

# Hygiene Advice for Mobile Petting Zoos

Mobile petting zoos can be a fun and educational experience for both children and adults. However, it is important to maintain proper hygiene to ensure the safety of both the animals and the visitors. Here are some hygiene tips for mobile petting zoos in the UK.

Without proper procedures businesses face the risk of spreading disease, making their animals and the public unwell. If an outbreak does occur the businesses could be shut down for a period or be closed permanently.

**Hand washing:** Provide handwashing facilities stations for visitors before and after interacting with the animals. Encourage visitors to wash their hands thoroughly with warm soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Ideally taps should be able to be turned on/off without having to touch the taps. Drying facilities should also be made available.

**Animal handling:** Educate visitors on proper animal handling techniques and discourage visitors from touching their faces or mouths while interacting with the animals. Staff should also supervise interactions to ensure proper handling. Safe feeding should be observed with visitors given guidance before being allowed to feed the animals.



**Animal hygiene:** Keep the animals clean and groomed and ensure their living quarters are regularly cleaned and disinfected. Upstands are needed in all animal stands to prevent bedding and faeces spilling out into surrounding areas.

**Staff hygiene:** Staff should wear gloves and aprons when handling animals and cleaning their living quarters. Staff should also wash their hands frequently and thoroughly.

**Food and drink:** Visitors should not be allowed to eat or drink near the animals and should be encouraged to dispose of any food or drink waste in appropriate containers.



**Illness:** Visitors who are unwell or have symptoms such as coughing, sneezing or diarrhoea should be discouraged from visiting the petting zoo. Staff should also stay home if they are unwell.

**Legal elements:**

## **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974**

A criminal offence will arise from a failure to comply with legal duties imposed by the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSWA) and regulations made under it.

This legislation places a duty on employers and those who are self employed to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that in the course of conducting their undertaking, members of the public are not put at risk.

## **Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended) (COSHH)**

*E. coli* O157 and other micro-organisms that may cause ill health are subject to the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002 (as amended). These Regulations require an employer or self-employed person to:

- Assess the risks to employees, self-employed people and the public from exposure to hazardous substances, including micro-organisms.

- Prevent, or, where this is not reasonably practicable, adequately control exposure to the hazardous substances.
- Introduce and maintain control measures.
- Inform, instruct, and train employees about the risks and precautions to be taken.
- Inform visitors about the risks and precautions to be taken.
- Regularly review the assessment and the effectiveness of control measures.

Guidance on COSHH can be obtained from the HSE website <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/index.htm>

### **Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)**

You are legally bound under RIDDOR 2013 to report certain accidents, dangerous occurrences and types of ill health to the enforcing authority. The enforcing authority will either be the local authority or the Health and Safety Executive. They may well send an inspector to investigate. The authority will also investigate complaints made by members of the public. It is essential that you can demonstrate that you have effective procedures in place to identify and manage risk.

By following these hygiene tips, mobile petting zoos can provide a safe, lawful and enjoyable experience for all visitors while ensuring the health and wellbeing of the animals and visitors.

A further breakdown is here: [Preventing or controlling ill health from animal contact at visitor attractions or open farms - Agriculture - HSE](#)

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Better Business for All works to boost business productivity and growth by making it easier for businesses to access the regulatory support they need from Local Authorities such as Trading Standards, Environmental Health, Licensing, and others. BBfA also works with regulators to help them better understand the challenges faced by businesses.

I hope this guidance has been useful, further business support information can be found here: [Better Business For All](#).