

Mission Statement

The Indianapolis Zoo empowers people and communities, both locally and globally, to advance animal conservation.

indianapoliszoo.com

Indianapolis Zoo

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Ms. Carrie Lambert
Executive Director
Indiana Tourism Association
PO Box 55456
Indianapolis IN 46205

Dear Carrie:

Thank you for the opportunity to relay the reopening plans for the Indianapolis Zoo. We anticipate additional guidance from the Governor's office, the Indiana State Department of Health and the CDC and will adjust our plans accordingly.

The Zoo is prepared for a rolling opening that could include limiting capacity and services to protect the health of our staff and visitors. Zoo officials believe that due to the large amount of open, outdoor space on the Zoo grounds, we are in a strong position, with precautions, to ensure social distancing for our staff and visitors that would allow us to open with limited services in Phase I.



In response to the questions from the Governor's office, below are the measures the Indianapolis Zoo is considering for reopening:

Please identify the steps you plan to take within your industry to resume operations. This includes how you would gradually return to full-service levels, such as bringing employees back to the workplace in stages, staggered shifts, customer interactions, and service limitations necessary to ensure your industry can begin to resume operations.

The Indianapolis Zoo was able to retain its regular full and part-time staff through this crisis but delayed bringing on our seasonal workforce. As appropriate, staff members have been working from home since March 16th. The Zoo is anticipating an opening scenario that allows us to bring back regular staff to the Zoo as required in order to begin hiring and training necessary seasonal staff required for reopening. Any high-risk staff (such as those dealing with existing medical conditions) would continue to work from home. A strict policy on staying home if feeling ill or exhibiting any symptoms will remain in effect. The Zoo will continue to provide sick leave benefits under the FFCRA. The Zoo will follow direction from the Governor's Office and the ISDH regarding testing, such as temperature screening for staff and volunteers.

- Volunteers would be brought back in stages as required to support visitation when it is safe to begin ramping up. Those volunteers who are high-risk would not be brought back until it is deemed safe to do so.
- While a normal summer day could see attendance of anywhere from 5,000 – 12,000 visitors, we are prepared to stagger, or cap attendance based on recommendations from the Governor’s office. For example, we could implement timed ticketing or daily limits on total numbers of guests if appropriate.
- Zoo camps would not open in a Phase I scenario but would open with limited capacity with appropriate social distancing in Phase II.
- Groups sales events would adhere to restrictions provided through the Governor’s office and the ISDH allowing for appropriate social distancing measures.
- With reduced visitation in Phase I and II the Zoo would not need to use satellite parking and would not use shuttles to transport visitors.
- Zoo interpreters would come back to the Zoo as staffing allows and resume providing information to guests with proper social distancing in place.
- Activities such as rides, presentations and guest chats would be restricted in number and capacity based on guidance from the Governor’s Office and the ISDH to allow for proper sanitation between guests and proper social distancing.
- Face painting experiences for guests would be suspended until Phase III with appropriate precautions, or perhaps cancelled completely for this year.
- The Café and Gift Shop would be closed during Phase I. Food service would only be available in vending machines or at outdoor take-out windows. The Gift Shop would open outdoor stands and spaces only. In Phase II indoor seating and outdoor seating would be reduced to allow social distancing. Capacity in the Gift Shop would be controlled to allow for social distancing.

Please identify requirements you will put in place to provide a safe workplace for you, your employees and the Hoosiers they serve. Measures such as health screenings, Covid-19 testing, contact tracing, isolation, social distancing, use of personal protective equipment, and health screenings for employees will likely be a part of the world’s new normal and may factor into your plan.

- The Zoo will reopen in Phase I only selling tickets online to eliminate the need for a person-to person interaction to buy a ticket. We are working with the ticket vendor to sell timed tickets to limit the number of guests in the park. In addition, members would also need to obtain an unpaid timed ticket.
- Capacity in indoor exhibits will be a one-way traffic flow and capacity for each area limited to allow space for social distancing. All entrances and exits will be monitored and controlled by staff.
- We will limit the number of people in a line at any given time and will clearly mark the appropriate social distance.
- The Zoo will follow the guidance from the Governor’s Office and ISDH regarding face covering for staff and guests.
- Food Service at the Zoo would use all condiments in individual packages and cutlery prepacked and wrapped in cellophane. The food booths would not initially accept cash in Phase I and has credit card readers available to the guests that would be wiped off after each transaction.
- Extra hand sanitizing stations will be provided throughout the Zoo.

- Extra cleaning and sanitizing of public spaces including but not limited to restrooms, handrails, tables, trash cans and exhibit glass will take place on an hourly basis.
- The Zoo would continue to closely evaluate all staff travel.

Thank you for your leadership and support. Please do not hesitate to let me know if I can provide additional information.

Sincerely,

Karen Burns
Executive Vice President