

Group Policies & Procedures

These policies only apply to self-guided groups. Groups visiting with an education program will have separate policies to follow. All other zoo policies (listed online, on zoo grounds, and/or relayed by a zoo employee/representative apply.

How can I book a field trip?

- You can book a **self-guided** field trips on the zoo's website (<https://www.rwpzoo.org/groups/>).
 - Any trips with an education program must be arranged directly with the Education Department.
- Visit any time during the zoo's [hours of operation](#), which vary seasonally.

What are the group rates?

RWPZ provides the following discounted group rates to parties with 10 or more paying guests:

- Adult: \$20.00
 - Please note, this group rate is not available to chaperones paying separately, who would instead admit at the general adult admission rate of \$22.00 each.
- Child (ages 2-12): \$14.00
- Seniors (ages 62+): \$16.00

Can I get an extra discount?

Providence schools: Roger Williams Park Zoo is owned by the City of Providence, and so Providence residents do pay taxes that help fund the Zoo. As a thank you for supporting us, Providence School K-12 students receive complimentary admission during the school year only (September – June) when visiting with a Providence elementary, middle, or high school. Under these terms, students admit free and one chaperone for every ten students also receives complimentary admission. Any additional chaperones above the 1:10 ratio will be charged the adult group rate, due at time of visit. Because it is through the City of Providence, this agreement is only valid for Providence and therefore cannot be extended to any other school networks.

Non-profit or low-income schools: Sadly, we do not have the endowments to distribute discounted or complimentary admission to any organizations.

Groups with guests who have special needs: Groups visiting with those who have special needs will be able to admit using our special needs rate. Under this rate, every special needs guest admits for just \$14.00 each. For every 10 special needs guests, one adult chaperone will receive complimentary admission. Additional chaperones will be able to admit for just \$14.00 each. If a chaperone is needed as a medical caretaker or as a required 1:1 aide, they will receive complimentary admission. Do keep in mind that for the safety and comfort of all, special needs groups are required to have 1 adult chaperone for every 5 guests.

Do chaperones admit free? What's your chaperone policy?

Chaperone ratios are designed with safety and security in mind. For that reason, Roger Williams Park Zoo insists **all** groups must follow the policy below:

- Groups with children age 8 and above: We require one adult chaperone for every ten students. That chaperone receives complimentary admission.
- Groups with children under age 8 OR groups for those with special needs: For the safety and comfort of all, these groups are required to have 1 adult chaperone for every 5 guests. However, complimentary admission is still limited to just 1 adult for every 10 students/special needs guests. Each remaining chaperone will admit at the adult group rate.
- A chaperone must be 18 years of age or older. High school students attending with their schools cannot serve as chaperones, even if they are 18 years of age. For this reason, all high school students (regardless of age) must be chaperoned by a non-student adult.
- Students must remain with their chaperones at all times. Students are not allowed to roam the zoo unattended.

Code of Conduct?

1. Respect the animals: Treat animals kindly- please do not feed, chase, or harass the animals.
2. Respect other people: Treat fellow guests, Zoo staff, and volunteers with courtesy and respect. Any form of harassment (verbal or physical), discrimination, or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.
3. No smoking or vaping: For the health and safety of our visitors and animals, smoking and vaping are not permitted anywhere within the Zoo grounds.
4. Chaperones are responsible for their group's conduct.: Groups with chaperones are responsible for the conduct and well-being of their members. Chaperones must be trained to assist with any needs within the group, including emergencies and ensuring all members follow Zoo rules. Chaperones must stay with their groups at all times.
5. Emergency Procedures: Familiarize yourself with emergency procedures and follow instructions from Zoo staff in case of an emergency:
 - a. Listen to Announcements: Pay attention to any announcements made over the public address system. These announcements will provide important information and instructions in case of emergencies.
 - b. Orient Yourself with Maps: Familiarize yourself with the Zoo's layout and locate emergency exits, first aid stations, and designated assembly points on the map provided at the entrance. Maps are also available at various points throughout the Zoo, and on our website for your convenience.
 - c. Be Aware of Your Surroundings: Stay alert and mindful of your surroundings at all times. Report any unusual activities or hazards to Zoo staff immediately.
 - d. Follow Instructions: In the event of an emergency, follow instructions given by Zoo staff or emergency responders promptly and calmly. This may include evacuation procedures or sheltering in place depending on the nature of the emergency.
 - e. Stay Informed: Keep updated on weather conditions if outdoors and be prepared to take appropriate action in case of severe weather alerts.
6. Proper attire is required: To maintain a family-friendly environment, appropriate attire is required. This includes wearing shirts and shoes. Swimwear is only permitted in designated water play areas.
7. No unauthorized solicitation: Solicitation or distribution of pamphlets and materials is strictly prohibited within the Zoo premises, without prior approval from administration.
8. Help us keep our Zoo clean: Help us keep the Zoo clean and eco-friendly by disposing of trash and recyclables in designated bins throughout the campus. Your efforts contribute to conservation efforts and sustainability initiatives at the Zoo.
9. Photography and Videography: Feel free to capture your memories but respect the privacy of other guests. Commercial photography and filming require prior approval.
10. Obey Signs and Barriers: Follow all posted signs, barriers, and guidelines for your safety and the well-being of the animals.
11. Banned items: The following items are prohibited within the Zoo premises:
 - a. Illegal drugs and outside alcohol
 - b. Rollerblades, skates, skateboards, scooters, or similar recreational devices
 - c. Balloons, drones, weapons, and other items that pose a risk to the well-being of animals or guests
 - d. Tripods may be restricted during special events

Any guest found violating the code of conduct will be requested to adjust their behavior. Should the behavior persist, the guest may be asked to leave the Zoo grounds.

When is payment due?

- Full admission is due at time of visit and is to be paid in one lump sum.
- Groups only pay for the actual number of attendees on the day of your visit, so do not worry if your final numbers change from your estimates on the reservation form.
- Payment is accepted in the form of checks, credit cards, or cash.

- Make checks payable to the Rhode Island Zoological Society. Returned checks incur an additional \$25 fee. If possible, do not fill in check amount until visit day, when cashier calculates final cost.
- **Purchase orders will not be accepted.**
- All overpayments will be refunded in the form of a check and will take 3-4 weeks to process.

What if some students have a zoo membership?

- To enter the zoo on a family membership, an adult cardholder must be present and show a membership card with matching photo ID. Please keep in mind the child cannot redeem the member benefits if the cardholder is not present.
- Parents who are admitting themselves and/or their children on a zoo membership should also plan on staying for the zoo visit to ensure the group maintains proper chaperone ratios.
- Those admitting on a zoo membership will not count toward the minimum 10 paid guests required to earn the group rate.

What do I need to know for the day of my visit?

- Only the group leader should enter the admissions line. The group leader should know the exact headcount and have payment in hand prior to entering the line.
- Security will be on grounds to assist with bus parking. At time of arrival, buses will be directed toward the main entrance plaza for passenger drop-off. Security will then direct and assist buses with parking in a designated on-grounds location.

Do you offer rain dates? What if it's raining when I visit?

The zoo is open rain or shine, so we do not reserve rain dates. If your trip needs to be postponed, [contact Group Sales](#) prior to your arrival time and we will be happy to reschedule your visit. We do not issue refunds or rainchecks.

- RWPZ makes every effort to be open rain or shine, but extreme weather conditions may call for unexpected closures. While these unexpected closures are infrequent, RWPZ does reserve the right to close the zoo for any reason, including current or forecasted weather conditions. These closures will be posted on the Zoo's website and social media accounts as soon as they are announced. When possible, we will make an effort to reach out to guests but sometimes this is not possible. Please be sure to always check our website before your visit for the most accurate announcements.

Is there a place to eat lunch?

- Groups are welcome to bring their own lunches onto zoo grounds.
 - Please note, there is no public storage or refrigeration, so students will want to plan on carrying their lunches with them.
 - Alternatively, groups can also purchase catered meals or boxed lunches from the zoo's catering partner. Please ask for more information.
- The Zoo does have picnic tables and public eating spaces spread throughout the Zoo. They are available on a first-come, first-serve basis and during peak times, can fill quickly. **To guarantee you a great place to eat, the zoo does accept private venue reservations for a small fee.** A large, covered eating space in our Event Tent would accommodate a group of your size and could be rented for an added fee (\$200* for 90 minutes; accommodates up to 80 guests at a time). Trips visiting with a school receive a discounted rate of \$150! Advanced registration is required, so be sure to contact the Group Sales Department to lock in your request.

NEW IN 2025: I heard that the *Return of the Dinosaurs* exhibit is coming to the zoo. Tell us more!

For those who don't know, *Return of the Dinosaurs* is a limited time exhibit that will be at our zoo in 2025, taking place from April 6th through August 10th! As you trek through the wilderness you'll encounter a variety of different Dinosaurs, ranging from curious herbivores to giant predators that used to roam the world. As students explore the trail, they'll learn all about the long-lost stories of these ancient creatures, in addition to the secret of their return!

These life-sized displays & interactive experiences will encourage guests to explore their imaginations & imagine what life was like back in the prehistoric days. Don't miss out on a wild time – book today to explore the past!

- Visitors must purchase daytime zoo admission to enter zoo grounds, plus a separate *Dinos* ticket to enjoy the *Return of the Dinosaurs* exhibit. *Return of the Dinosaurs* tickets are sold both online or can be added to a field trip reservation. There is limited capacity, so be sure to reserve your tickets as soon as possible!

Groups SAVE! Save \$2 on each ticket when you buy 10+ *Dinos* tickets in a single order. This drops the price to just \$7 per guest.

- The price is the same for adults and children. Every child ages 2 and older requires a ticket.
- Since this is a special zoo feature, normal group policies may not apply. There are no complimentary chaperone admissions to *Dinos* and Providence School students do not admit free.
- School groups enjoy an even more adventurous discount when visiting between April 6th and June 26th! During this time, *Dinos* tickets are available for just \$5 per person when purchasing a minimum of 10 tickets, our greatest savings!

Ready to buy? Log onto rwpzoo.org if you'd like to buy your *Dinos* tickets online, in advance. The group discount will automatically apply after you have added 10 or more paid tickets to your card and advance to the next screen.

- After buying tickets, immediately distribute tickets to chaperones. Please do this prior to visiting the zoo, as groups will not be able to gather or hold at the feature's entrance.
- Tickets can also be added to your field trip reservation and paid for upon your arrival. School groups enjoying the \$5 discounted rate are required to purchase their tickets as part of a field trip reservation, to verify eligibility.
- Note: *Return of the Dinosaurs* also has family-friendly rides available on-site. These weather-permitting rides are a separate add-on and ride tickets are sold during your visit.
- Interested in learning more? Visit rwpzoo.org and search "*Dinos*" to access the general information page.

Additional notes: RWPZ is undergoing construction to bring new opportunities, programming and exhibits to zoo grounds. During this time, you may see a limited number of areas temporarily closed for renovation.