

Petting Zoo Guidelines

Fairs, petting zoos and family farms are a fun way for kids and their families to learn about animals. Because animals can carry diseases that can be transmitted to humans, it is important for operators to teach visitors how to reduce the spread of disease. The Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department recommends the following health education practices for operators.

Provide your visitors with:

Information

- Tell visitors to wash their hands with soap and water after touching animals and before eating; prohibit food or drink in the animal areas; prohibit pacifiers; caution against kissing the animals; and list animals that should not be touched.
- Post signs with this information in several locations: at the beginning of the tour, near animals, and in eating areas.

Handwashing Stations

- Ensure the stations are stocked with warm running water, soap, and disposable towels.
- Route visitors directly to the stations after leaving the animal areas and prior to entering the eating area.
- Encourage staff to demonstrate proper handwashing techniques to visitors.

Clean and Sanitary Exhibits

- Replace animal bedding daily.
- Clean and sanitize fencing and rails daily.
- Remove and dispose of manure in a timely and effective manner.
- Clean visible fecal matter from any accessible surfaces (i.e., hand rails) with soap and water frequently.

Controlled and Safe Environment

- Prevent contact with manure, water troughs, and animals that should not be touched by providing physical barriers.
- Avoid the display of ill animals.

Questions? Please contact the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department at 253 798-6460.