

Guidance for Equine Industry During Re-Opening

The state's framework to resume business operations — “Ad Astra: A Plan to Re-Open Kansas” — provides guidance for businesses statewide as they resume operations. As of Tuesday, May 26, 2020, these are no longer enforceable under a statewide executive order, but they remain in place **as recommendations only** for individuals and businesses across Kansas. Statewide travel-related quarantines established by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment are still in effect.

It is important to note that **local governments retain the authority to impose more restrictive orders or provisions**, and there no longer exists a statewide protection for those businesses performing essential functions as previously identified in the Kansas Essential Functions Framework (KEFF). However, the Department of Homeland Security has recognized the food and agriculture sector as a critical infrastructure industry and should be considered as local authorities consider local orders which could restrict continued operations of these critical functions. For a complete list of the essential critical infrastructure workers as defined by DHS, go to: <https://www.cisa.gov/identifying-critical-infrastructure-during-covid-19>.

As an essential function, and part of the critical infrastructure of this state, the contribution of the agriculture industry to the state and local community is critical. **We strongly encourage you to exercise ongoing safety measures** to ensure that your employees remain healthy and you can continue to function, and also to assure your customers and community that you provide a safe, reliable environment.

What should equine facilities do during the Re-Opening?

- Managers of these facilities should continue to implement operational changes to protect their employees and customers.
- The best practices below were developed to ensure continuity of operations and protection of animal health and welfare while also safeguarding the health of your staff and their families.
- Central to the efforts to protect public health within your organization are these principles:
 - Maintain at least six feet of distance between individuals, be they customers or employees, as much as possible.
 - Follow fundamental cleaning and public health practices detailed on the Kansas Department of Health and Environment website at [coronavirus.kdhe.gov](https://www.kdhe.gov/coronavirus).

- Avoid instances in which large groups are in one location and unable to maintain a six-foot distance with only infrequent or incidental moments of closer proximity. This includes limiting areas and instances in which physical distancing is not maintained, such as in entrances, lobbies, break rooms, etc.

Best Practices

These best practices will protect your employees and customers and are recommended as part of the statewide re-opening. In communities with continued “stay-at-home” orders or other additional restrictions, operations should implement these practices to comply with local orders.

Facility Access

- Limit access to just essential personnel (veterinarians, equine caretakers, trainers and essential owners) as much as possible.
- Discourage non-essential persons (students, friends, family members, etc.) from entering the facility as much as possible.
- Do not allow anyone having symptoms of COVID-19 (cough, shortness of breath or fever), or who has been exposed to a person with symptoms of COVID-19, access to the facility.
- Limit the number of personnel on the farm at any one time to allow for physical distancing.
- All individuals should stay six feet apart and must not congregate.
- Washing stations or hand sanitizer should be made available at access points for all personnel entering and leaving the premises.
- Policies and procedures should be developed for responding to veterinary visits while adhering to current physical distancing guidelines and maintaining facility biosecurity.

Facility Biosecurity Measures

- All individuals should wash hands before entering the facility and wear clean clothes as part of the facility’s general biosecurity plan.
- Individuals should touch only the equipment and supplies necessary for completing the tasks of caring for and exercising the specific horse(s).
- Shared use of helmets, grooming supplies, tack and other equipment between individuals should be avoided.
 - Any equipment that must be shared should be cleaned and disinfected before and after use.
- 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.
- Calculate how much feed will be necessary for your animals to minimize feed deliveries and ensure adequate feed is on hand.
- When utilizing shared items such as trash receptacle lids, hoses, etc., use good biosecurity practices such as gloves, paper towels, hand-washing or other methods, as appropriate, to avoid transmission.

Cleaning and Disinfection Measures to Prevent COVID-19 Transmission

- Practice good hygiene by washing your hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol after touching a horse, communal areas, or communal equipment to prevent environmental spread of the virus.
- The virus can persist on non-porous materials (leather bridles/saddles/halters, nylon halters/lead ropes, gate latches, door handles, spray nozzles) longer than porous materials (cotton lead ropes, saddle pads).
 - Clean communal leather tack daily with tack cleaner.
 - Disinfect gate latches, stall door handles, light switches, feed scoops, hose ends, spray nozzles, cross tie snaps, pitchforks, wheelbarrows and other frequently handled surfaces regularly or after contact with personnel.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has provided guidance for cleaning and disinfecting your facility here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>.

For current information about Kansas' response to COVID-19, go to the Kansas COVID-19 Resource Center at www.covid.ks.gov.