

I/7093/2022

File No: 25-1/2002-CZA(Vol-II)(Part-COVID)

Computer No. 139866  
Government of India  
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change  
CENTRAL ZOO AUTHORITY

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January 19, 2022

**OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

**Sub: Precautions to be undertaken by zoos in the light of increasing number of cases of SARS CoV-2 and variants– regarding.**

The undersigned is directed to refer to the advisories from this office to zoos as under, for precautionary measures and animal collection monitoring for SARS CoV-2 and its variants.

1. This office email dated December, 27 2021 related to Compliance with the containment measures for COVID-19 based on the Order No.40-3/2020-DM-I(A) dated December 27, 2021, issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.
2. This office Circular F.No. 25-1/2002-CZA(Vol-II)(Part-COVID) dated April 30, 2021
3. Order No.40-3/2020-DM-I(A) dated April 29, 2021 issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt
4. This office Circular F.No.25-1/2002-CZA(Vol.II)(Part) dated April 15, 2021
5. This office Circular F.No.25-1/2002-CZA(Vol.II)(Pt.) dated June 10, 2020
6. This office Circular F.No.25-1/2002-CZA(Vol.II)(Pt.) dated June 1, 2020
7. This office Circular F.No.25-1/2002-CZA(Vol.II)(Pt.) dated May 14, 2020
8. This office Circular F.No.25-1/2002-CZA(Vol.II)(AK)/2469/C/2020 dated April 6, 2020
9. This office Circular F.No.25-1/2002-CZA(Vol.II)(AK)/2469/B/2020 dated April 6, 2020
10. This office Circular F.No.25-1/2002-CZA(Vol.II)(AK)/2469/A/2020 dated March 24, 2020
11. This office Circular F.No.25-1/2002-CZA(Vol.II)(AK)/2469/2020 dated March 23, 2020
12. This office Circular F.No.19-115/93-CZA(53)(Vol.XIV)(Pt.)/2427/2020 dated March 13, 2020

In the light of the increase in the number of cases across the country, zoos are advised to revisit the guidelines to be followed as precautions and the following measures must be adopted by zoos:

1. Access to felids, mustelid, primate and viverrid enclosures and holding areas must be limited to essential staff only. The area must be cordoned off and visitor movement in

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- these areas must be stopped.
2. To protect animals, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) may be used by animal keepers and other animal care staff (with regular use of coveralls, double masks, N95 masks, face shields, latex gloves).
  3. All staff working in close proximity to the animals, in animal enclosures or food preparation areas must be fully vaccinated with both doses and a schedule for random checks by RT-PCR may be developed for monitoring.
  4. All staff must be appropriately trained in the safe handling and wearing of protective gears such as masks and gloves.
  5. Two-meter social distancing must be maintained by all zoo staff, and close contacts with all the above mentioned animals must be avoided.
  6. All organic debris must be picked up and disposed appropriately.
  7. Enclosures of the above-mentioned animals must be sprayed with anti-virals, especially those found to effective against the COVID-19 virus, and then after a period of 10 mins hosed down with a weak stream of water.
  8. The above-mentioned animals must be housed in well-ventilated areas. All food supplied to the above mentioned animals must be cleaned and disinfected thoroughly and all meat must be sterilized by dipping in hot water (above 65°C).
  9. It is recommended that all large carnivores may be tested for COVID 19 as animal health monitoring mechanism.
  10. Staff must be specifically instructed to inform their supervisor immediately in case of any unusual symptoms or behaviour by the animals.
  11. Staff showing any symptoms associated with COVID 19 should not attend to the upkeep of the above-mentioned animal.
  12. In case of mortality, post-mortem of the above-mentioned animals should be conducted with due care and appropriate samples should be sent for COVID 19 test following the guidelines provided.
  13. Zoos must ensure strict rodent control in all enclosures and in the zoo premises as the virus mutations are associated with rodent adaptation
  14. Despite vaccination, if there are any signs of illness. however mild. among staff, they must be reported to the supervisor or competent authority immediately.

In view of the above, all recognized zoos are advised to take appropriate preventive measures and enhance the surveillance for any symptoms in captive animals that are characteristic to infection of the SARS CoV-2. Specific advisories issued by this Office referred above may be referred to for appropriate action. The designated institutes authorised to take up SARS CoV-2 testing are mentioned below;

- a. National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases (NIHSAD), Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh
- b. National Research Centre on Equines (NRCE), Hisar, Haryana
- c. Centre for Animal Disease Research and Diagnostic (CADARD), ICAR-Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI), Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh
- d. Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology – Laboratory for Conservation of Endangered Species (CCMB-LaCONES). Hyderabad.

Further, as a resource for reference of zoos, the webinar on COVID- 19 is available at the following link [https://youtu.be/dgOd\\_J5Ju3s](https://youtu.be/dgOd_J5Ju3s) . Also, the website of World Organisation for Animal Health for working with free-ranging wild mammals in the era of the COVID-19 pandemic can be accessed at ([https://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Our\\_scientific\\_expertise/docs/pdf/COV19/](https://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Our_scientific_expertise/docs/pdf/COV19/))

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A\_WHSG\_and\_OIE\_COVID-19\_Guidelines.pdf) .

Further, the national directives for COVID-19 Management, as specified by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, should be strictly adhered to. Action taken by zoos in the respective State / Union Territory may be apprised to this Office.

This is issued by permission of the competent authority for your information and prompt action is requested in this regard.

Yours sincerely,



**Akanksha Mahajan**  
**Dy Inspector General Of Forest**

**To**

The Chief Wildlife Warden of all States / Union Territories,

**Copy forwarded for information / necessary action to:**

1. PS to Hon'ble Minister (EF&CC), Government of India
2. PS to Hon'ble Minister of State (EF&CC), Government of India
3. PPS to the Secretary to the Government of India (EF&CC)
4. PPS to the Director General of Forests and Special Secretary
5. The Director, Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology
6. The Director, Indian Veterinary Research Institute, Izatnagar
7. The Member Secretary of the concerned State Zoo Authority,
8. The Officer in-charge of all recognised zoos
9. DPA – CZA – to upload on website of the CZA.

**Akanksha Mahajan**  
**Dy Inspector General Of Forest**