



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 14, 2020
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KCZoo Reopening to the Public with Precautions

Kansas City Zoo: Here we come ROARing back! After being closed for more than eight weeks, the Kansas City Zoo will reopen our doors to the public this **Saturday, May 16**, but with some changes. To ensure the health of our guests, employees, and animals, we are taking precautions that follow national and local guidelines for encouraging physical distancing and reducing high-touch areas. Here is what the public can expect:

Limited number of guests

- **All guests must reserve an entry time at kansascityzoo.org.** Entry times will be available in 15-minute increments, up to one week in advance. This includes Friends of the Zoo members and those holding free passes, although there will be no charge associated with making a reservation for these groups. Those without online access can call the Zoo at (816) 595-1234 to reserve a timed ticket.
- There will be a limited number of tickets available to keep attendance within the city's guidelines.

Increased social distancing

- Daily activities such as shows and Zookeeper Chats are temporarily suspended but are available virtually with a QR code you can access with your mobile phone or through our web site.
- Indoor exhibits will be one-way traffic as will pathways around the Africa section of the Zoo and through Australia and Tiger Trail. West Africa (across the swinging bridge) will be temporarily closed.
- Africa Tram will be operating daily but have limited capacity due to physical distancing guidelines. All other Zoo rides will be closed initially and will begin operations as it is determined safe to do so.
- All Zoo employees will wear face masks; guests are encouraged to wear masks for their safety.

Reduced high-touch areas

- Food and beverage options will be available, but we have taken many steps to ensure safety including physically distanced seating, pre-packaged utensils and condiments, and no self-serve options.
- Water fountains and refill stations are temporarily closed, but free water is available at any food stand.
- Playgrounds, play equipment, and animal feeding stations are temporarily closed.
- Additional hand-sanitizing stations have been placed throughout the Zoo.
- We encourage guests to use touchless credit card payment whenever possible.

“Things will look and feel a little different at the Zoo as we open back up, and we know we will have to continue to adjust things daily. Our primary concern, though, is the health and safety of our community,” said Randy Wisthoff, Executive Director/CEO. “We are so appreciative of the support that Kansas City has shown us while we’ve been closed, and we cannot wait to welcome everyone back to the Zoo.”

Anyone who would like to visit the Zoo or more information, should visit our website at **kansascityzoo.org** to reserve a timed entry ticket.

Kansas City, Missouri, residents and visitors should be advised that as opportunities to visit retailers, restaurants, personal service providers, and engage in recreational activities become available, the Kansas City Health Director does not advise that residents and visitors participate. This is particularly true for vulnerable populations (those with underlying health conditions or who frequently interact with them). We must emphasize that the epidemic is not over, outbreaks are still occurring, and that the death rates due to COVID-19 are likely under-reported. Furthermore, the public health system in KCMO is not yet at full capacity to support all who may have been exposed, or to investigate related outbreaks.

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Kansas City Zoo is open 9:30 am to 5 pm weekends and 9:30 am to 4 pm weekdays beginning Saturday, May 16. Call (816) 595-1234, or visit www.kansascityzoo.org for more information.

The Kansas City Zoo, a private, non-profit organization, is operated in agreement with the Kansas City, MO Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners, partially funded by the Zoological District and is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums.