

ANIMAL CONTACT

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One of the main attractions at a county fair is the animals. Contact with animals is bound to happen. Some activities, such as petting zoos, actively encourage touching animals. To limit disease transmission between humans and animals or vice-versa, some special precautions should be followed concerning animal contact. Note: MCIT excludes all liability claims resulting in bodily injury and/or property damage arising from pollution, fungal pathogens or bacteria. These could include outbreaks or illnesses from animal contact or food. Therefore, agricultural societies are encouraged to take special precautions to avoid these situations. For more information, members should contact their MCIT risk management consultant.

ANIMAL CONTACT





REDUCE TRANSMISSION OF DISEASE

- Only allow contact with animals over or through barriers, such as fences. Visitors should not be allowed into pens.
- Discourage or prohibit food and drink in animal barns. Germs from hands can pass to food and enter the body when in close proximity with animals.
- Food and beverage should be stored, prepared, served and consumed only in nonanimal areas.
- Establish transition zones where fair visitors pass through animal areas. Transition zones are areas patrons go through before or after visiting an animal area and are designed to decrease exposure to zoonotic disease and promote handwashing. See “Transition Zones” section for more details.
- Make handwashing stations and awareness signage available and conspicuously placed near entrances or exits to animal areas.
- Encourage and require animal exhibitors to clean up after their animals regularly.
- Ensure that drainage directs animal waste away from visitors. Visitors may inadvertently track feces into other barns and infect those animals. Antibacterial bedding or other materials can be used to help reduce the risk of disease transmission in this way.

TRANSITION ZONES

The following design features should be considered for transition zones into and out of animal areas.

The zone at the entrance to an animal exhibit should be used primarily to instruct visitors about the health risks associated with animal contact. Information should caution visitors against eating, drinking and smoking; and putting fingers, bottles and pacifiers in mouths while in the animal area. This instruction is often conveyed through the use of awareness posters, but staff can also inform visitors. The entrance transition is an ideal location to create a storage area for strollers, wagons or other related items.

The exit transition zone should be designed to facilitate hand washing with adequate cleaning equipment and awareness signage. Staff or volunteers could also be stationed in this zone to remind and encourage visitors to wash their hands. Instructional posters should be hung in highly visible locations.

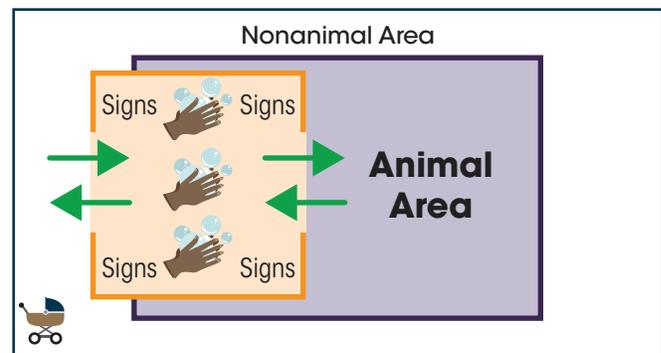
The entrance and exit transition zones are often located at each end of an animal building to create a one-way flow of visitors but may be incorporated into one area if there is only a single entry. When creating a single transition zone, the signage should be posted according to the direction of visitor flow, with health risk information facing the incoming direction and handwashing signage facing those leaving. The diagram below shows the two design options.

TRANSITION ZONE DESIGNS

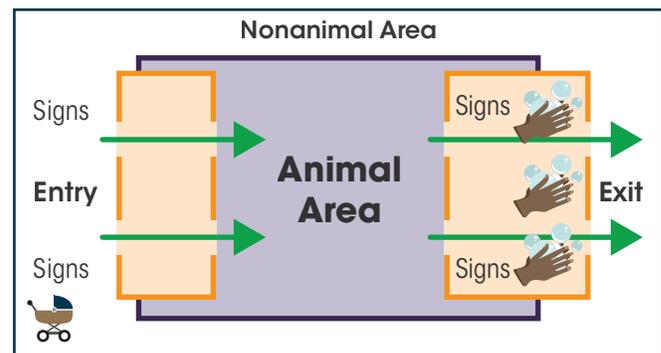
The diagram shows two transition zone designs for different visitor flow at animal exhibits.

See Chapter 28, Sanitation for more information.

DESIGN 1



DESIGN 2



- transition zone
- 🛒 stroller/personal item storage
- ➡ flow of visitors
- 🧼 hand-washing station