



# **ZOOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA**

## **ZAA Accreditation Standards**

### **2021 Edition**

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# ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

## ANIMAL WELFARE, CARE & MANAGEMENT

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### Preamble

Animal care and management is one of the most critical and complex tasks to be performed by the modern zoo and aquarium. ZAA accredited facilities must be guided by current professional principles and standards to ensure that the animals in their collection are provided the best care and welfare possible.

### 1. Laws and Regulations

- 1.1. The institution must comply with all laws and/or regulations, including those specific to wildlife. Where local state and federal standards are less stringent than ZAA standards, ZAA standards must be met.

### 2. General

- 2.1. ZAA Accredited institutions must create and follow an Institution Collection Plan (ICP).
- 2.2. ZAA Accredited Facilities must have a written acquisition and disposition policy.
- 2.3. All facilities must provide appropriate staff access to ZAA standards, professional training and development tools.

### 3. Records

- 3.1. The institution must show examples of having a zoological management system for managing animal records, veterinary records and other relevant information that is readily accessible.
- 3.2. An animal inventory must be compiled at least once a year and include data regarding animals added and removed from the institution's collection whether by birth, transfer, death, or introduction to the wild.
- 3.3. The inventory must include all species owned or on loan to the institution.
- 3.4. Animals must be identifiable, whenever practical, and have corresponding ID numbers. For animals maintained in colonies/ groups or other animals not considered readily identifiable, the institution must provide a statement explaining how record keeping

is maintained. Appropriate methods of ID include, but are not limited to,; tattoo, tags, photo, transponder ID, leg band, and/or ear notches.

- 3.5. All animal records, to include but not be limited to medical, research, legal, transfer, transport, title and permitting information must be kept in electronic or paper form with appropriate backup records stored in a secure fashion that will assure future access.
- 3.6. A staff member must be designated as being responsible for the institution's zoological records management system. Animal records must be kept current.
- 3.7. Training must be provided for all staff who record data records system (registrars, animal care specialists, veterinarians, keepers etc.) to ensure consistent data entry, data access and management.
- 3.8. When a specimen is transferred to another institution, all data for that animal, including any historical data from previous holding institutions, must be transferred with the animal.
- 3.9. For ZAA Animal Management Plan (AMP) species, all data to manage these programs effectively must be submitted to the Studbook Keeper.

#### 4. Animal Welfare

- 4.1. No person shall maintain any species in any unsafe or unsanitary condition, or in a manner which results in neglect, maltreatment, or threat to public safety.
- 4.2. The institution must have a process for assessing animal welfare and wellness.
- 4.3. All animals must be well cared for and should be presented in a manner reflecting modern zoological practices and philosophies, exhibit design, including animal welfare requirements, aesthetics and educational requirements.
- 4.4. All animals must be housed in enclosures, including holding facilities, which meet or exceed the ZAA Space Requirements as outlined in the ZAA Space Requirement Guidelines.
- 4.5. Enclosures must be safe for the animals and meet their physical and psychological needs.
- 4.6. All animals should be kept in appropriate groupings which meet their social and welfare needs.

- 4.7. The animals must be provided accommodation from weather or other conditions clearly known to be detrimental to their health or welfare.
- 4.8. The institution must develop and implement a clear and transparent process for identifying, communicating, and addressing animal welfare concerns with staff in a timely manner and without retribution.
- 4.9. The institution must have a regular program of monitoring water quality for aquarium fish and marine mammals. A written record must document long-term water quality results.
- 4.10. Critical life-support systems for animals requiring such in the institutions collection must be equipped with a failure warning system and emergency backup systems, all of which are tested periodically.
- 4.11. Critical life-support associated mechanical equipment should show a record keeping maintenance program and a training record of staff members equipped to maintain equipment. Special equipment should be maintained under a maintenance agreement, or a training record should show that staff members are trained for specified maintenance of special equipment.
- 4.12. If animals are housed either long-term or permanently in indoor facilities, the appropriate UV spectrum for the species should be provided.
- 4.13. Sufficient shade must be provided by natural or artificial means to allow all animals kept outdoors to be protected from direct sunlight.
- 4.14. Clean drinking water must be provided daily. Any water containers used shall be clean. Reptiles and amphibians shall be provided water in a manner to ensure their health and welfare.
- 4.15. Habitats shall provide drainage for surface water and runoff.
- 4.16. Institutions housing elephants in their collection must meet ZAA standards for elephant care and management.
- 4.17. Institutions housing cetaceans in their collection must meet ZAA standards for marine mammal care and management.
- 4.18. All animal transports must be conducted in a manner that is safe, well-coordinated and implemented, minimizing risk to the animals, staff and public. All applicable laws and regulations must be followed.

## 5. Ambassador and Education Animals

- 5.1. If ambassador animals are used, on or offsite, a written policy on the use of live animals in programs and demonstrations must have a written protocol followed by qualified staff trained to do so. While outside their primary enclosures, although conditions may be different, animal safety and welfare must be assured at all times.
  - 5.2. All facility programs or demonstrations, on and off site, must deliver an education, conservation and/or welfare message as an integral part of those programs and demonstrations. An education, conservation and/or welfare message must be an integral component of all programs and demonstrations.
  - 5.3. Animals used in offsite educational programs must have a written protocol in place to protect the rest of the animals at the institution from exposure to infectious agents.
  - 5.4. Staff assigned to handle animals during demonstrations or educational programs must be trained in accordance with the institution's written animal handling protocols.
  - 5.5. Any animals used in off-site educational programs should be presented and maintained at the same level of care as the institution's permanent resident animals, with foremost attention to animal welfare considerations, both onsite and at the location where the animals are permanently housed.
6. Contact Area Animals & Temporary, Seasonal or Traveling Live Animal Exhibits
    - 6.1. When in operation, animal contact areas (petting zoos, touch tanks, etc.) must be supervised by qualified staff.
    - 6.2. Temporary, seasonal and traveling live animal exhibits, programs, or presentations (regardless of ownership or contractual arrangements) must be presented and maintained at the equivalent level of care as the institution's permanent resident animals with foremost attention to animal welfare considerations.
7. Enrichment and Husbandry Training
    - 7.1. The institution must follow a written animal enrichment program.
    - 7.2. A formal, documented animal enrichment program is required for marine mammals and primates.
    - 7.3. The institution should follow a written animal training program that includes husbandry, science, and veterinary procedures that enhance the overall health and well-being of the animals.

- 7.4. The institution must have a staff member or committee assigned to animal enrichment program oversight, implementation and assessment as well as record keeping and modification based on results.

8. Marine Mammal Care Standards – and must comply with ZAA Housing Guidelines

- 8.1. Any facility holding marine mammals to include but not limited to cetaceans, pinnipeds, and sirenians must have a veterinarian on site or a contracted veterinarian within a reasonable distance from the facility.
- 8.2. Environmental conditions for animals should be deemed, constructed, and managed to promote positive health and welfare; animals should be protected from environmental conditions as well as provided with adequate lighting and air quality when housed indoors.
- 8.3. Species-specific needs should dictate the size and architecture of the habitat required to enhance the animal's physical, psychological, and behavioral well-being.
- 8.4. Pool sizes should satisfy the need of aquatic mammals for physical exercise, opportunity to engage in natural behaviors and constructive social interaction.
- 8.5. Pool surface area, volume and depth must meet or exceed minimum requirements according to ZAA Space Requirements.
- 8.6. Separate accommodation for pregnant and parent/offspring marine mammals, cetaceans has to be available.
- 8.7. For gregarious and social species (such as cetaceans), only isolate marine mammals when strictly necessary, providing appropriate accommodation and enrichment while being temporarily separated from a group.
- 8.8. Primary pools must have a dry working area for conducting training and/or veterinary procedures.
- 8.9. At least one lifting platform, or alternate way to approach a sick, a newborn or young cetacean quickly should be provided.
- 8.10. Pinnipeds must have access to both water and land at will at all times, unless under treatment or observation approved by a veterinarian.
- 8.11. In mixed sex groups of pinnipeds where reproduction is occurring, a separate maternity area for mother(s), with a pool, and dry area, should be available.

8.12. Enclosures housing multiple mature male pinnipeds must have separate areas with sufficient visual barriers (such as fences, gates, and/or rock work) to provide relief from aggression.

9. Commercial Collectors

9.1. Institutions engaging the commercial collectors must make a good faith effort to determine that the collectors are properly permitted to conduct legal collections of animals (including aquatic animals) and that collection is done in a sustainable manner.

10. Public Contact Animals

10.1. All animals that will be used for contact with the public will have been evaluated by the exhibitor for appropriateness to ensure compatibility with the uses intended. All wildlife shall be exhibited in a manner that prevents injuries to the public and the wildlife.

10.2. The exhibitor must take reasonable sanitary precautions to minimize the likelihood of disease or parasite transmission.

10.3. Class I wildlife shall only be permitted to come into physical contact with the public in accordance with ZAA Standards for Public Contact with Class I Wildlife.

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## VETERINARY CARE

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### Preamble

ZAA-accredited institutions should ensure the health and welfare of all animals in their care. In addition to a knowledgeable professional animal care staff, the utilization of a qualified veterinarian and veterinary staff and access to modern veterinary facilities is required. All concerns regarding the health of animals should be assessed, treated, and corrected as a priority utilizing the expertise and resources of the veterinary team and American Association of Zoo Veterinarians (AAZV).

1. Veterinary Care Program

1.1. The institution should refer to the Guidelines for Zoo and Aquarium Veterinary Medical Programs and Veterinary Hospitals, and the policies developed or supported by the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians (AAZV). The most recent edition of the medical programs and hospitals booklet is available at the AAZV website, under “Publications”, at <http://www.aazv.org/>.

- 1.2. The institution's program of veterinary care must be a written document that includes the preventative medicine schedule, including vaccines, parasite exam, routine exams, etc.
- 1.3. Institutions must be aware of and prepared for periodic disease outbreaks in wild or other domestic or exotic animal populations that might affect the institutions animals and/or visitors (ex-Avian influenza, Eastern Equine Encephalitis Virus, etc.) Plans must be developed to outline steps to be taken to protect the institution and the public in these situations.
- 1.4. Complete medical records must be maintained on animals in the collection to include all veterinary attention they receive and/or concerns pertaining to them.
- 1.5. Animal treatments should be recorded on treatment logs including drug administration and filed in an organized manner.
- 1.6. The institution must have a written Program of Psychological Wellbeing for any singly housed primates and/or behaviorally compromised primates.

## 2. Staff and Facilities

- 2.1. A full-time licensed veterinarian with zoo animal experience or in collaboration with an experienced zoo veterinarian should be under written contract to serve as the veterinarian for the animal collection.
  - 2.1.1. In cases where such is not necessary because of the number and/or nature of the animals, a consulting/part-time veterinarian must be under written contract to conduct regular on/off-site inspections of the animals.
  - 2.1.2. To provide an immediate response to any indication of disease, injury or stress to an animal, veterinary coverage and/or communication but be available 24hrs./day, 7 days/week.
- 2.2. It is recommended to have a trained staff member(s) to aid in the day to day animal health observations and routine care.
- 2.3. There must be a clear plan for communication with the veterinarian on medical concerns and daily observations.
- 2.4. All animals in the collections should be observed daily. Care staff should be trained to evaluate animal health (not diagnose or prescribe treatment

to animals) and to report any abnormal observations to management and the veterinarian.

2.5. An onsite facility for minor/major veterinary procedures is recommended as appropriate for the collection.

2.6. The facility must have the ability to safely transport the animals to a local veterinary clinic for exam/surgery, if needed.

### 3. Pharmaceuticals

3.1. The institution's contracted veterinarian is responsible for prescribing or coordinating the prescription, storage, distribution and use of all animal prescription drugs in a fashion that complies with all applicable state, federal and local laws and regulations.

3.2. Written protocols must be available to animal care staff for the use of prescribed animal drugs. Appropriate security of the drugs is required.

3.3. All controlled drugs must be stored in an appropriate secured locked container.

3.4. Trained emergency capture personnel must have access to appropriate chemical immobilization drugs at all times.

### 4. Equipment

4.1. Capture equipment including remote drug delivery systems (if applicable) must be in working order and available to authorized, trained personnel at all times.

4.2. Emergency drug doses for all dangerous animals in the collection is recommended; such a list should be easily accessible with the remote drug delivery system.

4.3. Facilities must have needed diagnostic equipment, monitoring equipment, lab equipment, radiographic equipment and appropriate diagnostic equipment or have access to such services.

### 5. Preventative Medicine

5.1. A preventative medicine program must document the frequency of physical examinations, vaccinations, and deworming program. Ensuring there is a plan for every species in the collection is paramount to their overall wellbeing.

5.2. Animal care staff should be trained to assess animal welfare, normal and abnormal behavior, have knowledge of the animal's natural history and

diets, and knowledge of restraint procedures required for the animals under their care.

## 6. Nutrition

- 6.1. Animal food preparation and storage areas must meet all applicable state, federal and local laws and/or regulations.
- 6.2. The institution must follow a written nutrition program including quality and quantity that meets the behavioral and nutritional needs for all animals.
- 6.3. Animal and human food must not be stored in the same location (refrigerators, freezers, etc.).
- 6.4. If browse plants are used for diet or enrichment with any animal, the plant must be identified, researched and reviewed for safety prior to use.
- 6.5. A written record of all browse plants will be kept by an institution staff member for all browse plants researched and approved for animals in the institution.
- 6.6. Inspection(s) for potential toxic plant risk and exposure near an animal exhibit must be made regularly. Staff will be made aware of all such risks to help monitor the exposure

## 7. Quarantine

- 7.1. The institution must have holding and/or isolation facilities and/or protocols for newly arrived animals as well as the treatment of sick or injured animals.
- 7.2. All staff working with quarantined animals must be familiar with the written quarantine procedures.
- 7.3. Quarantine, hospital, and isolation areas should be in compliance with the standards/guidelines contained within the Guidelines for Zoos and Aquarium Veterinary Medical Programs and Veterinary Hospitals developed by the AAZV and can be obtained at: [www.aazv.org](http://www.aazv.org)

## 8. Pest Control

- 8.1. Institutions must have pest control management program to address threats of contamination by and threats of pests to animals, staff and/or visitors. Such methods must comply with all state, federal and local laws and regulations while not threatening the health and wellbeing of the animals, staff and/or visitors.

## 9. Necropsy

- 9.1. Deceased animals should be necropsied to determine the cause of death for tracking morbidity and mortality trends in order to strengthen the program of veterinary care and animal care of the collection.
  - 9.2. Necropsies must be performed in a manner that minimizes risk of disease exposure to animal collection, staff and/or visitors.
  - 9.3. Animal remains must be stored and disposed of in accordance with all applicable state, federal and local laws and regulations.
10. Euthanasia Policy
- 10.1. The institution must follow AVMA or AAZV Guidelines for Euthanasia of Animals unless circumstances warrant alternative protocols to prevent suffering and/or inhumane circumstances.

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## CONSERVATION

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### 1. Conservation Program

- 1.1. Institutions must have and follow a written conservation action plan/strategy that includes components outlining the institutions conservation practices such as in-situ conservation efforts, natural resource conservation and sustainability/green practices, and conservation education and advocacy programs. Such programs should be in coordination with ZAA's special committees to assist in demonstrating and furthering conservation partnerships, impacts both locally and globally as well as new conservation efforts initiated by guests inspired by the institutions efforts. This must be part of the Institution Collection Plan (ICP).
- 1.2. Institutions must make an effort to participate in and contribute to a local, regional or international wildlife conservation program as well as monitor the impact of the effort on that program.

### 2. AMP Participation/Support

- 2.1. The institution must participate in each AMP that pertains to an animal belonging to the institution. It is mandatory to participate in the collection of data pertaining to AMP animals, at least at a minimum of records submission. The institution may indicate at what level it desires to participate in each AMP.

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## EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION

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### 1. General

- 1.1. Education and Conservation must be a key component of the institutions mission and goals.
- 1.2. Institutions must have a written education plan that includes goals and objectives. This plan should be supported by graphics, signage and av technology where possible to support the educational mission of the facility.
- 1.3. The institution must make efforts to research, evaluate and implement scientific studies that pertain to the animals in their collection as well as the education and conservation work they are providing. Such efforts will be monitored and evaluated to determine a need for modifications that could better serve the institutions animals, conservation and/or education messaging.

## PHYSICAL FACILITIES

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Accreditation is based on the facilities operations existing at the time of the inspection.

### 1. Housekeeping, Improvements, and Maintenance

- 1.1. Good housekeeping must be regularly practiced.
- 1.2. A preventative maintenance program is recommended, which outlines how the institution identifies and addresses maintenance, and a schedule including corrective maintenance and improvements.

### 2. Equipment

- 2.1. All required mechanical equipment must be kept in working order or be on a scheduled maintenance and/or repair schedule.
- 2.2. The institution shall have a policy for the systems and methods of fire protection and security, including routine maintenance and safety checks and must be in compliance with all local building codes, including fire extinguishers, sprinkler systems, etc.

### 3. Animal Enclosures

- 3.1. Adequate lighting must be sufficient in all indoors night houses and exhibits with means of emergency lighting where needed. Lighting systems must be tested periodically.
- 3.2. The institution shall have a means for emergency lighting.

- 3.3. Ventilation must be sufficient in all indoor facilities, including animal holding, to minimize odor, and provide air exchange.
- 3.4. Animal areas, enclosures and holding, must be of a size and complexity to provide for the animal's physical, social, and psychological well-being.
- 3.5. Animal areas should consider animal welfare, meet and/or exceed the ZAA Space Requirements, and conform to standards and requirements set by all applicable laws and regulations.
- 3.6. Protection from excessive heat or cold and availability of sufficient shade should be provided for the welfare and comfort of the animal.

#### 4. Public Areas

- 4.1. Adequate lighting must be provided in public areas.
- 4.2. Public areas must be free of debris and kept in good repair.

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## SAFETY & SECURITY FOR STAFF

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### 1. General

- 1.1. The institution must be in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations regarding employee and volunteer training for safety in the workplace.
- 1.2. The institutions shall have an appropriate occupational health and safety program.
  - 1.2.1. The institution shall have protocols to minimize transference of zoonotic diseases to/from animals and staff or visitors. The institution shall provide training to the staff in the protocols and provide methods to minimize the risk of zoonotic disease.
- 1.3. Staff working with toxic/hazardous materials must be trained in the proper handling, labeling and storage of those materials per the institutions state, federal and local laws and regulations.
- 1.4. Flammable materials must be properly labeled and stored.
- 1.5. Safety Data Sheets must be accessible to all staff, on paper or electronically per the institutions state, federal and local laws and restrictions.

- 1.6. Safety procedures shall be in place for the visitors, such as emergency evacuation, first aid stations, sanitation devices or wash sink in animal contact areas, etc.
- 1.7. A tuberculin (TB) testing/surveillance program must be established in accordance with state, federal and/or local laws and regulations for the appropriate staff and animals at the institution.
- 1.8. The institution must have a security protocol applicable for the size and nature of the zoo to possibly include monitored camera surveillance, live-on property management, security personnel (staff or contracted) all of who are trained to respond to respective zoological emergencies.

## 2. Emergency Procedures

- 2.1. The institution should involve local law enforcement and other emergency agencies with planning, drills, and training, as appropriate.
- 2.2. Emergency drills and training must be conducted, recorded, and evaluated on a regular basis. Each drill should occur at a minimum of one time per year. Drill topics can be combined. The drills may be a simulated, interactive exercise; recreating a situation; tabletop exercise; and/or analysis of the response to a recent emergency.

### 2.2.1. Drill topics shall cover at minimum:

- fire
- environmental emergency appropriate to the region
- injury to visitor or staff
- animal escape
- venomous animal bite (if venomous animals are in the collection)
- active shooter
- diver extraction drill (if the institution has underwater diving as part of regular operations or maintenance) (drill twice per year)

- 2.3. The institution shall have appropriate emergency supplies, written protocols and staff training for emergency situations.

### 2.3.1. Written protocols shall include a clear chain of command.

### 2.3.2. Appropriate alarms and fire extinguishers shall be readily available and training shall be provided to appropriate staff.

### 2.3.3. The institution shall have a written plan for first aid and other various health emergencies.

- 2.4. The institution must have a communication system that can be quickly accessed in case of an emergency.

### 3. Facilities/Animal Exhibits

- 3.1. All animal habitats and holding areas must be secured to prevent unintentional animal egress.
  - 3.1.1. To provide safety for staff, visitors and animals particular attention should be given to shift doors, gates, human access doors, double-door safe entry systems, habitat barrier dimensions and construction, and locking/latching mechanisms.
- 3.2. Habitat service areas must be safely lighted, free of debris and other hazards, and provide space to allow for safe servicing. Service doors, locks, latching mechanisms and shift doors must be in good operating order.
- 3.3. Special attention shall be given to free-ranging animals so that no undue threat is posed to the institution's animals, the free-ranging animals, or the visitors. Animals maintained where they will be in contact with the visiting public must be carefully monitored and treated humanely.
- 3.4. Electrical service in all wet environments, aquatic exhibits, and associated service areas must be equipped with ground fault circuit interrupters (GFI).
- 3.5. Public access areas and doors must be unobstructed and meet all applicable laws and regulations.
- 3.6. Barriers must be of sufficient strength and design to prevent public entry into animal habitats or holding areas and to prevent public contact with animals in all areas where such contact is not intended.
- 3.7. Animal habitats shall be sufficiently strong and structurally designed to prevent escape and to protect the animal from injury. Refer to the ZAA Space Requirements.
- 3.8. Sanitation and water and waste disposal must be in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.

### 4. Risk Management

- 4.1. The institution shall have a written protocol for the review of and response to potential risks, as appropriate to the size and location.

- 4.2. Institutions should provide notification of an escape of a dangerous animal or serious injury to a staff member or guest to the ZAA Executive Director as soon as possible.

## 5. Dangerous Animals

- 5.1. Institutions maintaining venomous animals must have an appropriate anti-venom plan that includes availability, location and administration information.
- 5.2. Antivenin's location must be known by all staff members working in those areas. An individual must be responsible for inventory, disposal/replacement, and storage of antivenin.
  - 5.2.1. It is the responsibility of the institution to ensure that appropriate antivenins are available locally for all venomous species maintained at the institution, and for which antivenin is produced. Institutions may rely on the antivenin supply of local hospitals and treatment facilities, but it is also the institution's responsibility to guarantee that these inventories are maintained adequately. Such arrangements must be formally documented.
- 5.3. Institutions maintaining potentially dangerous animals such as elephants, killer whales, sharks, venomous animals, and others, must have appropriate safety procedures in place to prevent attacks and injuries by these animals.
  - 5.3.1. Appropriate response procedures should also be in place to deal with an attack resulting in an injury.
  - 5.3.2. Training and drills on the procedures must be conducted on a regular basis.
  - 5.3.3. Whenever injuries result from these incidents, a written document outlining the cause of the incident, how the injury was handled, and a description of any resulting changes to either the safety procedures or the physical facility must be prepared and submitted to the accreditation committee.
- 5.4. All areas housing venomous animals, or animals which pose a serious threat of catastrophic injury and/or death such as elephants, killer whales, sharks, venomous animals, large carnivores and others, should be equipped with either appropriate alarm systems and/or have protocols and procedures in place which will notify staff in the event of a bite injury, attack, or escape from the habitat. These systems and/or protocols and

procedures should be routinely checked to insure proper functionality, and drills should be conducted on a regular basis.

- 5.5. The institution should have written protocols for staff contact with Class I animals.

## 6. Security/Firearms

- 6.1 The institution must have adequate security protocols in place.
- 6.2 Stored firearms must be in a locked cabinet of sufficient construction and design to impede unauthorized entry and located in a secure area.
- 6.3 Personnel authorized to utilize firearms must have documented training.
  - 6.3.1 Personnel authorized to utilize firearms must practice on a regular basis.

## 7. Diving

- 7.1. Institutions which utilize underwater diving with compressed air (SCUBA or surface supplied) as a part of regular operations and/or maintenance shall meet minimal operational safety standards for such diving. Such institutions must comply with the applicable laws for their location and size of institution and must follow the standards mandated by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) or equivalent organization.
- 7.2. Institutions which utilize underwater diving as part of regular operations and/or maintenance must appoint a dive safety officer with the credentials, responsibilities and authority to fulfill that role.
  - 7.2.1 At minimum, a dive safety officer must be a certified recreational dive instructor, or an equivalent, to meet the credentialing requirement.
- 7.3. Institutions which utilize underwater diving as a part of a regular operations and/or maintenance must follow a dive manual which has, as one of its components, a section on dive safety. The section must have a dive emergency extraction plan for each habitat into which divers enter. All divers must be trained in the procedures associated with emergency plans associated with tanks in which they dive.
- 7.4. Institutions which utilize underwater diving as a part of regular operations and/or maintenance must conduct at least one documented live-action emergency dive safety drill annually.

- 7.5. The institution must have a written emergency plan for diving-related emergencies. Risk assessment, training, and drills must be conducted regularly, and should be updated and documented accordingly.

## 8. Perimeter Fence

- 8.1. The perimeter fence must be separate from all animal habitats or other animal areas by at least three (3) feet and be of sound quality and construction.
- 8.2. All facilities must be enclosed by a perimeter fence or barrier. The fence or barrier must be constructed that a). it protects the animals in the facility by restricting animals from outside the facility and unauthorized persons from going through or under it and having contact with the animals in the institutions, and b). it can function as a secondary containment system for the animals in the institution.
  - 8.2.1. There are rare instances where the terrain surrounding the facility provides a viable barrier.
  - 8.2.2. Institutions which are entirely enclosed within a building may be exempt from the perimeter fence requirement.
  - 8.2.3. If the institution maintains Class I animals, the perimeter barrier must be no less than eight (8) feet in height and constructed of not less than 11 ½ gauge chain link, or equivalent material.
  - 8.2.4. If the institution maintains Class II and III animals only, the perimeter barrier must be no less than a). eight (8) feet in height, constructed of not less than 11 ½ gauge chain link, or equivalent material, or b). a fence of not less than six (6) feet in height, with a 2-foot, 45 degree, inward angle overhang, constructed of 11 ½ gauge chain link or equivalent material.
  - 8.2.5. If the institution maintains Class III animals only, the perimeter barrier must be no less than six (6) foot in height.

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## GOVERNING AUTHORITY

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### 1. General

- 1.1. Privately-owned institutions must have a written contingency and/or succession plan, for both management and financing, that is shared with its leadership team in the event of death or incapacitation of the owner(s)
- 1.2. The governing body of the institution must be supportive and in abeyance with ZAA goals and objectives.
- 1.3. The governing body of the institution must be supportive and in compliance with ZAA Accreditation Standards and professional ethics and bylaws.
- 1.4. The institution's governing authority must consist of a professional(s) who are trained and dedicated to manage the institutions animals, staff, programs and day to day operations on full time basis. Institutions managed by groups of individuals (Boards of Directors) calling upon a paid CEO/Director to accomplish these tasks for them must include that individual in their governing decisions that pertain to day to day operations with clear protocols regarding who will make decisions and be responsible for animal welfare, animal acquisition and euthanasia, staffing and programs. Each institution must define and make available their governing authority's chain of command and responsibilities.

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## SUPPORT ORGANIZATION

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### 1. General

- 1.1. If a support organization exists, the support organization must share the institution's goals and objectives.
- 1.2. A formal, up-to-date agreement must be in place that delineates the roles and responsibilities of the support organization, including authority over animals, exhibits, paid and unpaid staff, programs, long-range plans and other matters affecting the institution.

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## FINANCE

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### 1. General

- 1.1. The institution is encouraged to follow best practices in fiscal sustainability.

- 1.2. The institution must have general comprehensive liability insurance, either by independent carrier or internal means with sufficient coverage to cover any incident.
- 1.3. The institution must provide a financial support plan that defines a current and future operating ability that supports the existing and proposed animal collection and facility.
- 1.4. The institution must comply with all state and federal wage laws while striving to compensate staff within the relative zoological trade norms in their geographic areas.
- 1.5. The institution must have in place a financial plan for ongoing capital improvements and maintenance.

## STAFF

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### 1. General

- 1.1. Staff at accredited institutions must comply with ZAA Policies.
- 1.2. There must be an appropriate amount of qualified staff in place to care for the collection.
- 1.3. Staff should have opportunities for training and professional development.
- 1.4. All staff must have and maintain professional attitudes and behaviors when representing a ZAA accredited institution.
- 1.5. All staff must have access to current ZAA accreditation standards and polices.
- 1.6. Institutions must adhere to all state, federal and local equal opportunity laws, regulations and guidelines for any and all staff. Protocols must be in place for staff to bring concerns regarding equalities of any kind to the attention of management in a confidential manner.
- 1.7. Institutions must encourage staff members to participate in ZAA committees, programs and/or projects that further the goals and efforts of the organization. All should be afforded avenues to participate in zoological webinars/conferences/etc. and share statistics, information and concerns on different platforms to advance animal enrichment, and welfare as well as education and conservation efforts.

## GUEST SERVICES

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### 1. General

- 1.1. Institutions must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and/or comply with all applicable laws and regulations.
- 1.2. The institution must provide accessibility and public amenities for all visitors (children and adult).
- 1.3. The institutions should have appropriate directional signage.
- 1.4. The institution must present to the visiting public a professional, clean and aesthetically pleasing environment.
- 1.5. The institution's website and social media should be professional in appearance, in compliance with ZAA's standards, and content should provide up- to-date information such as hours of operation, admission information, location, programs, and ZAA affiliation.

## MASTER & STRATEGIC PLANNING

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### 1. General

- 1.1. It is recommended that institutions have a written master plan and strategic plan that address short-, medium- and long-term goals regarding the development, renovation and construction of new exhibits.
- 1.2. The master plan and strategic plan should be guided by the facility mission and values and focus on best practices in animal welfare.

## RELATED POLICIES

### AMBASSADOR ANIMAL POLICY

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#### Preamble

ZAA encourages the use of ambassador animals as an opportunity to inform and educate the public about conservation and the natural world.

#### 1. Ambassador Animal Policy

- 1.1. The institution must maintain a written Ambassador Animal Policy.

- 1.1.1. The policy should address animal welfare, conservation and educational messaging, rest periods and time intervals, safe housing, and transportation of ambassador animals.
- 1.1.2. The policy should be evaluated regularly by the management of the facility.

## 2. Policy on the Presentation of Animals

- 2.1. Animals used for ambassador programs should be appropriate for each institution.
- 2.2. The animal selection and the scripts and messaging used should be reviewed and updated annually to ensure best practices are being utilized.
- 2.3. All animals used in ambassador presentations must be cared for in the same manner as the rest of the collection, including, but not limited to, diet, veterinary care, enrichment, welfare, protection from predators, and shelter.

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## PUBLIC CONTACT POLICY

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### 1. General

- 1.1. All wildlife that will be used for contact with the public shall have been evaluated by the exhibitor to insure compatibility with the uses intended. All wildlife shall be exhibited in a manner that prevents injuries to the public and the wildlife. The exhibitor shall take reasonable sanitary precautions to minimize the possibility of disease or parasite transmission which could adversely affect the health or welfare of citizens or wildlife.
- 1.2. Class I carnivores and Class I and II primates shall not be permitted to come into contact with the public.
- 1.3. Contact with Class I wildlife is authorized only as follows:
  - 1.3.1 Elephants and rhinos under direct control of handlers.
  - 1.3.2 Reptilia other than Class I Crocodylia: Large constrictors (see page 33) more than ten (10) feet in length or sixty (60) pounds in weight must have two trained handlers plus an additional handler for every additional five (5) feet in length.
- 1.4 Public contact or handling intervals for Class I wildlife shall be limited as to frequency, intensity, and duration so that such handling will not adversely affect the health, welfare, or safety of the animals, nor expose the public to injury.

### Class I Carnivores

Snow leopard, *Panthera uncia*  
Leopard, *Panthera pardus*  
Jaguar, *Panthera onca*  
Tiger, *Panthera tigris*

Lion, *Panthera leo*  
Cougar, *Puma concolor*  
Bears (family Ursidae)

### Class I Primates

Chimpanzee (genus *Pan*)  
Gorilla (genus *Gorilla*)  
Gibbon (genus *Hylobates*)  
Drill and mandrill (genus *Mandrillus*)

Orangutan (genus *Pongo*)  
Baboon (genus *Papio*)  
Siamang (genus *Symphalangus*)  
Gelada baboon (genus *Theropithecus*)

### Class II Primates

Howler monkey (genus *Alouatta*)  
Uakari (genus *Cacajao*)  
Mangabey (genus *Cercocebus*)  
Guenon (genus *Ceropithecus*)  
Bearded saki (genus *Chiropotes*)  
Guereza monkey (genus *Colobus*)  
Celebes black ape (genus *Macaca*)

Indri (genus *Indri*)  
Macaque (genus *Macaca*)  
Langur (genus *Presbytis*)  
Douc langur (genus *Pygathrix*)  
Snub-nosed langur (genus *Rhinopithecus*)  
Proboscis monkey (genus *Nasalis*)

### Class I Wildlife (except carnivores and primates listed above)

Rhinoceros (family Rhinocerotidae)  
Elephant (family Elephantidae)  
Hippopotamus (family Hippopotamidae)  
Cape buffalo, *Syncerus c. caffer*  
Crocodile, except dwarf and Congo  
(family Crocodylidae)  
Gavial (family Gavialidae)  
Black caiman, *Melanosuchus niger*  
Komodo dragon, *Varanus komodoensis*

#### Aquatic & Marine Wildlife:

- a. Cetacea
- b. Orca, *Orcinus orca*
- c. Pinniped
- d. Walrus, *Odobenus rosmarus*
- e. Northern Elephant Seal,  
*Mirounga angustirostris*
- f. Leopard Seals, *Hydrurga  
leptonyx*
- g. Eared Seal (Otaridae)
- h. Polar bear, *Ursus maritimus*

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## THE USE OF APES IN COMMERCIAL MEDIA AND PERFORMANCES

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### Preamble

Apes (chimpanzees, gorillas, bonobos, orangutans, and gibbons) are intelligent, long-lived, highly social animals with complex social structures. It is prohibited to use apes in commercial media and performance.

## 1. Rationale

- 1.1. An ape infant normally remains with its mother for several years in a group environment, learning social skills essential for development of normal adult behaviors.
- 1.2. Apes raised by humans in the absence of other members of their species will not normally acquire the skills to be socially and sexually competent as juveniles and adults. While there may be a medical necessity to human-rear an infant ape, every effort should be made to acclimate the infant to other members of their species as soon as feasible for development of normal behaviors.
- 1.3. Apes generally become physically powerful and unpredictable as they near adulthood.
- 1.4. Dressing apes in human clothing or training them to engage in unnatural behavior severely undermine communications vital to achieving conservation and is strictly prohibited.
- 1.5. Apes are susceptible to many of the same communicable diseases as humans.

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## POLICY ON RESPONSIBLE POPULATION MANAGEMENT

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### Preamble

The stringent requirements for ZAA accreditation, and high ethical standards of professional conduct, far surpass the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's requirements for licensed animal exhibitors. Every ZAA member must abide by The ZAA Code of Conduct.

ZAA accredited institutions cannot fulfill their important missions of conservation, education, and science without live animals. Responsible management and the long-term sustainability of living animal populations necessitates that some individuals be acquired and transferred, reintroduced or even humanely euthanized at certain times. ZAA member institutions that acquire animals from the wild, directly or through commercial vendors, should perform due diligence to ensure that such activities do not have a negative impact on species in the wild. Animals should only be acquired from entities that are known to operate legally and conduct their business in a manner that reflects and/or supports the intent of this policy.

### I. INTRODUCTION

This ZAA Policy on Responsible Population Management provides guidance to ZAA members to:

1. Ensure that animals from ZAA accredited institutions are not transferred to individuals, organizations, or facilities that lack the appropriate expertise or facilities to care for them ,
2. Ensure that the health and conservation of wild populations and ecosystems are carefully considered.
3. Maintain a proper standard of conduct for ZAA members during acquisition and transfer/reintroduction activities, including adherence to all applicable laws and regulations,
4. Ensure that the health and welfare of individual animals is a priority during acquisition and disposition activities.
5. Support the goals of ZAA's cooperatively managed Animal Management Programs

## II. LAWS, AUTHORITY, RECORD-KEEPING, IDENTIFICATION AND DOCUMENTATION

The following must be considered with regard to the acquisition or transfer/management of all living animals and specimens (their living and non-living parts, materials, and/or products):

1. Any acquisitions, transfers, euthanasia and translocations must meet the requirements of all applicable laws and regulations.
2. Ownership and any applicable chain-of-custody must be documented. If such information does not exist, an explanation should be provided regarding such animals and specimens. Any acquisition of free-ranging animals must be done in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations and must not be detrimental to the long-term viability of the species in the wild.
3. The Director/Chief Executive Officer or designee of the institution must have final authority for all acquisitions, transfers, and euthanasia.
4. Acquisitions or transfers/euthanasia/translocations must be documented through institutional record keeping systems. The record keeping system must include animal identification and transfer information. Any existing documentation must accompany all transfers.

5. For some colonial, group-living, or prolific species, it may be impossible or highly impractical to identify individual animals when these individuals are maintained in a group. These species can be maintained, acquisitioned, transferred, and managed as a group or colony, or as part of a group or colony.
6. In the case of animals (living or non-living) and their parts, materials, or products (living or non-living) held on loan, the owner's written permission should be obtained prior to any transfer and documented in the institutional records.
7. ZAA's Animal Management Program necropsy recommendations and protocols should be accommodated.
8. Some governments maintain ownership of the species naturally found within their borders. It is therefore incumbent on institutions to determine whether animals they are acquiring or transferring are owned by a government entity, foreign or domestic, and follow rules accordingly.

### III. ACQUISITION REQUIREMENTS

#### A. General Acquisitions

1. Acquisitions should be consistent with the mission of the institution, as reflected in its Institutional Collection Plan, by addressing its exhibition/education, conservation, and/or scientific goals regarding the individual or species.
2. Animals (wild, feral, and domestic) may be held temporarily for reasons such as assisting governmental agencies or other institutions, rescue and/or rehabilitation, research, propagation or headstarting for translocation, or special exhibits.
3. Any receiving institution must have the necessary expertise and resources to support and provide for the professional care and management of the species including: physical, psychological, and social needs of individual animals and the species.
4. ZAA member institutions may acquire animals through public donations when it is in the best interest of the animal and/or species.

#### B. ACQUISITIONS FROM THE WILD

Maintaining wild animal populations for exhibition, education and wildlife conservation purposes is a core function of ZAA member institutions. ZAA member institutions have saving species and conservation of wildlife and wildlands as a basic part of their public

mission. As such, the ZAA recognizes that there are circumstances where acquisitions from the wild are needed in order to maintain healthy, diverse animal populations.

Acquiring animals from nature can result in socioeconomic benefit and environmental protection and therefore the ZAA supports environmentally sustainable/beneficial acquisition from nature when conservation is a positive outcome.

1. Before acquiring animals from nature, institutions are encouraged to examine alternative sources.
2. When acquiring animals from nature, both the long-term health and welfare impacts on the wild population as well as on individual animals should be considered. In crisis situations, when the survival of a population is at risk, rescue decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis by the appropriate agency and institution.
3. ZAA member institutions may assist wildlife agencies by providing homes for animals born in nature if they are incapable of surviving on their own (e.g., in case of orphaned or injured animals) or by euthanizing the animals because they pose a risk to humans or for humane reasons.
4. Institutions should only accept animals from the wild after a risk assessment determines the institution can mitigate any potential adverse impacts on the health, care and maintenance of the existing animals already being housed at the zoo or aquarium, and the new animals being acquired.

#### IV. TRANSFER, EUTHANASIA AND REINTRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS

##### A. Living Animals

1. ZAA member institutions should consult the Animal Management Programs Coordinators when making transfer decisions.
2. When transferring of animals or their specimens (parts, materials, and products) managed by a ZAA AMP program, institutions should communicate with the species coordinator.
3. Animals acquired solely as a food source for animals in the institution's care are not typically accessioned.
4. In transfers to non-ZAA entities, ZAA members should perform due diligence and should have documented validation, including one or more letters of reference. For example, a trusted reference source with expertise in animal care and welfare, who is familiar with the proposed recipient and their current practices, and can verify that the recipient has the expertise and resources required to properly care for and maintain the animals.

5. Every loaning institution should annually monitor and document the conditions of any loaned specimen(s) and the ability of the recipient(s) to provide proper care.
6. Translocations and release of animals into the wild must meet all applicable laws and regulations. Any reintroduction requires adherence to best health and veterinary practices to ensure that non-native pathogens are not released into the environment exposing naive wild animals to danger.
7. Humane euthanasia may be employed for medical reasons, quality of life or to prevent the transmission of disease.

## **B. NON-LIVING ANIMALS AND SPECIMENS**

ZAA members should optimize the use and recovery of animal remains. All transfers must meet the requirements of all applicable laws and regulations.

1. Optimal recovery of animal remains may include performing a complete necropsy including, where possible, histologic evaluation of tissues which should take priority over specimens' use in education/exhibits. ZAA Animal Management Programs necropsy protocols should be accommodated. This information should be available to AMP Programs for population management.
2. The educational use of non-living animals, parts, materials, and products should be considered, and their use in Animal Program sponsored projects and other scientific projects that provide data for species management and/or conservation should be considered.
3. ZAA accredited member institutions may consult with ZAA Species Managers prior to transferring or disposing of remains/samples to determine if existing projects or protocols are in place to optimize use.
4. ZAA accredited member institutions should develop agreements for the transfer or donation of non-living animals, parts, materials, products, and specimens and associated documentation, to other institutions, such as universities and museums. These agreements should be made with entities that have appropriate long-term curation/collections capacity and research protocols, or needs for educational programs and/or exhibits.

## ZAA ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

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1. The ZAA Animal Care & Habitat Standards and Related Policies are minimum standards and ZAA accredited facilities should strive to exceed these standards.
2. Animals are listed in Class I, II and III categories for the purposes of establishing guidelines on perimeter fencing, habitat and other requirements, not for the purposes of establishing whether they are or are not a potential danger to the public.
3. ZAA does not support the keeping of Class I & Class II wildlife as pets. Class I & Class II wildlife are to be maintained solely in breeding or exhibition facilities. ZAA is against having Class I & Class II animals and non-human primates as pets. Parental care in primates is a learned behavior; therefore primate suckling offspring should be kept with the parents until naturally weaned and in social groups as much as possible. For this reason, primates shall not be pulled from their dams unless the life of the offspring is at risk.
4. Exotic animals in mixed herds or flocks may hybridize from time to time. However, breeding hybrids is not accepted and purposeful breeding of hybrids is strongly condemned by ZAA.
5. ZAA accredited facilities must comply with all applicable laws and regulations.
6. Accredited facilities will be required to comply with any changes in the standards for reaccreditation. If there is an established risk factor, changes in the standards may need to be implemented within a given timeframe.
7. If an accredited facility, which has been approved with only Class III animals, wishes to acquire a Class I or II animal or has been approved with only Class III and II animals, and wishes to acquire Class I animals, they must be in compliance with the accreditation standards for Class I prior to bringing in the animal. The facility must notify the accreditation chair prior to the acquisition.
8. If the operations, practices, and/or offerings at the currently accredited facility change or grow to such a degree that the institution is now subjected to standards not previously applicable, the facility is obligated to notify the Accreditation Chair in writing of the change and implement compliant status before the change or update is effective. Example: Facilities that undergo major operations changes, i.e., a facility that has been previously accredited as a breeding or educational facility that was not open to the public shifts its operations and begins to allow public visitation, must notify the Accreditation Chair prior to these changes to insure the facility meets the additional requirements for public visitation such as public barriers.
9. Rescinded
10. Rescinded

11. If facility membership dues have lapsed and you are accredited, your accreditation will also lapse and you will have 30 days upon expiration to reapply for accreditation before you lose your ZAA accreditation. Your dues must be current to maintain your ZAA accreditation.

12. Facility members are required to have at least one professional member connected with the facility.

13. Only ZAA accredited facilities and commercial members may use the ZAA logo on their website or display at their facility.

14. In the case of a change in ownership or the installation of a new director and upper management, the facility must notify ZAA within six months and the accredited status to be reviewed by the board of directors.

15. Rescinded

16. Policy on Usage of Class I Carnivores and Class I and II Primates for Public Encounters: No ZAA professional member or accredited facility shall participate in intentionally supplying or acquiring non-domestic baby or juvenile animals to be used in the pet trade or on a temporary basis for brief encounters and/or photos with the public. ZAA professional members and accredited facilities may not be part of a revolving door business of animal encounters or photo opportunities. **(Class I carnivores and Class I and II primates shall not be permitted to come into contact with the public.)**

17. Rescinded

18. Rescinded

19. Facilities that are accredited and move their operations or parts of their operation including collection animals to a new location shall notify the Accreditation Chair in writing, stating the physical address of the new location, prior to the physical move. Existing accreditation, regardless of term of cycle shall remain effective for 6 months from the date of change of location notification. A new accreditation inspection shall be conducted within that 6 month period of the new location to attain institutional accreditation. Where the relocation transitions for periods longer than 6 months the facility would have to maintain membership with facilities at 2 locations both of which would have to be accredited.