



Animal Care

Guidance for Zoos and Captive Wildlife Facilities: Protecting Birds From Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza

Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) is a very contagious, deadly disease of birds. Everyone who owns or works with birds needs to know how to safeguard them from this devastating disease. This includes facilities regulated under the Animal Welfare Act. Whether at a large zoo or wildlife rehabilitation facility, strong biosecurity measures can prevent an HPAI introduction and keep your birds healthy.

Biosecurity Measures

- **Separate and compartmentalize** your birds to prevent contact with free-ranging (non-captive) wild birds.
- **Test and quarantine** all sick birds and newly acquired birds to prevent the spread of illness.
- **Clean and disinfect** enclosures and equipment used for captive birds.
- **Prevent cross-contamination** via personnel (staff, volunteers, veterinarians) by wearing personal protective equipment or dedicated facility clothing and shoes and showering before and after contact with birds.

Report Sick Birds

HPAI can strike with little to no warning—sudden death, decreased food and water consumption, and lethargy are common signs. Early detection is vital to keep the disease from spreading. If you see any sign of illness in your birds, immediately report it to your State veterinarian or the U.S. Department of Agriculture (1-866-536-7593).

Depopulation is NOT required for exhibit flocks with HPAI-infected birds. However, if HPAI is suspected in your birds, you will need to follow quarantine requirements and use proper biosecurity to prevent disease spread.



Resources

- **Animal Care Tech Note**—Protecting Captive Wild Birds From Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza: aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal_welfare/ac-tech-note-captive-wild-bird-biosecurity-508.pdf
- **USDA's Defend the Flock** outreach campaign—free resources and other information on biosecurity: aphis.usda.gov/animalhealth/defendtheflock
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations** on potential biosecurity solutions ranked from most to least effective: cdc.gov/niosh/topics/hierarchy

Learn More

If you have questions about protecting captive wild birds from HPAI, call us at **(970) 494-7478** or email animalcare@usda.gov.

For general information, visit aphis.usda.gov and search “avian influenza.” Find out where HPAI has been detected in commercial poultry, backyard flocks, and free-ranging wild birds. You can also search “HPAI response” to learn how USDA responds to HPAI outbreaks.