	Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Animal Care	Document Control: N/A
		Version No.: January 1, 2023
Required Procedures for Facility Inspections During the COVID-19 Pandemic		Effective Date: January 1, 2023

- **PURPOSE**

This document establishes required procedures for protection of employee, customer, and animal health while performing animal facility inspections during the COVID-19 pandemic. These procedures are applicable to all AC employees who enter animal facilities, carriers and exhibitors (all field activities henceforth referred to as “inspections”). They are meant for temporary use while the COVID-19 situation is still critical; they are subject to change as conditions change. Notifications will be provided as changes occur. APHIS considers the conduct of mission critical activities, including inspections, in all counties to be appropriate, *provided* that inspectors use PPE as required in this document, the [AC Inspection Guide](#), the [AC Safety and Health Handbook](#), and requirements of State/local jurisdictions.


- **INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS**

- **Regardless of vaccination status**, masks are required to be worn *indoors in public* by all employees at all worksites (including private property entered for the purpose of inspection) located in counties with high levels of community transmission according to the [CDC map](#). This is subject to change based on CDC recommendations. Masks are always permitted to be worn if desired.
- **Additionally, follow CDC recommendations**, state/local guidance, and/or individual facility requirements for protective measures when inspecting at public or private facilities. Adhere to individual facility procedures when inspecting animals susceptible to COVID-19¹.
- Follow [current CDC guidelines](#) for COVID isolation requirements and testing procedures before deciding to inspect.
- Follow any additional requirements provided by the Safer Federal Workforce, USDA, or Agency policies.

- **CHOOSING NOT TO CONDUCT OR TO ABORT AN INSPECTION**

- If the facility representative informs you they are positive for COVID, you may choose to not conduct an inspection. Inform your supervisor and log as a task in eFile in the Activity Box on the Accounts Page, “COVID – UNABLE TO INSPECT.” Follow CDC guidance to follow up with the facility in an appropriate amount of time and then proceed with attempting another inspection.
 - If you feel the initial inspection should proceed speak with your supervisor before conducting the inspection. Wearing an N95 (must have current respiratory clearance and fit test) and socially distancing will be required if the inspection proceeds.
- If you abort an inspection after it has started for any reason, complete a Focused Inspection report for the areas you were able to inspect.
- Document the areas included in a focused inspection:
 - Research facility: on the Research Facility Protocol Selection Worksheet
 - Non-research facility: email your supervisor, “Due to COVID-19 concerns, a focused inspection was conducted on the following areas: (list areas inspected).”

¹ Updated information regarding animals and COVID-19 can be [found here](#).

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APPENDIX: LIBRARY OF LINKS

[AC Safety & Health Handbook](#)

[Safer Federal Workplace Task Force](#)

[USDA APHIS Coronavirus Updates](#)

[CDC Community Levels Map](#)

[CDC COVID-19 Guidance Library](#)

[CDC Face Covering Recommendations](#)

[CDC COVID-19 in Animals](#)

[CDC Testing & Quarantine](#)

[CDC Quarantine and Isolation](#)