



# HENRY VILAS ZOO®

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## Henry Vilas Zoo to Reopen Thursday, June 18, 2020

Dane County's Henry Vilas Zoo will reopen to the public on Thursday, June 18. As part of its continued commitment to the well-being of guests, zoo staff and animals, and in an ongoing effort to assist our community in preventing the spread of COVID-19, Henry Vilas Zoo has implemented enhanced protocols and procedures.

The only entrance in to the zoo will be through the gate by the main parking lot on South Randall Ave. Guests will be able to use a one-way path throughout the zoo grounds and will be able to see most of the animals. The Lake Wingra entrance will be closed. Outdoor buildings and play areas will also be closed.

There will be signs and staff along the way and safe opportunities to purchase food, drinks, and gifts. The zoo has increased cleaning and disinfecting protocols and installed hand sanitizer stations throughout the grounds. All staff will be required to wear masks and the zoo will encourage guests to wear them as well. Masks will be available for purchase.

The zoo will have reduced capacity for guests and will have a staff member at the entrance letting in visitors as capacity allows. During busier times of the day, that may mean guests will have to wait in a line outside of the main gate.

"We are excited to welcome visitors back to the Henry Vilas Zoo," said Dane County Executive Joe Parisi. "With so many families facing challenges due to the pandemic, it is more important than ever to have access to a free zoo, filled with opportunities to learn and spend quality time, without having to worry about the cost."

Henry Vilas Zoo closed for the first time in its more than 100-year history on March 14, 2020 following the recommendations of state and county health officials to help slow the spread of COVID-19 in the community.

"Since the day we decided to close back in March, we have been planning on what welcoming you back would look like," said Executive Zoo Director Ronda Schwetz. "We've been working hard to make sure our guests have the best possible zoo experience and we can't wait to see you again. Everyone here at Henry Vilas Zoo has missed you!"