

ZV COVID -19 Safe Plan Document Control		
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To note: This is a working document and will be updated regularly to reflect government and health advice. Future phases in this plan should be used as a guide only, and each phase will be reassessed dependent on restrictions and advice received.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of a COVIDSafe Plan is to provide clear direction to both our staff and volunteers on how we will re-open in a responsible manner adhering to government guidelines as defined by [WorkSafe Victoria and the Victorian Chief Health Officer](#). Our objective is to ensure we manage the risks of a person (staff, visitors, volunteers or contactors), contracting or spreading COVID in any Zoos Victoria managed property through the following key principles:

1.2 Related and Reference Documents

- Melbourne Zoo COVID Operational Plan
- Werribee Open Range Zoo COVID Operational Plan
- Healesville Sanctuary COVID Operational Plan
- Corporate teams COVID re-opening Plan
- ZV Management of a suspected or confirmed COVID case protocol
- ZV COVID Fitted Face Mask protocol
- ZV Disease Risk Analysis
- Industry Restart Guidelines Outdoor Attractions and Experiences, September 2020, Victorian Government
- Zoo and Aquarium Association Australasia (ZAA) guidelines Operating during COVID

1.3 Objectives

The objectives that apply to the COVIDSafe Plan are to:

- Ensure the safety and well-being of our staff, visitors and animals
- Re-gain the support of our members and visitors
- Rebuild our financial position
- Ensure we reduce the risk of the introduction and spread of coronavirus (COVID) in our workplaces
- Maintain records of everyone who comes to the work premises
- Ensure the appropriate level of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is worn at our work premises
- Activate our processes to respond to a suspected or confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID) at the work premises, if required
- Continually review our responsibilities and obligations.

1.4 Governance

- Delivery of each phase of the Zoos Victoria COVIDSafe Plan will be directed by the Victorian Government and the ZV Board.
- The Zoos Victoria COVIDSafe Plan is approved by SET and delivered through operational plans for each of the three Zoos Victoria properties.
- Zoos Victoria COVID Committee of the Board provides guidance and input to the executive.

2. Ensuring the safety of our staff, volunteers, visitors and animals

2.1 Guiding Principles (Key strategies)

1. Ensuring that physical distancing and fitted face mask requirements are met by staff, volunteers, visitors, contractors and others visiting any of our workplaces
2. Instituting good hygiene procedures and practices for everyone entering our properties
3. Implementing and maintaining a heightened cleaning schedule to reduce the risk of transmission of coronavirus
4. Ensuring anyone who is ill or showing symptoms, or who has been instructed to quarantine or self-isolate does not come to the workplace
5. Providing information, training and supervision on how the risks of COVID are to be managed and ensure all processes and procedures are applied by all staff, volunteers and contractors
6. Providing visitors with information and instruction on what they need to do to minimise the risk of transmission during their visit
7. Ensuring the safety of our animals is actively considered and managed during the re-opening process
8. Providing and using personal protective equipment (PPE) as directed by the CHO – including but not limited to face masks
9. Keeping records of our people working or visiting our zoos for the purposes of contact tracing and the management of any infections

2.2 Physical Distancing and Fitted Face Masks

The **physical distancing** measures will be determined by ZV Senior Executive Team in accordance with recommendations from the Victorian Government and CHO and may vary at different phases of the plan but current arrangements are:

- Visitation numbers will be capped at each property.
- Physical distancing will be based on people (staff and visitors) keeping 1.5 meters apart and a minimum spacing of 1m² per person with no overcrowded areas. Where this is not possible, the duration of the close contact will be minimised.
- Activities that encourage people to gather in groups will be managed as per guidelines.
- Indoor spaces will be open subject to restrictions on entertainment, hospitality or retail depending on the space.
- Online ticketing will be available.
- Minimise the risk of whole teams being unable to work by separating staff into staff bubbles and further manage physical distancing where possible.
- Meetings will be remote, less than 15 minutes duration or held outdoors.
- From 23 March 2021, up to 100% of our staff who have been working from home can return to the office. Standard workplace requirements such as density limits still apply.
- Volunteers will be transitioned back to properties based on risk categories. Specific exceptions may be made after a thorough risk assessment. The safety of volunteers will be managed in the same way as managed for staff.
- No carpooling between staff unless there is no alternative mode of transport

Face Masks - responsibility for wearing a fitted face mask rests with the individual. A fitted face masks must be carried at all times. ZV will take reasonable steps to ensure all staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors wear a fitted face mask as required.

Current requirements are:

- Outdoor staff are required to wear a fitted face covering indoors and outdoors where the 1.5 metres physical distancing cannot be maintained
- A fitted face mask is not required if a person has a lawful exception.
- Visitors do not need fitted face masks whilst outdoors, in private areas, while exercising, or eating/drinking (or if a lawful exemption applies). However, if visitors enter an indoor space or where physical distancing cannot be maintained then it is strongly recommended the fitted face mask be worn.

For the safety of employees and other visitors ZV can refuse service to visitors not wearing a fitted face mask when required.

2.3 Hygiene

Hygiene will be managed to the standards recommended by WorkSafe Victoria and the ZV Disease Risk Analysis.

Key elements will be:

- Hand washing facilities will be available to everyone on properties
- Hand sanitiser will be available at key locations for staff and visitors
- Physical contact will be discouraged
- No cash transactions
- Hygiene messages will be communicated through posters, signage, and verbally at appropriate locations (e.g. toilets, staff rooms, admissions areas)
- Physical distancing indicators within the visitor queuing area
- Sanitiser and usage signage available in visitor spaces
- Sanitisers located at all property entries and all food areas
- Limit number of people in enclosed spaces, including retail
- Additional staff on properties for disinfection of public area touch areas
 - Hand rails
 - Seats and tables
 - Toilets and taps including bubblers
 - Glass viewing windows
 - Air lock doors
 - Retail Stores

2.4. Staff General

- Create workforce bubbles by limiting the number of people staff have prolonged close contact with. This includes wherever possible and practicable, keeping pools of staff rostered on the same shifts, avoiding overlap in shift changes and reducing staff working across multiple sites.
- All staff, volunteers and contractors must use the Victorian Government QR Code Service or API linked digital system from 19 April 2021 to maintain electronic record keeping.

- From 23 March 2021, up to 100% of our staff who have been working from home can return to the office. Standard workplace requirements such as density limits still apply.
- Staff and volunteers are to stay at home if not well and to get tested for COVID. HR to be alerted if COVID positive OR in contact with positive/suspect case of COVID. The ZV Management of suspected or confirmed COVID case protocol will be implemented in these circumstances. This may include the closure of an area or the complete closure of the zoo depending on the circumstances and in consultation with DHHS for the purposes of deep cleaning and contract tracing.
- Practice physical distancing and hand hygiene - wash OR sanitise hands frequently.
- Use own equipment where possible, including tools and stationery.
- Where practical, staff should use own personal utensils. Any shared utensils should only be used after wash in hot dishwasher.
- If tools and equipment are shared, wash with warm soapy water or sanitised wipes in between use.
- Cleaning staff to focus on disinfecting surfaces including handles and high touch areas on rounds.
- Daily review and replenishment of surface sprays and cloth/towel for staff areas.
- Cleaning of staff areas by each team for surfaces, door handles – each area has a cleaning kit.
- Daily review and replenishment of disinfection information for all staff areas.

2.5 Cleaning

Each property will develop a cleaning regime that ensures all visitor and staff areas are cleaned to WorkSafe Victoria and the ZV Disease Risk Analysis. Additional cleans of touch points and bathrooms in visitor areas will be scheduled during the days to minimise the risk of disease transmission and to inspire confidence in our visitors.

2.6 Managing illness

Staff will be asked to stay at home if they become ill or have symptoms. They should get tested for Coronavirus.

ZV has developed an Incident process which will be followed if an employee, volunteer, contractor or visitor is diagnosed with COVID

Victoria's Chief Health Officer has advised that people who fall into the following 'higher risk' categories should stay home wherever possible for their own protection, as they a higher risk of experiencing severe symptoms:

- people aged 70 years and older
- people aged 65 years and older with chronic medical conditions
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees aged 50 years and older with one or more chronic medical condition(s)
- people with compromised immune systems

Staff that fall into any of the above risk groups will be asked to continue to work from home or take leave unless they can be reasonably be protected from the possibility of being exposed to the virus at work. Staff that have unavoidable contact with people in any of the above risk groups will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Each property will manage First Aid to ensure that there are sufficient First Aiders to maintain service with the separation of staff into established group bubbles. To reduce the risk of coronavirus transmission, First Aiders will receive additional training and PPE.

2.7 Staff information, training and supervision

Staff (including where necessary volunteers and contractors), will be provided with access to all plans and documents, will be trained in the implementation of all COVID safety measures and will be properly supervised.

2.8 Provide visitors with information and instruction

Each property will develop and install appropriate signage to inform our visitors about the physical distancing, fitted face masks and hygiene measures being taken at that property, and how we are asking them to support these measures.

Our website and social media tools will be used to inform visitors of the measures at each property.

Information signage will include:

- General ZV Physical Distancing and Fitted Face Mask signage at all property entries (ZV Brand)
- Signage at each closed experience/area – ZV Branded
- Signage at each sanitisation location /area – ZV Branded
- Decals at all potential queuing areas – ZV Branded
- No cash signage at all retail and catering - ZV Branded
- Instructions for how to book admission online- ZV Branded
- One way entry and exit through precincts – ZV Branded

All visitors and staff must use the Victorian Government QR Code Service or API linked digital system from 19 April 2021 to maintain electronic record keeping.

2.9 Animals

A risk assessment of the possibility of transmission of the coronavirus has been conducted and recommendations implemented by properties.

An assessment of the pre-conditioning of collection animals to the return of visitors has been conducted and the recommendations implemented by properties.

2.9.1 Animal Areas for Animals at Risk (Non-Human Primates, Big Cats, Otters, Meerkats)

- 1) Keepers must wear a face mask when within 1.5m of an 'at risk' animal. If you are spending prolonged periods in a closed room with an 'at risk' animal with little air flow (e.g. gorilla/orang/baboon/arboreal/big cat dens) then you should wear a fitted face mask. If you touch your face or mask during a training session you must wash your hands again.
- 2) Discard or wash fitted face masks if they are dirty or damaged
- 3) When possible handle the fitted face mask by the ear tabs/strings. If you touch the central panel you must wash your hands.
- 4) Wash hands before entering an 'at risk' animal area and immediately prior to preparing food or doing a training session.
- 5) Gloves are only to be worn in same circumstance as BAU. When worn, gloved hands must be washed immediately prior to preparing food or doing a training session with an 'at risk' animal.
- 6) Hand sanitiser can be used if no hand washing station is available at exhibits (e.g. a tamarins, snow leopards). If hand sanitiser is unavailable then a box of gloves should be held at the exhibit to be worn only immediately prior to entering the exhibit or handling food.

2.10 Visitation

The visitation per property will be in accordance with Visitor number restrictions and safe physical distancing requirements as determined by ZV Senior Executive Team in accordance with recommendations from the Victorian Government and CHO and may vary at different phases of the plan.

For each property there must be alignment to the government mandated requirements for physical distancing, initially set as 1m² for individuals or family units. To ensure this requirement is met, the square metre available for each visitors (ie. The total area available to visitors namely pathways, lawns and visitor spaces, divided by the number of potential visitors) must be greater than 1 m². The estimates are conservative as data shows that most visitors are in family groups and that visitors are distributed through the day with an average maximum of 70% of visitors on site at one time.

Outdoor seated spaces: Will be open for up to 100% seated capacity up to a max of 1000 people with no requirements to apply a density quotient. The density quotient still applies in non seated spaces e.g bathrooms and lobbies. Density limits apply to non seated venues (outdoor).

2.10.1 Melbourne Zoo

Melbourne Zoo covers an area 41,344 m² accessible to visitors.

Daily Visitation Cap	1000	2000	3000	4000	5000	6000
Average m ² per visitor	41.4	20.7	13.8	10.3	8.3	6.9

2.10.2 Werribee Open Range Zoo

Werribee Open Range Zoo covers an area of 21,366 m² accessible to visitors.

Daily Visitation Cap	1000	2000	3000	4000
Average m ² per visitor	21	10	7	5

2.10.3 Healesville Sanctuary

Healesville Sanctuary covers an area of 30,338 m² accessible to visitors.

Daily Visitation Cap	1000	2000	3000	4000
Average m ² per visitor	30.33	15.11	10.11	7.58

2.10.4 Contacting Visitors

- Visitors will be encouraged to download the Australian COVID App
- As all visitors will have purchased online tickets, they will be able to be contacted if required

2.11 Catering

The following practices will be followed at all catering outlets that are trading. Outlet practices to be reviewed daily with further measures applied if required or updated in relation to any learnings or government announcements or updates.

ZV staff should also be instructed to avoid adding to any congestion if possible, eg by waiting or returning later or purchasing food outside of peak times.

Action
1. Caterer to change menus to more pre-packaged, grab and go options.
2. Perspex barriers are in place at the POS.
3. Sanitisers made available to visitors in proximity to the outlet.
4. Fitted face masks must be worn unless an exemption applies
5. Decals installed on the floor to guide physical distancing requirements.
6. Limited number of people allowed into indoor / outdoor areas (eg Harvest Café) as defined by the Government density quotient Caterer to identify relevant areas and apply numbers and means of controlling.
7. Counter areas will be cleaned and sanitised more regularly throughout the day. Caterer to develop a cleaning schedule as a minimum requirement and to clean as required.
8. No cash handling (card payments only).
9. Remove non-packaged items to behind the counter. Packaged goods eg, chips, chocolates to remain front of counter.
10. Self-serve ice cream freezers. Packaged impulse ice cream will be available from freezers. Freezers to be maintained and cleaned frequently.
11. Self-serve food displays that contain packaged food will be available, item that are not packaged (Hot displays) catering team member will serve customer, signage in place to inform of crew to serve hot food. All displays to be maintained and cleaned frequently.
12. Refillable cups accepted, new process is customers retain their cup and when coffee is ready the barista pours a shot and the milk into the customer's cup direct.).
13. No cutlery or cups at water stations available. Disposable cutlery will be available upon request.
14. No condiments for visitor use. Catering team to supply by portion control.
15. Outdoor seating will follow Govt density quotient.
16. Buzzers to be used on high traffic days and sanitised after each use.
17. No post mix facilities in use (beverages to be sold from cans and bottles).
18. Caterers to erect signage at closed outlets to direct visitors to outlets that are trading.

Appendix 1 – Covid Contractor Management Guidelines

These guidelines apply to Property and Corporate contractors.

Restrictions while on site

- Contractors entering site are to not have travelled or knowingly been exposed to anyone who has tested positive. Health and display of COVID-19 symptoms will be monitored closely
- A designated toilet block will be provided. Whilst walking to this toilet please do not stop to interact with zoo employees or animals. Please do not walk around any other areas of the zoo, we promise to welcome you back post COVID-19 to enjoy our animals. - Contractors will be restricted to vehicle access specific to each site.
- The only animal slide leading into the dens will be plated on the outside to seal the air flow
- Contractors will not have any direct access to keepers and/or will be allocated an appropriate point of contact in line with staff rostering schedules and team allocations.
- Contractors will be encouraged to call their allocated contact, communicate or deal with any issues at hand.
- Weekly site meetings will not be possible. In lieu of onsite meetings a request from zoo for weekly progress photos and a tele conference meeting will be proposed.
- Access hours will be site specific, due to changes in our availability to have people on site to accommodate a 5pm finish we would request that contractors please leave site when the keepers vacate the area.

Checklist for Contractors

Are you a returned traveller from an international trip within the last two weeks?

In this case, you will need hotel quarantine for a period of 14 days.

Have you been in close contact (as defined below) with a confirmed case and you have not completed the required self-quarantine period.

Close contact is defined as face-to-face interaction of more than 15 minutes or a group meeting lasting more than two hours with someone confirmed to have COVID-19 in the 24 hours before they showed symptoms, or once they showed symptoms. In this case, you will need to self-isolate at home for the quarantine period (currently 14 days).

Do you have cold or flu-like symptoms?

If you are a returned traveller or have had close contact with someone who has tested positive to COVID-19, you will be required to leave the zoo. And should follow current government advice to self-quarantine.

However, if you have not met these circumstances and are just feeling unwell within the workplace Zoos Victoria would require that the work is postponed until contractors are well.

Are you aware of ZV's Physical Distancing Requirements?

- Minimum Individual Contact (MIC) – No congregating in an enclosed / closed space room of greater than 2 hours.
- No direct face to face conversations, 1 on 1 of greater than 15min or within a 1.5 mtr distance.
- Reducing staff density in all areas ie: office, work, lunch areas.
- Leave specific doors and windows to be left open to allow increased air flow.
- Avoiding shaking hands.
- Increase hygiene measures and clean work spaces thoroughly throughout the day. And please be reminded to wash your hands frequently.
- If work requires you to work longer or closer than the minimum individual contact please speak to your ZV contact that has engaged the work to determine if the work can proceed.