

Farm Explorers

School or Group Program

For any booking questions, modifications or cancellations, please contact our booking office directly:

Phone **780-442-1442**
Email **cmsschoolbookings@edmonton.ca**

Field Trip Preparation

Adult Supervisors

Adult supervisors are required to attend with your group in accordance with the following ratios:

- Preschool: 1 adult per 3 children
- K – Grade 6: 1 adult per 5 children
- Grades 7 – 12: 1 adult per 10 children

These adults are included in your program fees. If you are unable to find the required number of adult supervisors for your group, please notify us.

Please inform adult supervisors that they may be asked to help out with group activities and that they are there to supervise the group. With young children, it is helpful to have your students arranged into smaller groups assigned to a parent helper leader before the program begins. You and your adult helpers' encouragement and active participation in all activities will help to make this learning experience a truly positive one for your students! Adult supervisors should not be bringing younger children (e.g. babies in strollers) to the program. We want all parent volunteers to be focused on supervising the children in the program.

Group Size

- The maximum number of **children** permitted in a program is 30. Groups exceeding 30 children must book an additional program(s).
- The **maximum number of individuals** (adult supervisors and children) permitted in a single program is 40. Groups exceeding 40 individuals in total must book an additional program(s).
- To ensure a high quality program we recommend that all children participating in a program be within the age range advertised for the program.

Additional adults and/or children exceeding the maximum group size or supervisory ratio cannot take part in the program, but can pay regular admission and tour the Zoo

on their own (only during the Zoo's regular hours of operation). The additional individuals can rejoin your group once the guided program is over.

Name Tags

Please have your students wear name tags; this helps the interpreter acknowledge the students by name.

Special Needs

Please inform your interpreter, in advance of the program, about students with: learning disabilities, physical disabilities, medical concerns (including allergies*), or behavioural issues. Please also indicate any strategies you use with students to help them have success in the classroom.

Program content and activity locations can be adjusted, if necessary, to accommodate students with special needs.

Please advise your interpreter of any allergies your students have or indicate any allergy concerns at the time of bookings. The Zoo is **not a nut-free or fragrance-free facility, as many animals eat seeds and nuts as part of their diet, and receive daily enrichments that may include scents (including extracts and spices). Common allergens encountered at the zoo include fur, feathers, dust, pollen, straw, and hay.*

Clothing

Please prepare your students to spend time outdoors; advise them (and adult supervisors) to dress appropriately for the weather. A portion of the program will be conducted outdoors regardless of the. Your interpreter may allow for more indoor time during inclement weather.

Before You Arrive at the Zoo

For zoo programs, it is usually a good idea to go over some basic ground rules and expectations for behaviour for the field trip. Some suggestions:

1. Keep with the group at all times (sometimes a buddy system or dividing the kids into small groups each with an adult leader is helpful).
2. Keep fingers out of the enclosures and do not climb on the fences. Sometimes the animal may not know the difference between a yummy snack and someone's fingers.

3. Don't try to touch an animal unless the interpreter says it's okay for the same reason given above. There may be some chances for encounters and touching animals but let the leader tell you when it is an appropriate time for that.
4. Anything else you think may be necessary to ensure appropriate behaviour from your class. The interpreter will review these rules at the start of the program and add anything s/he thinks is necessary

What to Bring

1) Appropriate Clothing and Footwear

Please make sure your students (and adults) dress for the weather as some of the activities will take place outdoors. It is important to dress for hot sunny weather (hat, sunscreen, bug spray) as well as cold or wet weather (jacket, extra sweater, raincoat, hat, mitts, snow boots, and appropriate footwear). For hot sunny days, we also recommend that each participant brings a refillable water bottle.

For your group's safety and comfort while walking around the zoo, we recommend comfortable, closed-toed footwear.

2) Are You Staying at the Zoo For Lunch?

There are no guaranteed or designated spaces for eating lunches or for storing lunch totes or backpacks before/during/after your program. We recommend that each participant carries his/her own lunch, snacks, and water bottle with him/her in a backpack at all times. The Zoo is not responsible for lost or missing items that are left unattended.

The Zoo's indoor classroom program spaces are reserved for school and group programs throughout the day, and are unavailable for your class or group as a lunch location.

There are a number of outdoor grassy and picnic areas within the Zoo that can be used for lunch, as well as some indoor public areas that can be used as temporary lunch locations in inclement weather. All of these public locations are first-come, first-serve. Please ask your interpreter for suggested locations when s/he calls to confirm your program, or at the end of your program.

Schools and groups are responsible for cleaning up after themselves, ensuring that all garbage and recyclable containers are deposited in the correct bins (garbage bins or blue recycling bins).

3) Classroom or Group Activity Sheets/Workbooks

You are welcome to bring any worksheets or notebooks for students to fill out during your program. Please let your interpreter know in advance if you would like him/her to include any information specific to these worksheet activities during your program.

4) Are You Coming For an Evening Program?

You may wish to have members of your group bring their own flashlights during the fall/winter/spring, as there is minimal lighting at the Zoo once the sun has set. Please refer to the section on “Evening / After-Hours Program Procedures” below for additional information.

What Not to Bring

For health and safety considerations of both humans and animals, we ask that you do not bring into the Zoo:

- o Balloons and kites
- o Sparklers and other fireworks
- o Pets or other animals*
- o Your own BBQs or indoor grills (for preparing food on-site)
- o Your own fruits, vegetables, and other food items to donate to the Zoo for the animals or for feeding the animals
- o Bicycles, children’s scooters, or inline skates (for use and/or lock-up)

*Service dogs that are accompanying persons with disabilities are permitted. Please be prepared to present your documentation for your service dog to the cashiers at the front gate. Service dogs without appropriate certification will not be permitted to enter the Zoo.

Interpreter Contact

The interpreter assigned to lead your program will contact you (the main contact person who booked the program) at least 48 hours prior to your field trip to confirm details with you. If you have not heard from your interpreter within 48 business hours and have questions about your program, please call the program coordinator at 780-496-3924.

Please note: the interpreter will contact you by calling the primary phone number(s) you provided at the time of booking, and will leave a message if they are unable to reach you. They may also try to contact you by email. If you wish to leave an alternate phone number where you can be reached during the daytime or evening, please ask the booking agent to include this number as a “note for the interpreter”.

- **If you have booked multiple classes/groups for multiple programs**, only the person listed as the primary contact for these will be contacted.
- **If you have booked programs on behalf of other teachers or groups**, please pass along any information provided by the interpreter to the adult supervisors who will be accompanying the group(s).

- **If you will not be attending the field trip yourself but are listed as the program contact**, please inform the interpreter when they call. If possible, please also provide the name(s) of the supervisors who will be accompanying the group at the time of booking.

Payment & Cancellation Procedures

Payment

- The amount owing is shown on your program confirmation. Payment is required prior to the program.
- Invoices are mailed out by the City on the first of the month. As you are required to pay your invoice on the first day of the previous month, you will receive your invoice before your program runs. For example, for a June booking, you will be mailed your invoice May 1.
- Payment can be made by cash, cheque, Visa, MasterCard and American Express. Please have cheques made payable to The City of Edmonton, and write your booking confirmation numbers on your cheques.
- Payment can be made at the facility, by calling 311 (outside Edmonton: 780-442-5311) or by mail to Citizen Services Payment Processing, PO Box 2359, 14th Floor CN, Edmonton AB, T5J 2R7

Program Cancellation

- You are required to provide written notice of cancellation of programs via email at cmsschoolbookings@edmonton.ca.
- Cancellations with 8 - 30 days' notice are subject to a fee of 50% of the program cost.
- Programs cancelled with less than 7 days' notice will be charged the full program fee.
- **Programs run rain or shine. In the event of poor weather, you must call 780-442-1442 or email cmsschoolbookings@edmonton.ca if you are not coming.**

Arrival Procedures

Your interpreter will meet you in the main plaza of the Zoo for the start of your program. If you will be arriving at the zoo for a program prior to the time that the zoo opens to the public, you can wait in the plaza if the gates are open, or you can wait just outside the gates if they are still closed.

We recommend that you organize your group(s) on the bus before disembarking.

If you will be arriving at the zoo and doing a self-guided tour prior to your program start time, please return to the plaza area to meet your interpreter at the program start time. The zoo is generally open 9 - 4 until Thanksgiving then 10 - 4 until the May long weekend. Check the [website for hours](#).

Admission is included in your program fees. We strongly recommend touring the Zoo before and/or after your scheduled program to make a whole day out of your field trip.

Evening / After-Hours Programs

You will be able to do the same or similar types of activities as you would during a day-time program. Please be aware that there is minimal lighting within the Zoo grounds, and that during the fall, winter, and early spring, some animals in outdoor enclosures will be considerably less visible at night. Participants are welcome and encouraged to bring their own flashlights that can be used for outdoor activities during an evening program.

You will meet your interpreter just outside the front gate of the Zoo at the scheduled program start time. Please be aware that the Zoo gate may be locked if you arrive early. Your interpreter will bring your group through an alternate door.

Please ensure that all members of your group arrive a little early or on time, since your interpreter will need to lock the gate once your group is inside the Zoo. If you are anticipating any late arrivals, please inform your interpreter so that s/he can wait until all members of the group have arrived, at which time the program can begin. Alternately, we recommend providing members of the group with your personal cell phone number, so that they can call you upon their arrival at the Zoo. Your group can then head to the front gate to meet them.

No member of your group can wander around the zoo on their own after-hours. Your group must stay together with your interpreter.

At the end of your program, your interpreter will lead you back to the plaza area where there is an after-hour exit. Members of your group cannot remain in the facility after the program end time. If members of your group are being picked up by parents after the program, please let parents know in advance that the gate will be locked, and that they will need to wait at the front gate for the group to exit the zoo.

Program Information

Spend some time at our Urban Farm to learn more about domestic animals! Children will have the opportunity to Get Closer to our farm animals, learn how they provide useful products such as milk and wool and meet some animals up close. You will also be introduced to some of our resident wild species at the zoo to learn the difference between domestic and wild animals and how humans can safely interact with both.

Program Objectives

1. Introduce students to domestic animals.
2. Have a chance to learn the human-domestic animal relationship in terms of a farming environment.
3. Compare and contrast domestic animals to wild species
4. Hands-on learning of traditional farming practices
5. Encourage attitudes of respect and concern for animals and their environment.

Curriculum Links

This program is very adaptable and can be tailored to meet the needs of any class. We can accommodate a specific theme or learning objective as part of your program. If you have anything you want included in the program, just let the interpreter know when s/he calls you to confirm your program.

Program Activities

This program includes activities that occur both indoors and outdoors. The program will include a visit to the Urban Farm. Other activities may include: a guided tour to see some of our indoor and outdoor zoo animals, including examples of wild and domesticated animals found locally and in other countries; a few hands-on encounters with some of our smaller zoo animals*; touching/handling of animal artifacts; and interpreter-led discussions about the features of wild and domestic animals. When your interpreter calls to confirm your program, please inquire about activities that may be included during your program. We cannot guarantee any encounters with specific animals, as this is dependent on animals' health on the day of your program.

**Please let your interpreter know in advance, or at the time of booking, if you or your group have any specific requests (i.e., you want to focus only on domestic animals) or concerns with certain types of animals that may be brought out for encounters (i.e., if you do not want any snakes*

brought out during your program). Our selection of tractable animals includes reptiles, birds, mammals, and amphibians. Most but not all of our tractable animals are touchable by members of the public. For more details about which animals may be included in your program, please ask your interpreter.

Programs do not automatically include time for a snack or bathroom break, but this can be incorporated into your program, especially with Pre-S and K classes. Classes and groups are responsible for providing their own food and beverages. Please confirm with your interpreter when they call, or just prior to the start of your program, if you would like to include a mid-program break. The length of the program is not increased to accommodate the break.

Questions?

Please view our online **School and Group Programs FAQ:**

http://www.edmonton.ca/attractions_events/edmonton_valley_zoo/zoo-school-group-programs-faq.aspx

You may also call the program coordinator at 780-496-3924.

We look forward to seeing you at the Edmonton Valley Zoo!