

Thinking of Having a Petting Zoo in Tioga County?

Here's What to Know!

Petting zoos are displays that exhibit a range of animals for the public to pet and/or feed. Petting zoos may also include animal rides, fair exhibits, pumpkin farms with animal exhibits, performing animal exhibitions, photo opportunities, pet shops, and pet encounters in schools.

Animals commonly included in petting zoos are mammals like ponies, goats, pigs, dogs, cows, etc. All mammals have the potential to contract and spread the rabies virus. It is very important that all animals included in a petting zoo be up to date on their vaccinations, including the rabies vaccine.

Any animal bite, regardless of where it occurred, must be reported to Tioga County Public Health by calling 607-687-8600, option 1, or by visiting ph.tiogacountyny.gov and completing the online [Animal Bite Report Form](#).



Requirements for Petting Zoos:

These requirements are specific to Tioga County

- Operators must have each animal's rabies vaccination records available.
- Animals must be vaccinated at least 14 days before the event.
- **The exhibitor must assist Tioga County Public Health in identifying all humans and mammals having contact with mammals found to have rabies.**
- Exhibitor records of human exposure must be available to Tioga County Public Health during and up to 6 months following the exhibit. Such records of human exposure may be in written, digital, photo, and/or security video form.

Safety Tips for Visitors:

- **Keep food and drink (meant for human consumption) away from the animals.**
- Keep in mind that children under the age of five and immunocompromised adults may be more susceptible to illness.
- **Always wash your hands after leaving animal areas.**
- Do not sit or play on the ground in animal areas.
- **Leave strollers and baby items (pacifiers, bottles) outside of animal areas.**
- Follow any additional rules posted by the petting zoo operator.

Safety Tips for Operators:

- **Keep animals that are not fully vaccinated, including animals less than 4 months of age that aren't yet eligible for the rabies vaccine, in an area that is not accessible to the public (where they can't be touched).**
- All animal bites or non-bite exposures (ex: scratches) must be reported to the petting zoo operator and Tioga County Public Health.
- **Food vendors may not be located near animal exhibits.**
- Handwashing stations with soap and water are to be located near animal areas.
- **Reminder, birthing animals may carry a greater risk for incidents. Move the animal to an area that is not accessible to the public, close that area of the exhibit, or notify visitors and instruct them to maintain a safe distance from the animal. Double fencing around these areas is recommended.**



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Tioga County

Petting Zoo Checklist	Present	Needs Correction
All petting zoo animals vaccination records are available onsite, and all animals were vaccinated at least 14 days prior to the event or current day.		
Animals that are not fully vaccinated including young animals and puppies and kittens less than 4 months of age are excluded from the petting zoo and kept in an area that is inaccessible to the public.		
<p><u>Signage is displayed to inform visitors of the following:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animals are present • Items such as food, drink, bottles, and pacifiers are not allowed • No smoking or tobacco products • Nothing should be placed in the mouth • Wash hands after touching animals • List of rules for feeding the animals 		
Signage is displayed, or verbal reminders are given, telling visitors there is no eating or drinking in animal areas.		
There is a transition area between the non-animal area and the animal area with appropriate signs and trash receptacles.		
There are storage or holding areas for strollers and other items that are not permitted in the animal area.		
Animals are kept out of non-animals areas (with the exception of service animals).		
Animal areas are kept clean and free of trash and debris.		
Children are supervised at all times while in animal areas.		
Double fencing (or some other method) is in place to prevent contact with animals that are not part of the petting zoo.		
Dangerous animals and animals that have a tendency to bite are in a separate area from those available for petting. Signs are posted warning visitors that these animals have a tendency to bite. A double barrier or other method is used to prevent visitor access,		