

Petting Zoo Guidelines

E. coli O157 (bacteria) and other disease-causing organisms (Salmonella, Campylobacter) have been linked with petting zoos. The young, elderly, and those with an immune system disorder may be more at risk to develop disease.

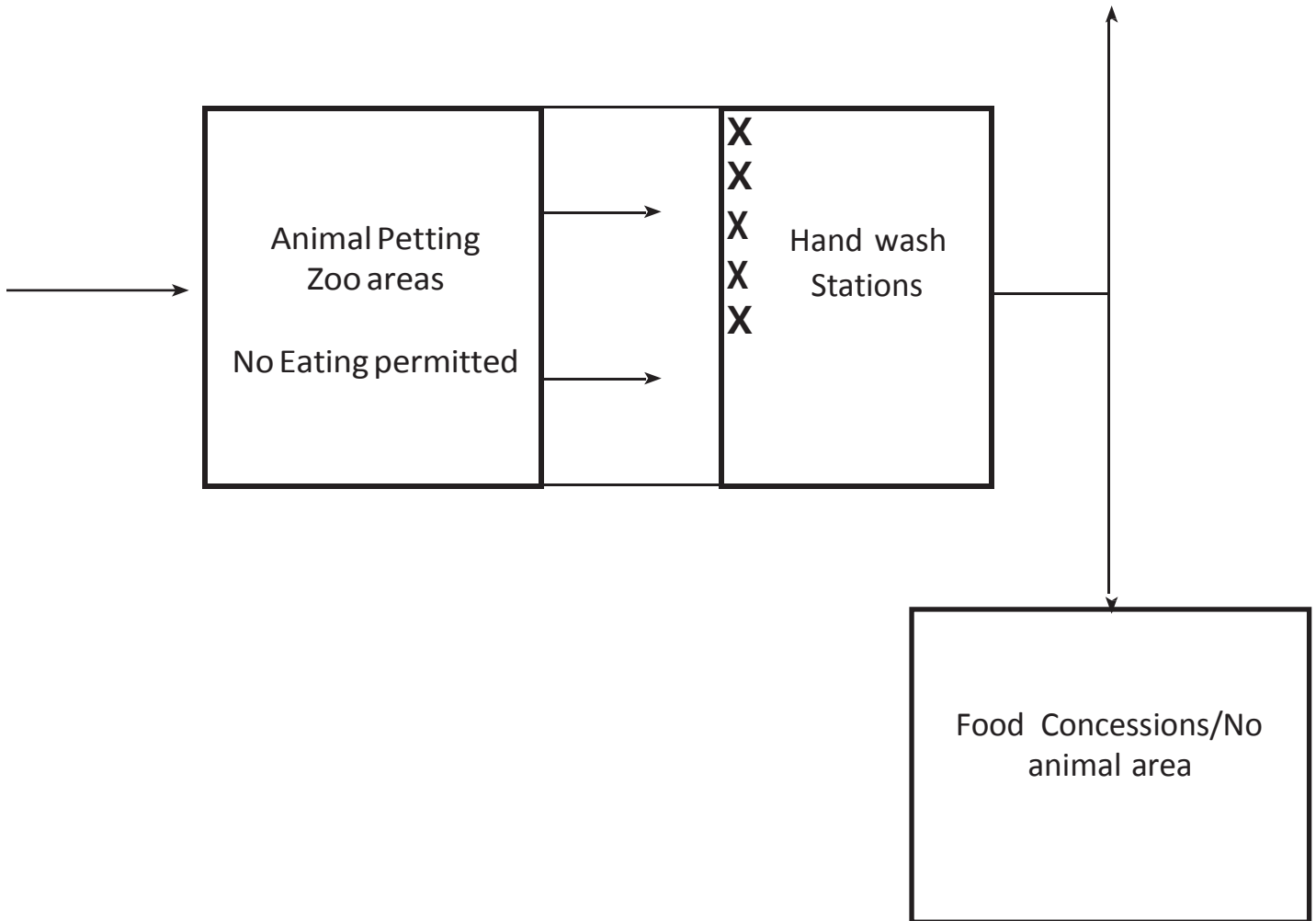
If you are considering a petting zoo in conjunction with your event or promotion, it is strongly recommended that adequate hand washing stations (portable or fixed) be placed in the immediate area of the zoo. Additionally, signs with a message to wash hands after petting and handling animals and verbal instructions by your staff of hand washing are strongly advised.

Central District Health Department recommends:

- Supplies for hand washing should be available, including a clean, drinkable water source outside of the petting area, dispensed hand soap, and paper towels for hand drying.
- Signs should indicate that hand washing after petting or handling animals is necessary.
- Prohibit eating and drinking in the petting environment. Attendants should monitor visitors and remind them of the restrictions. Provide signs indicating this restriction and provide adequate hand washing stations. (See drawing)
- Contamination may result from fence rails, ground contamination, and other sources within the enclosures. Fecal matter from shoes may also present a risk for contamination.
- Prohibit strollers and other personal items (carrying toys, use of pacifiers, spill-proof cups, baby bottles, etc.) in the petting environment to reduce risk of transmission of diseases.
- Animal feed and water should not be accessible to the public.
- In buildings where animals live, adequate ventilation is essential for both animals and humans.
- Portable hand washing stations may be rented from local suppliers that provide portable toilets. Other portable stations can be made. Call Central District Health Department-Environmental Health at 208 327-7499 for instructions or visit our website at www.cdhd.idaho.gov Click on Environmental Health, Food, and Forms.

Environmental Health Services

Possible layout of petting zoo.



Note: Have a physical separation by fencing or barriers between petting zoo and hand wash stations before entering food concession/no animal areas. Provide signs regarding hand washing before entering petting zoo, in the petting zoo enclosure, hand washing stations and the food concession area.