

# Virginia Zoo Homeschool Program: Frequently Asked Questions



- **How do I register?** Book online at <https://virginiazoo.org>. If you have a question or need assistance with registering your participant, please call (757) 441-2374 ext. 227 or email the Virginia Zoo's Education Department at [vazoo.education@norfolk.gov](mailto:vazoo.education@norfolk.gov). Our education staff will be in the office Monday through Friday from 9am-5pm. Due to the high volume of calls, please leave a message and allow at least one business day for your call to be returned.
- **Does the program ticket include general admission?** Yes, general admission is included with your ticket to our program.
- **Can I get a discount?** Discounts are available for Zoo Members! Check out our website for exact pricing. Members will need to log into their account before registering and the discount will be applied automatically at checkout.
- **Why is the booking system asking me to renew my membership before registering for my program?** Your membership must be active on the day of the program for the discount to be applied. If your membership will expire before a program takes place, then you will be prompted to update it during the booking process. Once renewed, your membership will extend to one year past your current expiration date.
- **How many participants are in each program?** We can have up to 20 participants at a time in each of our Homeschool Programs. We will maintain a 10:1 participant to instructor ratio. We may also have additional support from volunteers as well.
- **Are adults expected to attend the program?** This program is designed for participants to attend independently, and we encourage adults to explore the Zoo during the program. Discounted general admission tickets are available for non-member adults during the booking process. However, if your child requires additional support from an adult during the program, please reach out to us at [vazoo.education@norfolk.gov](mailto:vazoo.education@norfolk.gov).
- **What learning accommodations can the Virginia Zoo provide for my child?** The Virginia Zoo is passionate about providing an educational and engaging learning experience for all learners. **Reach out to us at [vazoo.education@norfolk.gov](mailto:vazoo.education@norfolk.gov) and let us know how we can best provide your child with the resources they need to be successful in our programs.**
- **How strict are the age divisions?** Programs are designed specifically for the advertised age group. If you are concerned about the suitability of a particular program for your child, please contact us at [vazoo.education@norfolk.gov](mailto:vazoo.education@norfolk.gov) and we will be happy to discuss the program with you.
- **Can participants younger than 6 years old participate in your homeschool programs?** We highly recommend the participants younger than 6 years old participate in our free early childhood programming: <https://virginiazoo.org/school-programs/early-childhood/>.

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- **What happens if I need to cancel my registration?** You must cancel more than 3 weeks from the program's start date to receive an 80% refund. Registration fees may not be refunded for cancellations after the 3 weeks allotted. There may be no refund in the rare event that a participant is sent home and not allowed to return for a serious or chronic behavioral problem.

In an effort to maintain the health and safety of our Education Department program participants and staff, please contact the Education Department prior to the start of the program should your child fall ill. In the event of an illness, the Education Department will work with program participants to find a suitable solution.

- **What happens if the Zoo is unable to run the program due to low attendance or inclement weather?** The Virginia Zoo reserves the right to cancel a session due to insufficient enrollment. In that case, you will receive a full refund. Should the Virginia Zoo close to the public, all Education Department programs scheduled to occur in that time frame will be cancelled, and all participants will be refunded in full. You may have the option to defer the payment to a future program within the program season instead of a refund. For all refund and cancellation questions, please contact the Virginia Zoo's Education Department at [vazoo.education@norfolk.gov](mailto:vazoo.education@norfolk.gov) or (757) 441-2374 ext. 227.
- **What time should we arrive for our program?** Please arrive 5-10 minutes before the program begins.
- **Where do I pick up and drop off my participant?** Check-in is in front of the Zoo, on the right-hand side by our Administration classroom (just past the giraffe statue). Look for staff members wearing blue shirts.
- **What do I do if we are running late?** Just call or text us! Our Education Department cell phone number is 757-536-4749.
- **What should my child bring?**
  - Water Bottle: Participants should **bring a refillable water bottle** with them.
  - Appropriate Attire:
    - While we will mostly be inside, it is possible that a portion of the program will include an outdoor activity.
    - **We recommend that our younger participants pack an additional change of clothes, just in case.**
    - You may want a light jacket in case your child gets cold indoors!

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- Camera: Your child is welcome to bring a camera to document their experience. **Cameras must be able to turn the flash feature off during animal encounters as flashes may startle or scare our animals.**
- **Can my child bring a phone or other technology with them?** Participants are highly encouraged to leave cell phones (unless using it to take pictures) and video game devices at home or in their bags during the program. Please note that the Virginia Zoo is not responsible for broken or lost items. **If technology becomes distracting, we will ask that your child leave the device at home during future programs.**
- **What does a typical program include?** Our programs include a variety of hands-on-activities and the chance to meet an animal related to the program theme.

After registration, you should receive a confirmation email with your booking receipt. Two weeks before your program, you will receive a reminder email from our staff with additional program details. If you have any additional questions, please contact us at [vazoo.education@norfolk.gov](mailto:vazoo.education@norfolk.gov) or at (757) 441-2374 ext. 227.