

# Petting Zoo Safety

July 2022



Having school children experience a petting zoo can be accomplished two ways:

## 1. Visit the petting zoo area at a commercial zoo or a private petting zoo.

A petting zoo at a commercial zoo or a private petting zoo is set up with staff and safety precautions that make it easier for the school, but this means transporting the children, staff, and volunteers to the zoo.

- Review safety procedures from the zoo including student and supervisor numbers; safety precautions.
- Review transportation and safety procedures with staff and volunteers before the event.
- Designate supervisor in charge for the event.
- Ensure private zoo operator has adequate liability insurance.

## 2. Have a petting zoo operator bring a small petting zoo to the school.

Having a farm operator bring their petting zoo to the school makes it the operation easier for school with no transportation needs but requires more planning and safety controls on the part of the school and the operator.

### Petting zoo operator

- Ensure operator has minimum \$2 million liability insurance naming petting zoo as part of the operations.
- Ensure operator has adequate safety rules and provides sufficient staff to supervise each pen area.
- Rules should limit the number of children allowed inside each pen.
- Hand washing facilities must be provided outside each pen area.

### School

- School should limit the number of students being supervised by each teacher, aide, or volunteer.
- Have parents sign an informed consent form and permission slip listing potential hazards and asking about any allergies for each child. (Including epi-pens etc. if needed)
- Keep a close eye of small children so they don't put their hands or contaminated objects in their mouths.
- Hand must be washed with soap and water after each pen if possible.
- If soap and water is not available at the pens, then provide hand sanitizer and have students wash hands with soap and water when returning to school.
- Do not allow food or drinks to be consumed in zoo area. Wash hands and move to a separate area to eat or drink.