



Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What perks do Lincoln Park Zoo donors and members receive?

A. Safari, household, and individual members and all donors receive a 15 percent discount on all camp programs. For summer camp, active Safari-level members and above will be eligible to register early. Please look at lpzoo.org/camps for specific dates and times. Household and Individual members will register with the general public but will receive a 15 percent discount. To check your membership status, call the membership hotline at 312-742-2322. Make sure you join, renew, or upgrade your membership prior to early registration!

Q. Can I register and then become a Lincoln Park Zoo member later to receive the member discount?

A. No. You must be an active member at time of registration to receive a discounted rate and to be eligible for summer camp early registration. To learn more about becoming a member, renewing your membership, or retrieving your membership login information, visit lpzoo.org/membership.

Q. Can I bring an unregistered camper to camp and register when we arrive?

A. No. Registrations must take place in advance and participants must be of the appropriate age for the program. Lincoln Park Zoo Camps fill quickly, and we cannot accommodate day-of registrations.

Q. Can I register someone else's camper?

A. No. Please be aware that only the legal guardian may register campers. If a camper is registered by someone other than a legal guardian, that camper may be removed from the camp roster.

Q. Can I call to find out whether my camper's friend is in a certain session of camp?

A. No. Due to confidentiality concerns, we cannot provide the names or registration information of other Lincoln Park Zoo Camp participants.

Q. Can I switch groups on the first day of camp?

A. No. We are unable to rearrange group rosters and registrants once the camp week has started. Camp sessions historically fill up. For safety reasons we are unable to have more than the maximum number of campers in each session.

Q. What if I need to cancel my camp registration?

A. Once you register for camp, Lincoln Park Zoo adheres to a strict cancellation and refund policy. If for any reason you need to cancel your registration, you must do so prior to the cancellation deadline. Deadlines are posted on the registration page, on your receipt, and at lpzoo.org/camps. Cancellations made prior to the deadline will receive a refund, minus a 12.5 percent processing fee. After the cancellation deadline has past, Lincoln Park Zoo will not be able to offer any refunds for cancelled registrations. If the zoo must cancel a program, full refunds will be issued.

Q. Can I register a camper who will turn 4 after the program has begun? (Or my second-grader in the third- and fourth-grade group, etc.?)

A. No. All programs are specifically designed with age and grade in mind, and we require campers to enroll with their own age/grade group.

Summer Camps:

Campers attending the preK-K camps must be 4 years old by the Monday of their first registered camp week. For other classes, your camper must enroll in the class that matches the grade they will enter in fall of that year.

Spring, Winter, and Federal Holiday Camps:

Campers attending the preK-K camps must be 4 years old by the first day of the program. For other groups, campers must enroll in the class that matches their current grade.

Selecting the program that is age/grade appropriate for your camper will provide them the best overall experience.

Q. Will caregivers be allowed to stay with their camper(s) during camp?

A. As a general rule, this is not allowed. Camp is designed to encourage interaction among participants of the same age, without caregivers. Due to space limitations, we are unable to accommodate caregivers. Some campers will perhaps experience a brief moment of anxiety, overcome their fears and participate more quickly without a caregiver present. If you think your camper cannot remain in class without you, please consider waiting another year.

Q. Is there first aid on site?

A. All camp instructors are first aid and CPR certified. There is also an EMT on duty at the zoo's Visitor Center during all camp programs, except during Zoo Crew sleepovers.

Q. Who do I call if I have an emergency or urgent question?

A. If you have an emergency or an urgent question while your camper is attending camp please call 312-805-3124. All other inquiries, call 312-742-2056.

Q. I am concerned about leaving my camper at camp. What safety measures do you take?

A. Your camper's safety and well-being are our top priority. All our staff must submit to background checks and are trained to work with children. For their safety, we ask that campers wear their camp T-shirt every day so they can be clearly identified. All camp instructors, camp teen volunteers, and additional camp staff will also wear easily identifiable T-shirts and carry radios to keep in contact with each other. Lincoln Park Zoo has an EMT on grounds during all camp programs in case of any medical concerns. Camp check-in and check-out procedures are specifically designed with your camper's safety in mind. If you have additional concerns, please feel free to contact us.

Q. Will my camper have direct contact with the animals? Will they be able to work alongside the keepers and vets?

A. For the safety of all, direct contact with exhibit animals is not possible. All exhibit animal care, including feeding and cleaning, is done by professionally trained zookeepers and/or veterinarians.

Q. What are the expectations for a camper's behavior while at camp?

A. Lincoln Park Zoo camps are all about respect. We expect that all campers will respect themselves, other people, the zoo, and nature. Respectful behavior will help ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone. At the beginning of every camp session, each group will further discuss the group's expectations for good behavior. Parents will be required to sign a Code of Conduct as a part of registration. Lincoln Park Zoo reserves the right to suspend any camper that does not abide by our expectations for good behavior.

Q. What level of need can Lincoln Park Zoo reasonably accommodate for campers with disabilities?

A. We strive to accommodate and include campers of every need level. We do ask that our campers can provide their own personal hygiene care and are able to travel throughout the zoo with little to no additional assistance. Please contact the Camp Leadership Team if you have any questions or concerns prior to registering for Lincoln Park Zoo camps. We can be reached at 312-742-2056 or camp@lpzoo.org.

Q. Are nuts served as snacks or included in activities at camp?

A. No. Due to the prevalence of tree nut and peanut allergies, we ask that parents NOT send campers with anything that contains nuts, peanuts, or nut products. This includes, but is not limited to, peanut butter, cookies, or baked goods containing peanuts, trail mix, Nutella, Nutella-based items, etc. (Note: soy nut butter and sunflower seed butter are great alternatives to peanut butter.) Nut products will not be included in any camp activities.

Q. What types of snacks and add-on lunches are served at Lincoln Park Zoo Camp?

A. We offer one healthy snack per day for each camper. All snacks and add-on lunches are nut free and prepared in nut-free facilities. Possible snacks include fruit, pretzels, goldfish crackers, and fruit twists. Our daily lunch menu can be viewed here. For campers with dietary restrictions, we offer vegetarian, gluten-free, dairy-free, and soy-free alternatives for snacks. Add-on lunches are only available as vegetarian and/or gluten free. Additional fresh fruit is available to all campers during lunch. Parents are encouraged to reach out to zoo staff in advance to discuss specific dietary needs.

Q. What if my camper does not like the snack or one of the add-on lunches?

A. We cannot provide alternatives if a camper does not like a snack or lunch item. Additional fresh fruit will always be available during lunch and as an option for snacks.

We hope we answered all your questions about Lincoln Park Zoo camps! Contact the Camp Leadership Team with additional questions at 312-742-2056 or camp@lpzoo.org.