



Conservation Education

School Programs and Tours - Frequently Asked Questions

What is the chaperone policy?

The Saint Louis Zoo requires a minimum of one (1) adult chaperone for every ten (10) students. Adult chaperones must remain with the students at all times while on Zoo grounds.

During programs in the classrooms, a maximum of two adult chaperones (*one of whom must be the students' primary teacher*) will be permitted in the classroom(s) with any given group of 25 students. On tours, only two adults will be permitted with any given group of nine students. All other adults need to wait elsewhere during programs or tours.

Why can't all parent/chaperones participate in the classroom program or tour?

Programs and tours are for students and their learning. Additional adults are distracting to the learning environment and therefore they must wait elsewhere while the students enjoy their program or tour.

What if my student requires an aide or paraprofessional support?

When booking your program or tour, let the registrars know how many students will have an aide with them. Aides do not count toward the two-adult chaperone maximum in the classroom or tour. However, fire codes must be adhered to in the classroom space, so if the group is too large, additional programs may need to be booked.

Can we bring other students and/or siblings that are not part of the program or tour?

No. Students and/or siblings that are not the appropriate age for the booked program or tour cannot participate.

Why does the docent-led tour meet on Zoo grounds?

In order to have the highest-quality tour, we ask that the participants meet the docent on Zoo grounds, so the entire time may be spent conducting the learning experience itself, rather than taking travel time out of the tour time.

Why can I only book three of any specific tour topic, at any given time?

For crowd control and space restriction in any given area, only three of any given tour topic can be booked at any one time.

Are live animals part of your programs?

Live animals are not part of our programs. We will utilize appropriate biofacts (skulls, fur, feathers, etc.) for the program booked, as well as share stories and details of our Zoo animals. Depending upon the age group, we may utilize videos, pictures, activity stations, and more.

How do we book a behind-the-scenes tour?

Behind-the-scenes tours are booked through the Zoo's tours department and available for high school age and up. Visit <https://stlzoo.org/visit/behind-the-scenes-tours> for more information, including prices and group size limits.

What if there is severe weather the day of our visit?

In the event that your school and/or the Zoo is closed the day of your scheduled visit due to *severe weather*, we will try to reschedule your program/tour, or issue a full refund. That decision will be made no more than 24 hours in advance of your program, at the discretion of the Manager of Learning Experiences.

Where do buses park?

There is no bus parking on Zoo parking lots. Buses must have a permit to park in Forest Park, and will be assigned to a designated lot by the Parks Department. Parking permits are obtained by calling the Forest Park Permits Office at (314) 289-5330, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.- 4 p.m., or by completing an [application online](#). As soon as possible, but at least a *minimum* of two weeks prior to your visit, contact Forest Park for bus parking permits. Drivers will need to provide their name, name and address of school/organization, date of visit, and the number of buses arriving at the time of their request. Permits will be mailed. Any permits requested less than two weeks before the scheduled trip will need to be picked up at the permit office.

Where do buses drop us off?

All buses for Conservation Education programs drop off and pick up at the Zoo's North Entrance. During busy spring months, some buses may be directed to drop off at the South Entrance. Make sure your group is registered via our [group registration form](#) to receive the most up-to-date information.

Where should our chaperones park?

Limited free street parking is available in Forest Park. Paid parking is available on the North and South Parking Lots. Learn more at <https://stlzoo.org/visit/parking-and-maps> *Parking is not guaranteed for any groups' chaperones.*

Where can we store our lunches?

The Zoo does not have space to store lunches. Please be prepared to carry lunches in backpacks or wagons. Storage lockers are available at the north and south entrances for your convenience. Please see the rental desks for more information.

Where can we eat our lunches?

Sack lunches may be eaten at any of the outdoor locations in the Zoo. Please see our [picnic map](#) for suggested group lunch seating locations. Plan appropriately for weather.

What is the EVOLV system?

EVOLV is the Zoo's security screening system designed to detect concealed weapons. All guests must pass through the system. Large bags, wagons, coolers, backpacks, and purses may require a bag search after passing through the detection system. [Plan for extra time to get through the security screening](#), particularly during busy field trip times.

A full list of Zoo Rules and Regulations can be found [here](#).