

# Visiting the Zoo during COVID-19

National Zoo Social Narrative



Smithsonian  
*National Zoological Park*  
*Conservation Biology Institute*



Today, I am going to visit the **Zoo**.

Today's trip may be different from other times I have visited the Zoo. This is because the Zoo has made some changes to help keep me and my family safe.





During my visit to the Zoo, there are some **new rules** I will need to follow, in order to stay safe.

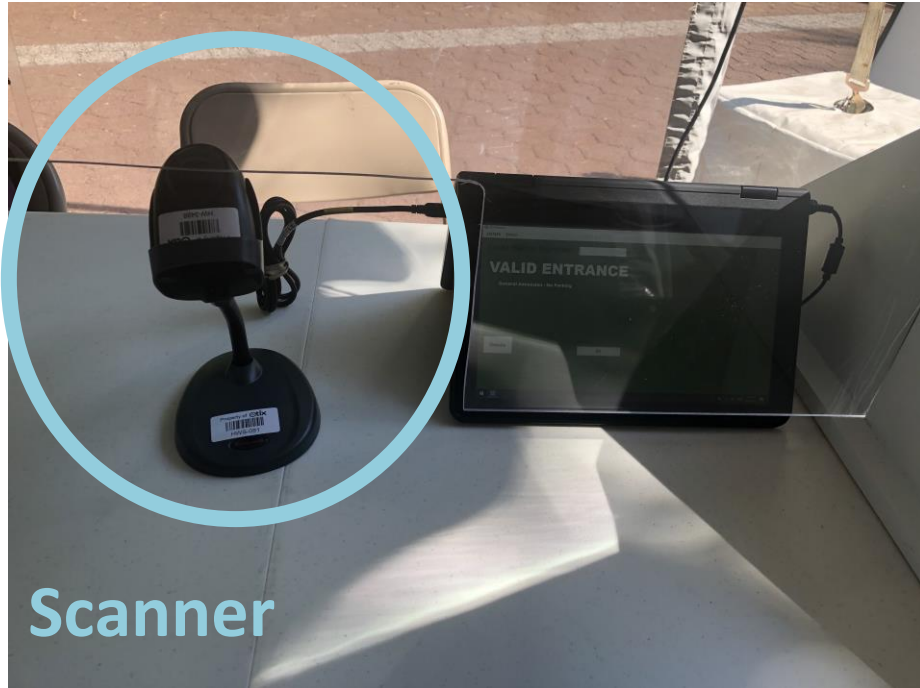
- ✓ I will practice **social distancing** and stay away from other Zoo visitors
- ✓ I will keep my **mask on**
- ✓ I will remember to **wash or sanitize** my hands to keep germs away.

I may see signs reminding me of these rules.





When it's time to enter the Zoo, I may need to **wait in line** with other people. I will see **blue dots** on the ground that tell me where to stand, so I'm not too close to other visitors.



Scanner

When I get to the front of the line, I will hold up my ticket to the **scanner**.



I can ask for help from the **people** behind the desk, if I need it.





Inside the Zoo, I may see **signs** that tell me how to walk safely down each path.

Some paths will be **one-way** only, so I may need to take a different route to see the animals.



I may notice that some areas of the Zoo\*, including some exhibit buildings, are **closed**. If I don't get to visit my favorite animal today, that's okay – there are many other animals I can see.

Caregivers: for an up-to-date list of closures, please visit <https://nationalzoo.si.edu/visit/welcome-back-zoo>





Some other parts of the Zoo, like statues and photo cut-outs, might also be **blocked off** to keep Zoo visitors healthy. I may see **signs** that remind me not to touch these items.





Another way I can keep germs away is by practicing **social distancing**, which means staying one zebra-length (6 feet) away from other Zoo visitors. I may notice different signs and reminders to stay apart from other visitors.





It's important to keep my hands clean and free of germs. I can use **sinks** in the restroom or **hand sanitizer pumps** located throughout the Zoo to keep my hands clean.





As I explore the Zoo, it's important that I **stay close** to my family or group, but away from people I don't know.  
This way, I will stay safe and have fun.



If I need help, or am separated from my family or group, I can find a Zoo staff member, like the ones pictured below.



**Zoo Police** may be walking or riding in vehicles.

Other **Zoo staff** may be wearing uniforms, name tags, or badges.





If I need help but can't find a staff member, I can call the Zoo Police by pressing the button on the **emergency call box**. Sometimes, I may also hear important announcements coming the call box, like when the Zoo is closing.



I may see different kinds of **barriers** that will help keep me safe during my visit.

It's important for me to not cross these barriers.



One kind of barrier I might see is a **railing**.



Another type of barrier I might see is a **fence**.



I might also see a **glass window** helping me to stay in the right place.





If it's too crowded, there are different areas where I can stop and take a break. One area is the **path** behind the Small Mammal House.





Another place where I can take a break is the boardwalk  
behind the **Reptile Discovery Center**.





If I get tired, I can stop and sit on one of the **benches** found around the Zoo.



If I get hot, I can run through one of the **misters** that sprays water.



Even though my trip to the Zoo may be different from other times I have visited, I can still have a **fun and safe** time with my friends or family!