

Wildlife Rehabilitation Restrictions through December 31, 2021 – Revised 05/19/21

1. **Suspension of all rehabilitation activities associated with mustelid species** (includes mink, weasels, martens, badgers, and otters). Black-footed ferrets are managed in accordance with status as a federally endangered species.
 - No restrictions on previously approved practices of humane euthanasia.
 - Mustelids may be minimally handled to move to a safe location away from human activity. The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and biosecurity as outlined below must be followed. The mustelid may not be moved to an indoor location nor held in an enclosure of any kind except for a temporary holding receptacle such as an animal crate that allows for transport to a safe location. No treatments may be administered except with approval from a CPW wildlife officer.
2. **Suspension of rehabilitation of all bat species**, with the following exceptions:
 - No restrictions on previously approved practices of humane euthanasia.
 - Bats may be minimally handled to move to a safe location away from human activity. The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and biosecurity as outlined below must be followed. The bat may not be moved to an indoor location nor held in an enclosure of any kind except for a temporary holding receptacle such as an animal crate that allows for transport to a safe location. No treatments may be administered except with approval from a CPW wildlife officer.
 - Big brown bats (*Eptesicus fuscus*) may be rehabilitated. The use of PPE and biosecurity as outlined below must be followed. Intake of any big brown bat must be reported to CPW within 24 hours and high resolution digital photographs of the front and side of the bat's head and must be provided to
CPW. Please send intake notification and photos to Tina Jackson at tina.jackson@state.co.us.
3. **PPE and biosecurity for all approved wildlife rehabilitation:**
 - **Limit number of people involved in rehabilitation.**
 - **Limit number of animals brought into rehabilitation.**
 - **Daily temperature checks** are recommended for all staff. Any temperature reading over 100.4 will warrant isolation of that staff member. A COVID test is also recommended. We request any COVID positive results be reported to CPW for further consultation.
 - **Do not work with wildlife and follow the isolation and quarantine guidance linked below if you:**
 1. Feel sick
 2. Had a positive COVID test in the last 10 days, or
 3. Had a known COVID exposure during the past 14 days
 - **Any time that a worker is in a room with a wildlife patient or within 6 feet of a wildlife patient outdoors, they must wear** a cloth, dust, or procedure mask. Masks should be worn in accordance with CDC guidance (the mask should completely cover the person's nose and mouth at all times.)
 - **Any time that a worker is directly handling, in an enclosed vehicle with, or in close proximity (<1ft) to a mammalian wildlife patient, indoors or outdoors, a face mask must be worn as outlined below.**
 1. Should a facility choose to ensure staff are fully vaccinated for SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19; at least two weeks following the second vaccine dose of a two dose vaccine series or two weeks following the single dose for a one-dose vaccine), they must wear a cloth, dust, or procedure mask.
 2. If all facility staff are not fully vaccinated, they must wear
 - An N95 or KN95 mask without an exhalation valve
 - See provided resources for more information on effectiveness of various N95 and KN95 mask products.
 - **A disposable gown or apron or dedicated clothing is recommended for all animal handling**
 - **Disposable (nitrile) gloves will be worn at all times when handling animals, preparing food for animals, or cleaning enclosures/cages.** Gloves must be changed between handling each animal (or animal group for those that are co-housed).
 - **Hand washing should be performed at the start and end of each workday, after handling of each animal, and frequently throughout the day.**
 - **Cleaning and disinfection of high contact surfaces throughout the facility shall be performed daily.** If these surfaces had direct animal contact, they will be disinfected after each use.
 - **Weekly COVID testing of rehabilitators is recommended for those who are not vaccinated**
 - **COVID vaccination is strongly recommended**
 - **Following the attached administrative and engineering controls is strongly recommended.**

Resources

- CDC guidelines on how to wear a mask:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-wear-cloth-face-coverings.html>
- CDC guidance on effectiveness of various N95 and KN95 mask products:
<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/respirators/testing/NonNIOSHresults.html>
- Isolation and quarantine guidance: <https://covid19.colorado.gov/isolation-and-quarantine>
- CPW Wildlife Health Program Staff: Karen Fox: karen.fox@state.co.us; (970) 472-4318

Wildlife Rehabilitation Activities: Hierarchy of controls to reduce the risk of SARS-CoV-2 spread between people

Found at: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/wildlife.html#anchor_1612816751241

Engineering Controls

- Maintain a log of personnel that have direct contact with wildlife patients that are known or suspected to be susceptible to SARS-CoV-2. At minimum, logs should include personnel name, date(s) of contact, species they interacted with, and duration of interaction.
- When possible, consider implementing flexible, non-punitive sick leave policies that help encourage sick employees to stay home.
- Promote employee mask and social distancing policies, inside and outside of work.
- Follow CDC COVID-19 [ventilation](#) guidelines to improve ventilation in the facility.
- Minimize frequent human proximity to susceptible species by keeping patients of those species isolated in properly ventilated areas.
- Place footbaths containing a solution of an [EPA-listed disinfectant](#) for use against SARS-CoV-2 at entry and exit points in areas housing susceptible species. Scrub boots with a boot brush before stepping in footbaths to remove organic material. Change footbath solutions at least once per day, since some disinfectants are not effective in the presence of organic matter.
- Distance enclosures used for susceptible species at least 6 feet apart. The use of a solid barrier between enclosures (e.g., between open mesh style small cages) may also help to minimize transmission of virus through the air.
- Do not allow contact between wildlife, pests, and domestic animals and rehabilitation patients in outdoor cages; consider placement of a cover over cages or double fencing.
- Since SARS-CoV-2 may be shed in feces, ensure regular removal of feces with proper disposal based on state/local ordinances.
- Use an [EPA-listed disinfectant](#) for use against SARS-CoV-2 on all non-disposable equipment used in the capture, handling, transport, rehabilitation, and husbandry of susceptible wildlife.
- Develop and institute training for personnel on risk mitigation measures that reduce the risk of transmission between people or people and wildlife patients.

Administrative Controls

- Develop and periodically update an emergency response plan to ensure continuity of operations during any type of emergency or disease outbreak. The plan should include contingencies for staff rotations or minimal dedicated staffing; animal care; food, water, and medical supplies; power and utilities supply; communications; and reporting human and animal health concerns to authorities. For SARS-CoV-2, this should include the facility policy for self-reporting of any SARS-CoV-2 positive staff and volunteers.
- People who may have been exposed to COVID-19 or who have [symptoms consistent with COVID-19](#) should stop contact with wildlife and follow [recommendations for quarantine](#).
- Report to the state and/or federal wildlife agency any SARS-CoV-2 susceptible wildlife with possible exposure to a person with COVID-19, especially animals that are displaying [clinical signs consistent with SARS-CoV-2 infection](#).
- If possible, establish dedicated teams of staff and volunteers who work together in rotating work shifts (e.g., 1 week on /1 week off) to minimize the potential spread of COVID-19 between workers.
- Isolate animals with respiratory (coughing, sneezing, nasal discharge) or gastrointestinal signs (diarrhea, vomiting). Limit staff contact and [use appropriate PPE](#). Contact a veterinarian to arrange care.
- Avoid unnecessary handling or other contact with susceptible species and limit the number of staff who handle members of these species.
- Implement a sequence for handling wildlife in rehabilitation:
 - First: Handle or treat susceptible animals.
 - Last: Handle or treat animals that have clinical signs compatible with SARS-CoV-2 in an isolated area.
 - All other animals should be treated between these two groups, keeping in mind to handle younger animals before adult animals.
 - Ideally, separate staff would be assigned to care for each group, or for limited staffing, handle/treat in the sequence listed.
- Pre-arrange backup caregivers for all animals undergoing rehabilitation.
- Follow guidelines in the NWRA/IWRC “[Minimum Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation, 4th editionpdf iconexternal icon](#)” to include daily cleaning and disinfection of the facility.
- [Wash hands](#) with soap and water or apply hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol before and after physical contact with patients, before putting on PPE, after taking off (doffing) PPE, after cleaning or sterilizing equipment, and after using the bathroom.
- Work with state wildlife health, animal health, and public health authorities to determine if samples should be collected from rehabilitated animals (if feasible) and submitted to designated veterinary diagnostic laboratories for SARS-CoV-2 testing.
- Have initial quarantine protocol and procedures in place for newly admitted patients as well as strict biosecurity protocols that can help to inform release criteria development.
 - Conduct ‘just-in-time’ training for staff and volunteers on basic biosecurity principles and practices. At a minimum, those working in close contact with wildlife should review the appropriate methods for [donning and doffing PPE](#) prior to working with the animals in rehabilitation facilities.