

Aquatic Experience Livestock Requirements

All Aquatic Experience exhibitors must be in compliance with the following guidelines, in regards to live animals, during the aforementioned event. Any vendor found to be in violation of said guidelines may be asked to leave Aquatic Experience without reimbursement. These requirements exist in order to secure the health and well-being of all livestock at Aquatic Experience.

Definition of livestock:

- All live vertebrate animals, including but not limited to:
 - Fishes
 - Reptiles
 - Amphibians
 - Mammals
- All live invertebrate animals, including but not limited to:
 - Arthropods (shrimps, crabs, insects, etc.)
 - Mollusks (Snails, clams, etc.)
 - Cnidaria (corals, anemones, jellies, etc.)
 - Echinoderms (stars, urchins, etc.)
 - Tunicates, sponges, etc.

Aquatic livestock holding and display systems:

- Holding and display receptacles containing aquatic livestock (shall henceforth be referred to as “aquariums”):
 - Must be **professionally designed** to house aquatic life
 - Size and design must be in-line with the specific needs of livestock held therein
- Filtration
 - All aquariums containing livestock require some form of filtration (power filter, canister filter, sump, etc.)
 - Primary purposes of filtration include
 - Gas exchange
 - Nutrient transport
 - Water circulation
 - Additional filtration is recommended in the form of:
 - Protein Skimmers
 - UV Sterilizers
 - Media Reactors
 - Mechanical/Chemical “Water Polishers”
- Water Quality
 - Optimal water conditions are to be maintained in aquariums throughout the event.

- Ideal conditions may vary from one form of livestock to another, but general conditions should be maintained as follow:
 - Temperature: 72 – 82 °F (23 – 28 °C)
 - Salinity (if applicable): stable levels in the range of 28 – 36 ppt (1.021 – 1.027 specific gravity) are to be maintained.
 - pH values may vary for each species represented.
 - General values should be between a pH of 6.5-7.5 (tropical fish) and 7.8-8.2 (marine aquariums and African cichlids).
 - pH should remain stable throughout the entirety of Aquatic Experience
 - Nitrogen
 - Ammonia/Ammonium (NH₃⁺/NH₄⁺)
 - Free ammonia (NH₃⁺) not to exceed 0.5 ppm
 - Total ammonia/ammonium not to exceed 2.0 ppm
 - Nitrite concentrations not to exceed 1.0 ppm
 - Dissolved oxygen
 - Must be maintained at greater than 75% saturation for the given salinity and temperature of the specific aquarium.
 - Turbidity
 - Exhibitors are required to do all in their power to maximize water clarity.

Livestock Sales

- Sales of livestock will be restricted to **certified retailers and wholesalers**.
- “Pre-bagging” of livestock is prohibited during the event.
 - All live animals must remain in an aquarium until time of sale
 - Live fish and crustaceans may not be bagged/packaged for purchase until the buyer is ready to exit the event.
- It is recommended that livestock sellers visibly post any and all livestock guarantees in their booth space.

Regulation of Livestock Requirements

- Without exception, all vendors displaying livestock at Aquatic Experience are required to provide and maintain ideal water parameters, in order to ensure the health of all living aquatic organisms.
 - In order to guarantee the water parameters are met, all exhibitors displaying livestock must have access to water testing equipment during Aquatic Experience.
 - The use of water testing is the only accurate way to measure the conditions inside of an aquarium. Water clarity is not a sufficient sign of aquarium health.
 - If any visual signs of stress are present in an animal, then Aquatic Experience reserves the right to subject any enclosure to water testing.
 - Any live animal displaying signs of parasite/bacterial/fungal/etc. infections should be removed from the Aquatic Experience show floor.

- In the event that the above water parameters are not met, the exhibitor must do everything in their power to remedy the situation, including but not limited to:
 - Performing water changes
 - Vendors are asked to contact an Aquatic Experience staff member, if additional water is needed for aquarium maintenance.
 - Replacing mechanical/chemical filtration
 - Supplementing with additional filtration
 - Supplementing with liquid chemicals (flocculent, ammonia binders, etc.).
- Without exception, all vendors displaying and selling livestock must be in compliance with any and all applicable city, county, state, and federal laws regarding the care and sales of live animals. This includes the new Cook County Animal Abuse Registry law, as outlined here: <http://aquaticexperience.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Abuse-Registry-Laws-Adopted.pdf>