

Zoo Immersion

School Program Information Package

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

Phone: **780-496-2926**

Email: **artsattractionsbookings@edmonton.ca**

Please Note: There is limited space for zoo immersion programs during the school year (September – April). Please book early to avoid disappointment! You will be directed to the Zoo School coordinator to pick dates that work for you and the facility.

Field Trip Preparation

Adult Supervisors

Adult supervisors are admitted free of charge with the program in 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

Additional parents (exceeding a total of 40 individuals) will be asked to pay facility admission fees and tour the facility on their own. Additional participants can rejoin the group after the registered program ends.

Please inform adult supervisors that they will 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.
- 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.
- To ensure a high quality program we recommend that all children participating in

a program be within the age range advertised for the program.

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.*

Zoo Rules

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. 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. During the COVID-19 pandemic, none of our animals are permitted to be touched by the public.
4. Do not climb any fences. We have had quite a few visitors slip and hurt themselves from climbing, so it's a good reminder to ask students to keep both feet on the ground.
5. 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 they think is necessary

What to Bring

1. Appropriate Clothing and Footwear

Please make sure your students (and adult helpers) dress for the weather as some of the activities will take place outdoors. It is important to dress for hot sunny weather as well as cold or wet weather. For your group's safety and comfort while walking around the zoo, we recommend comfortable, closed-toed footwear.

2. Indoor Shoes

For *multi-day* Zoo Immersion programs that have a designated classroom space, we ask that students bring a pair of indoor shoes with them. These can be left at the zoo in the classroom for the week.

3. Lunch and Snacks for Each Day

Zoo immersions have a designated classroom space:

You will have an indoor space for lunch. Students and adult supervisors need to bring their own lunches and snacks (morning and afternoon), and refillable water bottle each day. Please do not bring anything that requires heating (no microwave available).

4. Classroom or Group Activity Sheets/Workbooks

These materials are not automatically included in our Immersion programs, but can be created or customized for your program after discussing your program plan with your interpreter. You are welcome to create and bring any worksheets, notebooks, or journals for students to fill out during your program. Please let your interpreter know during program planning if you would like them to include any information specific to these worksheet activities during your program.

What Not to Bring

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

- ✗ Balloons and kites
- ✗ Sparklers and other fireworks
- ✗ Pets or other animals*
- ✗ Your own BBQs or indoor grills (for preparing food on-site)
- ✗ Food items to donate to the Zoo for the animals or for feeding the animals
- ✗ 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.

Program Customization and Interpreter Contact

Once you have spoken with the Zoo School Program Coordinator to decide and confirm which day(s) your class will be attending, the coordinator will send you an information sheet and program customization forms specific to the length of your program. You will need to complete and submit these forms to the coordinator at least one month prior to the start of your immersion program.

These forms will be forwarded to the interpreter assigned to lead your program, and s/he will create a tentative schedule of instructional and hands-on activities based on the information you submitted, and will send this to you by email at least 2 weeks prior to the start of your program. At this point, you and the interpreter can discuss any changes or modifications to the schedule that need to be made. If you have any questions about Zoo Immersion programs, please call the Zoo School Coordinator at 780-984-2063.

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 each month. You will receive your invoice the same month as your program runs. For example, for a May booking, your invoice will be issued on 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 phoned in: 311 or 780-496-2926.

Cheques can be mailed to:

Citizen Services Payment Processing
PO Box 2359
19th Floor Edmonton Tower
Edmonton, AB, T5J 2R7

Program Cancellation

- You are required to submit written notice of cancellation of your programs by email to: artsattractionsbookings@edmonton.ca.
- Programs cancelled with 30 or more days notice will not be charged the program fee or a cancellation fee.
- Programs cancelled with 8-29 days notice are subject to be charged 50% of the program fee, unless the cancellation is filled by a waitlisted group.
- For programs cancelled with 7 or less days notice, the full program fee will be charged.
- Programs run rain or shine. In the event of poor weather, you must call 780-496-2926 or email artsattractionsbookings@edmonton.ca if you are not

coming.

- Programs cancelled due to severe weather conditions but are rescheduled within the current school year, or the upcoming school years fall term (Sept-Nov), will not be charged a cancellation fee.

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 daily 9 AM - 4 PM from May long weekend until Thanksgiving. Then the zoo is open to the public Thursday - Sunday 10 AM - 4 PM and open only to field trip programming Monday - Wednesday. Check the [website for hours and more details](#).

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

Program Information

Immerse your students in the world of animals through this customizable program. Work with an interpreter to design a program to meet your specific learning objectives. Themes and activities can include any combination of the following: needs of living things, life cycles, adaptations, endangered species, animal classification, careers, and more! Your group will be with an interpreter from the moment you step off the bus, to the moment you have to get back on.

This program can be customized to fit your classroom's curriculum, needs, and interests, through information and hands-on activities.

This program is offered Sept. April for schools (Gr 1 and up).

Program Objectives

1. Cover classroom curriculum based topics within a zoo environment.
2. Introduce students to a variety of animals at the zoo.
3. Stimulate an initial and lasting excitement, joy, and appreciation for a variety of animals.
4. 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.

The curriculum connections are endless. We can focus on any curriculum topic you can imagine.

Program Activities

This program includes activities that occur both indoors and outdoors. Activities may include a guided tour to see some of our indoor and outdoor animals, interpreter-led discussions about animal features and animal information, one or two small animal encounters* touching animal artifacts, and learning-based activities. 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 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.*

Questions?

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

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

You may also call the Zoo Immersion coordinator at 780-984-2063.

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