

SCHOOL PROGRAMS

FIELD TRIPS

Frequently Asked Questions

The Maryland Zoo offers FREE admission for Maryland school groups on a field trip when they pre-register!

Field trips must be booked at least 2 weeks before the desired visit date.



This grant-funded Free Field Trip Program is in effect from September 4, 2018, through June 14, 2019.

ELIGIBILITY

Are students always free at the Zoo?

Students in classes from Maryland schools, pre-schools, home schools, and Head Start programs enter the Zoo for free only if the teacher has pre-registered and received a confirmation email and *Field Trip Entry Pass*.

The free field trip program is in effect on regular school days during the school year.

Year-round schools and credit-bearing summer programs may be eligible for the program outside the normal date range. To find out if your summer class is eligible, contact

fieldtrips@marylandzoo.org.

RESERVING A FIELD TRIP

How do I register for a field trip through the Free Field Trip Program?

Follow these steps to reserve your field trip:

- 1) Read the Field Trip Program policies at marylandzoo.org/fieldtrippolicy.
- 2) Check the Field Trip Calendar online to see if your preferred date is available: marylandzoo.org/reservefieldtrip.
- 3) Complete the online reservation request form.
- 4) Print out the *Field Trip Entry Pass* that you receive with your field trip confirmation email and bring the form with you on the day of your visit.

Can I visit the Zoo to plan before I bring my students?

Yes! We invite teachers to prepare for their field trips by touring the Zoo in advance. To take advantage of a pre-planning visit, you will need to submit a reservation request and receive a *Planning Visit Entry Pass*. This *Entry Pass* gives free admission for the planning teacher only.

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PLANNING AHEAD

Chaperones

*How many chaperones **must** I bring?*

The Zoo requires a **minimum** of one (1) chaperone for every eight (8) students. A chaperone is any adult—teacher, instructional assistant, parent—on the field trip responsible for overseeing a group of children and for engaging them in learning.

*How many chaperones can I bring for **free**?*

As part of the Free Field Trip Program, the Zoo admits one (1) adult free for every eight (8) students in a group. In addition, the Zoo accommodates students with special needs by offering free admission for adults in the role of IEP-mandated 1:1 assistant. Zoo Members serving as chaperones may use their membership card to enter the Zoo free of charge. Please note that siblings or other children coming along on the field trip are NOT counted in the calculation for allotted free chaperones.

Lunch

What do we do with our lunches at the Zoo?

Many school groups bring their lunches to the Zoo. Please note that there is no storage available for lunches on Zoo grounds. Food can also be purchased at the Zoo. Keep in mind that in spring, lines for food purchases can be very long.

Where can we have lunch?

There are a number of places your group can have lunch on Zoo grounds. During spring, picnic tables are available on Celebration Hill (near the Main Gate). Small tables are also available in Zoo Central (the main concessions area), and at the Oasis, a smaller concessions area at the back of the Zoo. All seating is first-come, first-served. Some groups choose to picnic on benches throughout the Zoo or on grassy spots such as the hill next to *Polar Bear Watch*. Most groups opt to have lunch in smaller chaperone groups rather than as one large class or school to make it easier to find seating.

Educational Resources

How can I add an educational program to my visit?

Enrich your students' field trip experience with a supplemental program! Choose a Zoo Introduction assembly-style program, or more in-depth learning with a ZOOlab. To learn more, visit marylandzoo.org/Classes.

Are there any free resources I can use with my students?

Yes! You can choose from a number of free resources to help your class meet curriculum standards while enriching your visit to the Zoo. Visit marylandzoo.org/LearningResources.



FIELD TRIP TIP!

The Maryland Zoo is open rain or shine.

But a rainy day doesn't have to put a damper on your field trip!

You can still have an enjoyable day if you dress for the weather. Some of the animals are actually more active in the rain! Bring your raincoats and umbrellas and be sure to check out the Zoo's *Rainy Day Guide* at marylandzoo.org/RainyDay for tips on visiting on a wet day.

Please note that field trip fees cannot be refunded due to inclement weather.

MARYLAND ZOO

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AT THE ZOO

Parking

Where can we park at the Zoo? Is there a fee to park?

Parking at the Zoo is free. Those arriving by car should park in the main parking lot (Lot A). Buses can either park or drop off students in parking Lot C. Both lots are accessible from the main Zoo entrance.

Payment for Field Trip Fees

How do I pay for extra adults?

Extra adults in the group beyond the 8:1 free-chaperone ratio can receive a discounted admission rate of \$11 each **ONLY IF** you pay for them in one transaction at the Gate on the day of your visit. Payments can be made using cash, check, or credit card. Checks should be made payable to **The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore**. Please note that refunds for overpayments will **not** be issued, and overpayments cannot be used to pay for future visits.

Can parent chaperones bring along students' siblings on the field trip?

Siblings or other children joining a chaperone on a field trip may enter for a discounted rate of \$11 per child **ONLY IF** you pay for them in one transaction at the Gate on the day of your visit. Children under the age of two are always admitted free. Please note that siblings and other children attending with the field trip are NOT included in the calculation for the allotted number of free chaperones.

Can I get a refund if I overpaid?

Refunds for overpayments will not be issued and cannot be used to pay for future visits. Overpayments will be processed as a donation to The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore.

Zoo Shuttle

What is the difference between the train and the Zoo Shuttle?

The Zoo's train, the Jones Falls Zephyr, is a ride that winds through a portion of Zoo grounds. There is a cost to ride the train. The Zoo's Shuttle (free) carries guests from the Zoo's Main Gate to the center of the Zoo.

Can school groups ride the Shuttle?

School groups are strongly **discouraged** from riding the Shuttle into the Zoo due to large visitor volume, which leads to very long wait times. School groups will be directed to enter the center of the Zoo via the walking path. On their way out of the Zoo, school groups may choose to use the Zoo Shuttle or the walking path.



FIELD TRIP TIP!

Teachers receive a link to the **Zoo map** in their confirmation email.

You can also access a Zoo Map at this link: marylandzoo.org/FieldTripMap

Teachers should print at least one copy of the map for each chaperone.

Zoo maps will not be readily available for school groups on the day of their visit.