

# Field Trip Survival Guide

Please review all of the following information

## Arrival Instructions

Buses will be directed to the circle in front of the Chattanooga Zoo for unloading. Upon arrival, please designate one teacher to check in. Zoo staff will get on buses to instruct the designated teacher where to check in and provide rules for students and chaperones.

## Exact Numbers/Information Needed for Check-In

- Number of Students
  - We do **NOT** need updated numbers before your visit unless needed for checks and purchase orders provided by the school. We expect numbers to change slightly between registration and the day of your visit. Please have your updated number of students and chaperones upon arrival.
- Number of **Required Free** Chaperones
  - 1:5 ratio for Pre-K
  - 1:10 ratio for K-12<sup>th</sup> grade
  - Optional 1:1 ratio for Special Needs
  - We round up for chaperones so if you have 96 1<sup>st</sup> grade students, you will receive 10 free chaperones.

## Payment Information

- The school must have one payment for the group. We can accept cash, checks, credit cards, and purchase orders from the school. If you are paying with a purchase order, you will be **REQUIRED** to bring the purchase order from your school. All checks should be made payable to the Chattanooga Zoo.  
301 N Holtzclaw Ave  
Chattanooga, TN 37404

## Bus Information

- After unloading, buses will be asked to park underneath the 3rd street bridge.
- Bus driver admission is not free. Bus drivers can serve as one of the required chaperones that receive free admission.

## Additional Adults (outside of the required chaperone ratio)

- Additional adults, that are not school staff, will be required to purchase their tickets online.
- All additional adults will be **REQUIRED** to wait for their children **INSIDE** the zoo towards Wild Burger Cafe. This allows for our front plaza to be clear for students, teachers, and our day visitors.
- The circle in the front of the zoo is reserved for bus loading/unloading. Additional adults should park in the Zoo parking lots.

## Facilities Information

- Outside food is not allowed due to animal welfare purposes. If you plan to bring packed lunches, please keep the food on the bus or in a vehicle. There are picnic tables and green space just outside the zoo gates to allow for a picnic. These are public property and cannot be reserved.
- Restrooms are located just inside zoo gates, on the side of our Hiwassee Hellbender Research Facility, and by the Warner Park Ranch Petting Zoo.

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- Chaperones must accompany students at all times, including in the gift shop.
- The Chattanooga Zoo is completely ADA accessible for our visitors.
- The Chattanooga Zoo is sensory inclusive and is certified by Kulture City. If your students need resources, please notify our ticket booth upon arrival or any staff member when on grounds. Please note that supplies may be limited.

## Refund & Cancellation Policy

- Field trips and field trip programs are rain or shine. Please have your students dress accordingly. Contact the Education team to reschedule or cancel a field trip (423-654-7648 or [fieldtrips@chattzoo.org](mailto:fieldtrips@chattzoo.org)).
  - Please note that due to heavy volume, it can be difficult to reschedule a field trip, especially if it has an educational program reserved. We encourage you to keep your original date, especially in the months of October, April and May.
- We do not need updated numbers prior to your visit unless needed for checks or purchase orders provided by the schools. We expect numbers to change slightly between registration and the day of your visit.

## Education Programs

Education programs are an add-on to field trip visits and are an additional cost. Education programs range from 30-45 minutes in length and include an animal meet and greet. We ask that you arrive as a group for your program and line up just outside our Warner Park Education Building 10 minutes prior to your arrival time.

- In order to foster a learning environment
  - Each program slot allows for a maximum of two classes to join.
  - Only school staff/chaperones are allowed to join the program. Guardians & siblings are welcome to explore the zoo or wait outside the Education building at the provided picnic tables.
- If your group is 10 minutes late for your program, the Education department reserves the right to shorten your program time or cancel it with no refund.
- No food or drink is allowed during an education program, as it can be distracting to our animals.

## Behavior Contract

Dear Chaperones,

The Chattanooga Zoo hopes to make your field trip experience one that your students will enjoy and remember all year. Our goal is to create a learning environment that is enjoyable, educational, and safe for your students. Everyone shares in the responsibility of making your field trip a great experience. You and your students play a critical role by agreeing to respect the zoo's policies, animals, and other guests. Below is an outline of appropriate and expected behaviors. We appreciate your support.

## Expectations:

- Follow directions from zoo staff, teachers, and chaperones.
- Students are required to stay with a chaperone.
- If an educational program was reserved as an add-on, please arrive 10 minutes prior to your scheduled program time.
  - Any groups that arrive for their program later than 10 minutes, may have their program cut short or canceled with no refund.

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- Respect our animals.
  - o Do not feed animals.
  - o Do not tap on glass. Do not yell at animals or harass them.
  - o Give the free-roaming animals a respectful amount of space.
  - o Do not throw anything into animal habitats.
  - o Be mindful of volume both indoors and outdoors.
  - o No outside food is allowed. Lunches should remain on the bus or in vehicles. We have tables and green space just outside zoo gates to allow for picnics.
- Stay safe.
  - o Stay on pathways at all times.
  - o Do not climb or cross any barriers.
  - o Do not place any body parts into animal habitats.
  - o Use walking feet and keep body parts to yourself.
- Respect Zoo property.
  - o Please deposit trash into either recycle or trash bins.
  - o Do not vandalize zoo property in any way.
  - o Please leave the plants and native wildlife untouched.

## Consequences:

Management reserves the right to escort any individuals or groups off zoo grounds should their behavior be deemed inappropriate, disruptive, or unsafe. There are no refunds when individuals or groups are escorted off grounds due to their behavior. We will contact school/organization administration should there be any negative reports of behavior. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us via email ([fieldtrips@chattzoo.org](mailto:fieldtrips@chattzoo.org)) or via phone (423-654-7648).

We look forward to your visit!

Respectfully,

The Chattanooga Zoo Education Team