

# MARYLAND ZOO

## NEWS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CONTACT:** Claire Aubel

O: 410/454-1333

Jane Ballentine

O: 443/552-5275

C: 301/332-1742

### **THE MARYLAND ZOO TO REOPEN AFTER THREE MONTHS OF CLOSURE**

**BALTIMORE, MD** – The Maryland Zoo is pleased to announce plans to reopen on Wednesday, June 24, 2020. Following the guidance of State and City public health directives, the Zoo is moving forward with reopening following a phased approach that strictly limits attendance and programming. The Zoo will open for members-only from June 24 - 26, followed by a general public opening on Saturday, June 27.

The Zoo closed on March 16 amid growing national concerns for public safety due to the spread of the virus. Despite being closed to the public, the essential Zoo animal care and veterinary teams have been onsite, continuing to provide expert daily care.

“We’re excited and ready to welcome visitors back to the Zoo,” said Don Hutchinson, president and CEO of The Maryland Zoo. “We feel our sprawling, outdoor setting provides a perfect opportunity for a fun excursion and a way to make positive memories during this unusual time.”

Zoo visitors will find a number of new measures in place, including a new reservation timed ticketing requirement for all visitors, including Zoo members. Tickets must be purchased [online](#) in advance to limit the number of guests during the day to support optimal social distancing throughout the Zoo visit.

Additionally, guests will follow a one-way path through the Zoo, while indoor spaces such as the Tundra Buggy and Chimpanzee Forest will be closed initially. Rides and attractions where physical distancing cannot be maintained or adequately sanitized between guests are currently closed; this includes, but may not be limited, to the Goat Corral, Jones Falls Zephyr Train, carousel, playground, as well as the Tree and Barn silo slides.

Wearing a mask will be required in some areas where social distancing is not possible, such as the Main Gate entry, gift shop and concession stands, and recommended in the rest of the Zoo. Zoo staff are also required to wear masks.

Spring and summer are some of the busiest times for visitation at the Zoo. The Zoo projects a loss of at least 25% of its annual operating revenue due to the COVID shutdown.

“Like many other nonprofits, this has been one of the hardest times in our history,” said Hutchinson. “Our unique challenge is that we cannot simply close the gates and walk away. We provided continual care and enrichment for more than 1,500 animals at the Zoo every day, and this did not stop when we were forced to shut down. The continued financial support from generous donors and

our loyal Zoo members has made it possible for us to uphold our high standard of care, but we will still be facing a budget shortfall going forward.”

The public can continue to support The Maryland Zoo by making tax deductible donations to the Zoo at [www.marylandzoo.org/donate](http://www.marylandzoo.org/donate).

For more information on how to plan your visit, please visit <https://www.marylandzoo.org/visit/tickets-hours/>. For Zoo updates, please visit [www.marylandzoo.org](http://www.marylandzoo.org) and [www.facebook.com/marylandzoo](https://www.facebook.com/marylandzoo)

### **About The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore**

Founded in 1876, The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore is the third oldest zoo in the United States and is internationally known for its contributions in conservation and research. More than 1,500 animals are represented in the Zoo’s varied natural habitat exhibits in areas such as the award-winning Penguin Coast, Polar Bear Watch, the Maryland Wilderness, African Journey and the Children’s Zoo. Situated in Druid Hill Park near downtown Baltimore, the Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums. For more information, visit [www.marylandzoo.org](http://www.marylandzoo.org).

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