

## DEAR EDUCATOR,

### Welcome to the National Aquarium!

We are so excited that you've chosen to visit us for your school's field trip. This packet will help you plan for and get the most out of your National Aquarium field trip experience. Please share this information with all teachers and chaperones who will be in attendance. The following information—and more—is also available within the Field Trips section of our website at [aqua.org/fieldtrips](https://aqua.org/fieldtrips).

### Registration, Check-In and Amenities:

#### RESERVATIONS

School groups wishing to visit must make a reservation in advance by contacting the Central Reservations office at 410-576-3833 or [reserve@aqua.org](mailto:reserve@aqua.org). After the reservation is made, you'll receive a confirmation that must be signed and returned with your \$75 deposit, if applicable.

Should you need to cancel your visit, please contact us no fewer than 21 days in advance of your scheduled date. Groups cancelling within 21 days of their visit will lose their deposit. Groups visiting for free through MSDE may also be subject to a \$75 cancellation fee within this 21-day window.

#### DIRECTIONS AND PARKING

Please plan to arrive early to ensure that you are on time for your entry. Visit [aqua.org/parking](https://aqua.org/parking) for detailed directions and information about parking. Buses may unload passengers at Gunther Circle in front of the main Aquarium entrance but will need to relocate for parking through the duration of your visit. Additional motorcoach parking information for the downtown area is available at [baltimore.org](https://baltimore.org).

#### CHECK-IN INFORMATION

Please arrive 15 minutes before your scheduled entry time to keep your group on track and to maximize your time to tour and enjoy the Aquarium. To expedite the check-in process, please have an accurate headcount of all students and adults in your group before you reach the will call window. PLEASE SEND ONLY ONE REPRESENTATIVE FROM YOUR GROUP TO THE WILL CALL WINDOW TO CHECK IN.

If you find that you are running late, please call us at 410-659-4278 before your scheduled entry time. If you have reserved a school program and are 15 minutes (or more) late for your scheduled education program, the program may be canceled.

## STORAGE OF PERSONAL ITEMS

Due to space and staffing restrictions, the Aquarium does not offer coat check or storage for large items such as coolers. A limited number of pay-per-use lockers for small items such as coats are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Any large items or lunches should remain in your bus or vehicles until they are needed.

## BOX LUNCH AND DINING INFORMATION

For the safety of our animals and guests, no outside food or drink are permitted in the National Aquarium. Water bottles are the one exception to this policy and bottle filling stations are available throughout the buildings.

We are happy to offer an array of in-building dining options, including [box lunches or food and beverage vouchers for groups](#) of 10 or more guests, plus quick-serve dining in Harbor Market Kitchen on Pier 3 near the Main Entrance and Harbor Market Cafe on Pier 4 near *Jellies Invasion*. Group dining arrangements must be made at least seven business days prior to your visit. For more information or to initiate your order, please visit [aqua.org/visit/groups](http://aqua.org/visit/groups). Indoor dining space for groups purchasing meal packages or individual food items may be available but cannot be guaranteed without prior agreement.

Groups bringing their own lunches must coordinate lunchtime with your bus driver in order to store lunches until they are needed. Outdoor picnic tables, benches and grassy areas surrounding the Aquarium may be used for your group to eat outside but cannot be reserved. In case of inclement weather, please have a backup plan, as there is no space available inside the building for groups to eat food brought in from outside the Aquarium.

# YOUR DAY AT THE AQUARIUM

Get your students engaged through feedings, animal encounters and live presentations! To see the day's schedule of events, check the "Today at the Aquarium" digital message boards upon entering the Aquarium. Or, visit [aqua.org](http://aqua.org) and click "Visit Us" to customize your experience.

## Add-on Experiences:

### 4D IMMERSION THEATER

The National Aquarium's 4D Immersion Theater combines the visual drama of a 3D film with a variety of sensory effects. 4D Immersion Theater tickets are not included with your field trip admission but may be purchased for an additional per person fee. Movie listings and more information are available on the Plan Your Visit section of our website.

### SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The National Aquarium offers a variety of subject-specific, age-appropriate, on-site programs that can be reserved for an additional per-person fee to enrich your field trip experience. To explore our full array of available programs, please visit [aqua.org/education/programs](http://aqua.org/education/programs).

### ONLINE RESOURCES AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

The National Aquarium offers online resources that will help you make the most of your visit and bring aquatic science into your classroom before, during and after your time with us. Curricula coordinated to National Aquarium field trip experiences and each of our education programs are available for free download on each of our program pages. Visit [aqua.org/education/programs](http://aqua.org/education/programs) for access to these materials and more!

Thank you for choosing the National Aquarium.

## Chaperone Information

Thank you for being a chaperone to the National Aquarium. As a chaperone, you play an important part in making this trip an educational success and a safe, memorable experience for the students. Please see below for tips on being a successful chaperone.

### YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR GROUP'S BEHAVIOR

1. Chaperones must stay with their students at all times.
2. Please make sure that your chaperone sticker is on and visible to Aquarium staff and students at all times.
3. Chaperones are responsible for student behavior in all areas of the National Aquarium, including the gift shop and dining areas.
4. If you and your students must leave the building and plan to re-enter, chaperones must get their hands stamped at any exit prior to leaving. Students will not be allowed to re-enter the Aquarium without a chaperone.
5. Be sure you know where and when to meet the rest of your school at the end of your visit or at any preorganized meal or program times. Have a plan in place and stick to it!
6. In case of emergencies, lost students, or medical situations, be sure you know how to contact your group leader and your group leader knows how to contact you.
7. For the safety of our animals, food, drinks, gum and balloons are not allowed in the Aquarium. You may purchase food and drinks in National Aquarium eateries, but all food and drinks must be consumed in designated areas before entering or reentering our exhibit spaces. The only exception to this policy is water which may be consumed throughout the building.
8. Respect other guests at the Aquarium by prohibiting your group from running or shouting anywhere in the building.
9. Undisciplined or unchaperoned groups will be asked to leave the Aquarium.

## You Help Students Learn

### ASSIST STUDENTS WITH ASSIGNED PROJECTS

Before your visit, ask your students' teacher about the educational goals for the trip. Find out if students will have special activities, projects or worksheets to complete. Ask teachers for any information you'll need to help the students complete their tasks.

### SPEAK TO THE TRAINED EXHIBIT GUIDES

Look for Aquarium staff wearing uniforms. They are happy to answer questions or assist your groups in any way.

### ATTEND AN ANIMAL DEMONSTRATION

Refer to the "Today at the Aquarium" digital message boards throughout the Aquarium to find scheduled animal demonstrations. Staff give informative talks during these sessions, including the opportunity for students to ask questions following each program.

## Chaperone Ratio

Schools are allowed to bring chaperones for free based on the following ratio. Additional chaperones will be charged our standard admission fee. If your number of students changes, this WILL affect your number of free chaperones, so please make every effort to keep track of attendance for students and chaperones as you prepare for your trip.

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Free Chaperones (Required)</b>	<b>Free Chaperones (Permitted)</b>	<b>Additional Chaperones, Main Building</b>
<i>Pre-K and K</i>	1 adult per 5 students	1 adult per 5 students	\$27.95
<i>Grades 1 - 6</i>	1 adult per 6 students	1 adult per 6 students	\$27.95
<i>Grades 7 - 12</i>	1 adult per 10 students	1 adult per 10 students	\$27.95
<i>Special Education</i>	1 adult per 10 students	1 adult per each student	\$27.95