

Guidance for Equestrian Facilities during COVID-19 Pandemic

Animal Industry Division



April 22, 2020

This guidance is based on what is currently known about the transmission and severity of COVID-19 and information made available by [Nevada Health Response](#). The Nevada Department Agriculture (NDA) will update this guidance as needed and as additional information becomes available. Local agencies may have additional guidance and/or requirements regarding these operations in their jurisdiction.

Recommended Precautions for Equestrian Facilities

Individuals providing care and exercise to insure the health and welfare of equines under the category “agriculture” which has been deemed “essential” under [Governor Sisolak’s directives](#). Equestrian facilities must prepare for possible COVID-19 impacts and take precautions to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Equestrian Facility Guidance

Social distancing

- Restrict facility access to essential personnel only (veterinarians, caretakers, trainers, essential owners)
- Prohibit non-essential persons (students, friends, family members) from entering the facility.
- Limit the number of individuals allowed on the premises at one time to no more than 10 people.
- Implement a sign-up form to determine which individuals can enter the facility at specified times.
- Only allow one individual from each party to enter the facility.
- Require all individuals to maintain at least six feet of space between each other.
- Limit all on-site activity to animal husbandry actions necessary to sustain animal health and welfare, grooming, feeding, watering, cleaning of stalls and exercising.

Cleaning and using protective equipment

- All individuals should wash hands and wear clean clothes before entering the facility as part of the general biosecurity plan.
- Require washing stations or an alcohol-based gel for all entering and leaving the premises.
- All individuals should wear [face coverings](#) at all times and should refrain from touching the covering.
- Individuals should only touch equipment and supplies necessary for completing the task of caring for the specific horse(s).
- Prohibit the shared use of any equipment between individuals. If equipment must be shared, it should be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use, following the guidelines on the cleaning products.

- Keep individual animal waterers and feed bunks in a fixed position within the stall to ensure feed or water can be provided without touching these items or removing them.
- When handling shared facilities such as trash receptacle lids, hoses, etc., use good biosecurity practices such as disposable gloves, paper towels, etc. to avoid transmission.
- All contact surfaces in the facility (gate latches, handles, switches, feed scoops, pitchforks, etc.) should be disinfected frequently.
- Communal leather tack should be cleaned daily with tack cleaner.
- Follow CDC [Disinfection Guidelines](#) when cleaning and use [approved disinfectants](#).

Monitoring illness

- Monitor staff for signs of illness.
- Anyone experiencing signs of illness should stay home, contact their healthcare provider and follow [CDC-recommended steps](#).
- If anyone becomes sick, the facility should:
 - Close off areas used by the sick person.
 - Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area. Wait 24 hours (or as long as possible) before you clean or disinfect.
 - Clean and disinfect all areas used by the sick person, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, and shared electronic equipment like tablets and computers.
 - Please reference the CDC's [Disinfecting Your Facility If Someone Is Sick](#) for guidance.

Animal health

- Although there is no evidence that horses can contract or become ill from COVID-19, practice good hygiene by washing your hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds or using a >60% alcohol hand sanitizer after touching a horse, communal areas, or communal equipment to prevent environmental spread of the virus.
- Animal owners should communicate proactively with their veterinarians to determine a plan in the case of a veterinary emergency.
- Be proactive with animal health and nutrition to prevent disease occurrence.
- To prevent illness, horses should be exercised or turned out regularly.
- Keep new animals or animals showing signs of illness away from other animals.

Animal Industry Resources

Latest updates related to Nevada agriculture industries during COVID-19 can be found at agri.nv.gov/industry_resources_covid19.