

PREPARATION FOR ZOO CAMP PROGRAMMING

COMMUNICATION

- Please ensure that we have the correct caregiver email address and phone number in CampBrain to receive important logistics information and to reach you in case of an emergency.
- Logistics emails are typically sent the Friday before the week of the program.

WHAT TO BRING

- Dress in comfortable clothing that you don't mind getting a little dirty. Closed-toe shoes are recommended for all campers and required for teen programming.
- All participants should bring a reusable water bottle. Please label all personal items. Participants are expected to keep track of their own items. **The Birmingham Zoo is not responsible for lost items.**

WHAT NOT TO BRING

- We recommend not bringing personal items such as electronics, game cards, money, jewelry, collectables, etc. in case of loss or damage.
 - Exceptions for sensory needs or personal items such as fidgets may be granted with prior notice to Zoo Learning Department staff.
- Fireworks, lighters, and other dangerous or illegal items are not permitted and will result in immediate suspension.
- **Any inappropriate items will be confiscated and returned to caregivers at the end of the day. Repeated violation may result in suspension from Zoo camp programming.**

A DAY AT ZOO CAMP PROGRAMMING

Check-In Procedures: Check-in for campers will occur at the Children's Zoo Gate.

- Check-in occurs between **8:30 and 9:00 am**.
- When you arrive at the Zoo, head to the right end of the main parking lot and park your vehicle.
- Exit the vehicle with your camper and their belongings and head towards the Children's Zoo Gate.

- Enter the check in line that corresponds with the **first letter of your last name**.
- On your **FIRST** day of camp, a camp staff member will double check your registration information, ensure your camper has everything they need for the day, give them a wristband that displays their camper number and camp group, and a volunteer will escort your camper into the correct classroom.

Check-out Procedures: Check out for campers will occur at the Children's Zoo Gate

- Check out is between **3:30 and 4:00 pm**
- When you arrive at the Zoo, head to the right end of the main parking lot and park your vehicle.
- Exit the vehicle and head towards the children's zoo gate.
- Enter the check-out line that corresponds with the **first letter of your last name**.
- Give the staff member your child's name, your ID, and they will be escorted out to you. Please remember to always bring a photo ID and sign out your participant for check-out.

Important Information Regarding Check in and Out

- **If you arrive after 9:00 am, please call 205-910-0907** for a staff member to meet you by the "Teacher Check-in" booth to the far right of the parking lot. This is the best location to meet us. Please do not go to the main entrance for late arrivals, especially since the main entrance is closed Monday-Tuesday.
- If you need to pick up your camper early, **you may do so up until 3:00 pm**. For early pick-ups, please call **205-910-0907** for a staff member to meet you by the "Teacher Check-in" booth to the far right of the parking lot.
 - **Please note:** The Zoo is a large campus, and activities take place throughout the Zoo. It may take staff up to 15 minutes to gather a participant's items and get them up to the pick-up location after you arrive. Thank you in advance for your patience.
- **Participants may not be checked in or out anywhere other than the "Teacher Check-in" booth in the far right of the parking lot.**
 - **If you would like to stay inside the Zoo after picking up your child, you must pick them up from the Children's Zoo gate and re-enter the Zoo through the main entrance. Please DO NOT attempt to pick up the child from inside the Zoo.**

- **Staff may ask for ID at any time during pick-up and the name on the ID must match a name provided on the approved pick-up list or the participant will not be permitted to leave with the individual until verbal confirmation is received from authorized persons/guardians over the phone.** You can add pick-up authorizations throughout the camp week by logging into your Campbrain account or emailing education@birminghamzoo.com.
- If you need any reasonable accommodations, please email education@birminghamzoo.com to discuss. All accommodations must be requested in writing.

SUPERVISION & SAFETY

- All Zoo staff and volunteers are screened as part of the hiring and onboarding process. In addition to full-time and seasonal staff, trained teen and adult volunteers will assist in Learning Department programming.
- Class sizes average 12-15 students per teacher, supported by up to 4 volunteers.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

- All program participants are expected to behave in a safe, respectful, and courteous manner. In the event of behavioral concerns, staff are trained to contact a leader in the Learning Department to act as program principal and consult with whomever is needed. Further action may include removing the participant from programming, seeking sensory aids, moving participants to another group, early dismissal, or removal from the program.
- **Depending on the severity of the incident, caregivers may be contacted immediately, at the end of the day, or upon request by the caregiver for an update on their participant's behavior. The Birmingham Zoo reserves the right to remove a participant from programming at any time, and those involved may not be given a refund.**

LUNCH & SNACKS

- Caregivers are required to pack an allergen-free daily lunch for their camper or teen. Limited options for a daily snack will be provided by the Zoo to all participants. Please pack a snack for your camper if you think they may be a picky eater.
- Please make us aware of any allergies during the registration and/or check-in process. For the safety of all campers, teens, staff, and volunteers, the Birmingham Zoo Learning

Department strongly discourages individuals from bringing lunches or snacks that contain common allergens such as nuts.

- **If you have a concern with your child being around a food allergen, please contact the Learning staff prior to your child's first day at camp to discuss necessary actions.**

ANIMAL CONTACT

- For the safety of all, participants will not have direct contact with Zoo animals except as part of a planned encounter program (e.g. Children's Zoo contact yard, lorikeet feeding, or giraffe feeding) or as a part of a specialty program (e.g. within some of the Careers and Conservation).
- Participants will have opportunities to have up-close encounters with some of our Ambassador Animals to enrich their experience, but these will not include touching.

WELLBEING & SAFETY

- The Birmingham Zoo's Learning and Engagement Department takes the safety and wellbeing of our campers, teens, staff and animals very seriously. While we cannot ensure 100% protection from exposure to illness, Zoo Camp and the Careers & Conservation program at the Birmingham Zoo follow guidelines issued by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), American Camp Association (ACA), Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) and Jefferson County Department of Health (JCDH) to assist in providing the safest environment possible. Caregivers are asked to review this document closely and email any questions to education@birminghamzoo.com

PRIOR TO ATTENDING

- We request that families and staff self-monitor all members of their household for signs and symptoms prior to attending Zoo Camp or Conservation & Careers. Any camper, teen, or staff member showing multiple signs of contagious illness or anyone who has been in close contact with another person with confirmed or active contagious illness will not be allowed to participate in Zoo Camp or Conservation & Careers.
 - **Signs of potential illness risk include:** congestion, runny nose, cough, fever, chills, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea.

HEALTH MONITORING

- All Birmingham Zoo Learning Department staff and counselors supervise campers and teens throughout the day. If a child, teen, or staff member develops concerning health symptoms or a fever above 100.4, caregivers will be called to pick them up as soon as possible. Those symptomatic or exposed should follow up with a medical professional or CDC guidance as required.
 - **Please Note:** Caregivers should inform the Zoo immediately if a camper, teen, or family member is diagnosed with COVID-19, flu, or other serious illness up to a week after attending Zoo programming.
- As of 2025, a camper or teen who has a confirmed illness prior to or during camp may attend or return to camp based on criteria provided by current CDC guidance. This may include a requirement to wear a high-quality face mask. Zoo credits will be offered for use within one year if a participant is unable to return to their program as a result of a confirmed and documented serious illness, provided to Zoo Learning Department staff within less than 2-weeks of their session dates. Further detail is provided in sections on Camp Refund and Credit Policy.
- In the event a participant or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19 or the flu, all individuals from that group will be notified. Families may reference current CDC guidelines for next steps, masking, or testing recommendations for “close contacts” or “exposed individuals.” In the event of multiple confirmed diagnoses of COVID-19 or the flu in a single week, affected groups’ programming may be cancelled to allow staff to self-quarantine.

SOCIAL GROUPINGS

- Each group will generally include the same participants and staff for the entire week. Classrooms or outdoor learning spaces will contain no more than 40 individuals (up to 30 campers, 2 staff, 8 volunteers) at any given time. To ensure that all participants receive age-appropriate opportunities, develop social and emotional learning skills, and make new friends, they are placed into groups based on age. In some circumstances, or based on staff discretion, participants may be moved to a new group during the week.
- While placing participants together in a group can never be guaranteed, if you feel that your participant will need accommodation to support them in their learning environment, please contact education@birminghamzoo.com 2 weeks prior to session dates. This

includes requests to be placed with another participant or have a caregiver with them, either for their safety or to accommodate special or physical needs.

ALLERGY ALERT

- All allergies should be disclosed on the participant's medical form and followed up via email to education@birminghamzoo.com or verbal confirmation upon program check-in. **Please indicate if food allergies are environmental or ingestion-only, as well as any symptoms that may occur if exposed.**
 - **Please Note:** the Birmingham Zoo uses nuts and nut products for animal diet purposes. Traces of nuts or nut products may be found in areas where animal feedings are conducted and in areas where animal demonstrations are performed. Despite our best efforts, we cannot guarantee your child will not be exposed to an allergen.
- In the Learning and Engagement Department, allergen safety precautions include:
 - Educators trained to recognize the physical characteristics that indicate an allergic reaction is occurring and proper responses to take when a student has a reaction.
 - Educators trained to properly use EpiPen.
 - Educators will not offer students any food containing nuts or nut products, and all participants will be discouraged from bringing snacks/lunches containing nuts or nut products.

MEDICAL POLICY & PROCEDURES

- Staff will administer First Aid for minor scrapes, cuts, bumps, and insect bites. Updates may be available to adults who request information in the pickup process.
- Children who are visibly ill or have exhibited signs of a contagious illness, including a rash or fever, within the past 72 hours should not attend camp. Caregivers will be notified immediately if a child becomes ill

Medications:

- If your child needs any type of OTC or prescription medication while at the Zoo, a single dose should be brought in a labeled, clear plastic bag with the medication box/label. Non-

emergency meds will be kept in a lock box in the Manager of Learnings Office and will be distributed to the child at the timeframe the guardian schedules.

- Emergency Meds (ex: epi pens or inhalers): If your child requires any kind of emergency or lifesaving medication, you will have two options.
 - **One:** If the child knows how to use their medication and is able to show camp staff proficiency of use, they will be allowed to keep their medications on them during the camp day. These meds **MUST** be kept in an easily accessible, wearable bag for the child (i.e. fanny back, purse, crossbody bag etc.).
 - **Two:** If your child does **NOT** know how to use their emergency medication **OR** the guardian prefers staff to hold on to it through the day, staff will collect meds and place them into a red bag to be carried by the staff leading your camper's group.

Please Note: Birmingham Zoo staff are not fully trained medical professionals and will contact emergency responders immediately in the event of a medical crisis. If you have specific questions or concerns regarding medication needs or emergency medical procedures, please reach out to us to discuss appropriate accommodations and protocols.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

- Additional rules and regulations may be reflected in the participant forms completed during the registration process in CampBrain. All forms are required to be completed in order to register for camps.
- Class size is limited and is filled on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Registration closes one (1) week in advance of each seasonal program. Registration must be completed online and cannot be completed at the Zoo.
- No make-up days will be allowed for missed days.
- Participants must be picked up during the pick-up window. A late fee of \$50 per individual will be incurred every 15 minutes after 4:00pm that a camper remains at the Zoo.
- Falsification of any information (example: participant age or membership) will result in dismissal without a refund. A copy of a birth certificate or other age or grade-level verification may be requested at any time.
- Any credit offered must be used within a 12-month period.
- If your child has special needs for learning or access, please discuss them with the Zoo's Learning Staff in advance so that we can help make the experience a success.

- All campers must be fully toilet-trained and able to use the restroom independently.
- Participation in Zoo Camp and Conservation & Careers at the Birmingham Zoo grants permission for the Zoo to use photos, videos and other images of the participant in promotional materials, including on the website.
- All rules and guidelines will be strictly enforced.

CREDIT AND REFUND POLICY

PAYMENT

- Full Payment is due prior to attending Zoo Camp or Conservation & Careers.
- Members may use their member discount to receive discounted pricing for camps.
- Those who opt into the payment plan may not change the due date of the plans. **A \$25.00-dollar non-refundable fee will be applied at check out when opting for the payment plans.**

ORGANIZATION CANCELLATION

- Any camp program canceled by Birmingham Zoo entitles participants to a full refund. A credit may also be issued if the registrant requests one.
- Birmingham Zoo Camp and Conservation & Careers programs are conducted rain or shine. Programs may be canceled due to inclement weather.

REGISTRANT CANCELLATION (If the registrant cancels their programming):

- If a participant cannot attend their scheduled program and notice is made on or before 2 weeks from the start of their program week, a full refund may be requested. An individual may also request a credit to be used within 12 months of being issued.
- If a participant cannot attend their scheduled program and notice is made within 2 weeks from the start of their program week, the participant will receive a credit to be used within

12 months of being issued. A full refund is not available within the two weeks of the start of a program.

- When space is available AND notice is provided at least 2 weeks from the start of the scheduled program, a participant may be transferred to another camp session of equal or lesser value. Transfer requests are based on availability and cannot be guaranteed. All transfer and change requests must be emailed to education@birminghamzoo.com at least two weeks prior to the original session start date to be considered.

REGISTRANT CANCELLATION – SERIOUS ILLNESS:

- Zoo credits equal to the value of missed days will be available for use within one year for Zoo Camp or Conservation & Careers participants who are unable to attend due to their own confirmed and documented COVID-19 illness, flu, or other serious injury.

REGISTRANT CANCELLATION – WEATHER:

- Birmingham Zoo programs are conducted rain or shine. However, programs may be canceled due to severely inclement weather. If Birmingham Zoo cancels a program, a full refund or credit will be issued to the registrant according to their preference.
- If Birmingham Zoo proceeds with programming, but a participant is unable to attend due to severely inclement weather, they should notify the Zoo 24 hours in advance, if possible, or as soon as possible otherwise. **In the instance that notice is provided prior to the program's start, the Zoo will issue a credit for the missed day.** The credit is available for use within one year. **A full refund is not available in this circumstance.**