

Self-Guided Field Trip

Policies



1. RESERVATIONS

Reservation requests for School Group Field Trips must be received in writing no later than 4 weeks prior to the date of your intended visit. Phone reservations will not be accepted. Requests received later than 4 weeks out are not eligible for Discounted School Group Rates and must pay regular admission rates. Your Self-Guided Field Trip is confirmed when you receive a confirmation number, a field trip guide and reproducible handouts for chaperones (usually within two business days) from the Virginia Zoo by email or mail. **PLEASE NOTE: Schools that do not have a confirmed field trip will be charged full price admission.** If you have not received confirmation within one week of submitting your request, please email brian.shannon@norfolk.gov.

2. FIELD TRIP WRISTBANDS

At least one week prior to your scheduled visit, we will mail you ZOO WRISTBANDS that serve as admission tickets for every adult and staff member you included in your reservation. We recommend you estimate your numbers accurately when making your reservation so that you have enough wristbands for all chaperones, and staff who might come. **PLEASE NOTE: Wristbands are non-transferable, non-replaceable one day tickets for admission into the Zoo. The Virginia Zoo is not responsible for lost or missing wristbands.**

In the event you have extra wristbands, you may return them to the Zoo without penalty on the day of your visit only. **Please Note: You will be charged for unused wristbands that are not returned on the day of your visit.** You will **not** be able to order additional wristbands once your reservation has been confirmed. Adults who do not have wristbands on the day of your visit will have to stand in line and pay full price general admission at the Gate upon arrival. To expedite your entrance to the zoo, please ensure that every adult chaperone and staff member is wearing their wristband prior to arrival at the Zoo.

3. RATES AND ELIGIBILITY

ADMISSION RATES

Students ages 2-11 are \$8 per student.

Students ages 12 & up are \$10 per student.

One chaperone (teacher or other adult 18 and over) is admitted free for every 10 students.

Additional Adult chaperones above the 1:10 ratio paid for as part of the school group payment (single form of payment; one transaction for entire group) receive a discounted admission rate of \$6 each. Adults paying separately must pay full admission price of \$14.95 or use their membership card. Schools, daycare centers and preschools physically located in the City of Norfolk receive free admission for the students and free admission for one adult (teachers and/or chaperones) for every ten children. (NOTE: The building the children are attending school must be physically located in the City of Norfolk.) Norfolk schools must meet all of the School Group Eligibility requirements below and submit a reservation request form. Non-reserved groups will be charged regular zoo admission. Students living with disabilities receive free admission as well as free admission for one chaperone per student with a disability. Groups of less than ten students are not required to make reservations. Groups of ten students and larger must submit a reservation request form.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for Discounted School Group Admission Rates, a group must:

- Submit a Self-Guided Field Trip Reservation Request Form at least 4 weeks in advance.
- Pay with a single form of payment (pre-pay or pay at the gate in a single transaction for all students, adults and staff)
- Have a chaperone-to-student ratio of at least 1 adult for every 10 students (required for preschool-Grade 12) and comply with the Chaperone Policy.
- Have status as an accredited public/private school or charter school in session or a licensed preschool/day care center with at least one staff member holding a valid teaching license.

4. CHAPERONE POLICY

Compliance with Chaperone Policy is required to remain eligible for Discounted School Group Rates

One adult per 10 students is REQUIRED for all groups (Preschool - Grade 12). When determining how many chaperones are required round up the number of students to the nearest 10. (e.g. 29 students requires 3 chaperones; 31 students requires 4 chaperones)

Additional Adult chaperones above the 1:10 ratio paid for as part of the school group payment (single form of payment; one transaction for entire group) receive a discounted admission rate of \$6 each. Adults paying separately must pay full admission prices or use their membership card.

Additional adults and children entering the Zoo before or after the school group may be required to pay full admission price when they arrive, or they may use their membership.

Chaperones must be at least 18 years old.

Chaperones must stay with their assigned group at all times.

Adults bringing younger siblings/babies in strollers are welcome but may NOT be counted as chaperones and must pay full admission prices or use their Membership. Extra children are subject to full admission prices.

5. BUS DRIVER ADMISSION

The Bus Drivers that drive your group to the Zoo receive free admission on the day of your visit only. Their children, family and friends will be subject to the general admission rates unless the child is a student in the visiting group.

6. STUDENT CONDUCT POLICY

For the safety and enjoyment by all zoo guests the following are expected of your students. Chaperones will be held responsible for student conduct.

Feeding animals is prohibited except in designated areas with food provided by the Zoo.

Stay on visitor pathways.

Outside food is not permitted in the Zoo. One drink per person in plastic bottles without straws is allowed.

Do not eat or bring food into an exhibit area.

Do not throw items in exhibits, tease or chase the birds or bang on glass exhibits.

Use quiet voices near exhibits.

Skateboards, skates or any kind of bicycles are not permitted.

Walk, don't run.

Be courteous to others trying to view an exhibit.

7. ZOO MEMBER FIELD TRIP POLICY

Virginia Zoo Members – Virginia Zoo member adults chaperoning a field trip can take their student child through the Members Entrance with their membership card and appropriate identification. A photocopy of the Virginia Zoo membership card must be provided to the ticket booth upon arrival for member students that do not have a parent attending the field trip. Students who do not have a photocopy of their Virginia Zoo Membership Card are required to pay the same fees as their classmates.

Reciprocal Zoo/Aquarium Members – Reciprocal Zoo/Aquarium member adults chaperoning a field trip can take their student through the Members Entrance with their membership card and picture identification. Students who do not have a parent chaperoning the field trip may not use their membership and must pay the same fees as their classmates.

8. SNACK AND LUNCH POLICY

Outside food is prohibited in the Zoo. One drink per person may be brought into the Zoo as long as it is **not** in a glass container and **does not** have a disposable straw. Shelters in Lafayette Park are available for your picnic. Please call Norfolk Parks and Recreation to reserve a shelter, 757-441-5834. We do not have the facilities to store your lunches nor are students allowed to carry their lunches while walking the Zoo; they must be safely stored on the bus or in a chaperone's vehicle.

Don't want to leave the Zoo for Lunch? Bagged lunches are available through our African Village Restaurant. Please see the Bagged Lunch Order Form you will receive with your confirmation packet.

9. ZOO MAPS

A downloadable map is available on our website to make copies for your students or for classroom projects.

10. PAYMENT

The Virginia Zoo accepts cash, business checks, VISA and MasterCard. Cash should be bills not coins to expedite your class through the gate. Business checks **must be made payable to City of Norfolk Treasurer**. If paying by Visa or MasterCard insure your card will be accepted at the gate by having Merchant Category Code 9311 (Tax Payment) temporarily allowed by the issuer.

Payment may be made in advance or on the day of your visit. Checks received in advance will be processed upon receipt. Credit Cards received in advance will be held for processing until the day of your arrival. **PLEASE NOTE: Signature is required when paying by credit card. We can not accept credit cards over the phone.**

11. REFUNDS AND CANCELLATIONS

If you must cancel or reschedule a reserved field trip, give the Virginia Zoo as much notice as possible. Call the Visitor Services Department at 757-441-2374 ext. 251 or email brian.shannon@norfolk.gov to cancel or reschedule your visit.

