

Group Payment Policies and Procedures

Payment Policies

1. TO CONFIRM YOUR RESERVATION
 - a. Arrival dates that are 21 days out or more from the date of booking require:
 - 20% non-refundable deposit, which must be received within 10 days of the date of booking.
 - Payment in full and a final headcount 21 days prior to arrival.
 - b. Arrival dates less than 21 days from booking require:
 - Final headcount, and payment in full within 48 hours of the booking date.
2. CANCELLATIONS, NO-SHOWS, OR DECREASE IN GROUP NUMBERS
 - a. Refunds are not available
 - b. Credit will be applied to the organization's next visit.
 - c. After 12 months, the South Carolina Aquarium will apply unused credit as a donation.
 - d. Groups that do not show up for their reservation or call to cancel will be billed for the balance on their account
3. Memberships, complimentary/consignment tickets, and other discounts or coupons cannot be used in conjunction with a group visit.
4. CHAPERONES: All chaperones not included in the final confirmed headcount will be charged General Admission prices at the gate upon arrival.

Behavior Policies (For Student Groups)

To make your visit as meaningful and enjoyable as possible, please discuss the following with your students and chaperones before your visit to the Aquarium.

1. FOR STUDENTS... I agree to:

- Stay with my chaperone at all times.
- Share the Aquarium with other groups and visitors by being courteous.
- Use my inside voice, walk, refrain from climbing on the exhibits, and not chew gum or bring food and drinks inside the Aquarium.
- Not play on the escalator or stairs and reserve the elevator for guests with strollers and wheelchairs
- Respect the animals by not trying to scare them, handling them roughly, or tapping on the exhibit windows.
- Not feed the birds on the terrace, in the Saltmarsh, or outside on Liberty Square.
- I understand that I will be required to pay for any item I break in the Aquarium Gift Shop.

2. FOR CHAPERONES... I agree to:

- Remain with my group and engage and monitor my students at all times. This applies to all grade levels.
- When involved in a program or educational activity, refrain from behavior that may distract the group, such as talking on a cell phone or to another parent or teacher.
- Assist students with dietary needs, bathroom breaks, and other needs that may arise.

3. FOR TEACHERS/LEADERS... I agree to:

- Read the behavior policies to my group and chaperones and accept responsibility for their behavior while at the South Carolina Aquarium. I understand that my group will first be given a verbal warning if this agreement is broken. If they do not heed this warning, I understand that we will be asked to leave the Aquarium without a refund. I further understand that if this happens, I will not be allowed to bring my students to the Aquarium for a full year. I am also aware that my administrator will be contacted and that any other groups coming from my school or organization will be required to have an increased ratio of 1:5 chaperone/student.

Arrival Procedures

1. OFFLOADING YOUR GROUP

- a. All vehicles must load and unload on the right side (the side closest to the garage) of our dedicated bus lane. This lane is located off Washington Street and is adjacent to the municipal parking garage. For your group's safety, please do not load or unload on Concord Street, the street directly in front of the Aquarium
- b. Once you have secured your place in the bus lane, your group may exit the vehicle onto the sidewalk.
- c. Lunches must remain on the bus.
- d. Public restrooms are located on the first floor of the parking garage. Please use these facilities if needed before entering the Aquarium.

2. PARKING FOR BUSES AND VANS MARKED WITH ORGANIZATION LOGOS

- a. The bus lane is available as free parking for buses and vans clearly marked with the organization's logo. All others will be ticketed.
- b. If this lane is full, Aquarium staff will direct you to the bus overflow area upon arrival.
- c. Buses are not allowed to idle for longer than 5 minutes anywhere in the Charleston area in compliance with Charleston City Ordinance.

3. PARKING FOR CARS AND PERSONAL OR UNMARKED GROUP VANS

- a. There is no free parking available for cars and personal or unmarked vans.
- b. Once your group has unloaded/loaded in the bus lane, all cars and unmarked vans can park at any of the parking meters on Calhoun Street or in the municipal parking garage. This garage is owned by the City of Charleston; therefore, we are unable to validate parking.
- c. Any cars and personal or unmarked vans parked in the bus lane will be ticketed by the Charleston City Police. The Aquarium is not responsible for any tickets received and cannot assist in any ticket resolution.

Lunches, Snacks, and Smoking Policies

1. For the safety of our animals, group lunches, snacks, or gum are not allowed beyond the front gate. Covered shelters are available for group lunches or snacks.
2. Please join us in our conservation efforts when you break for lunch. We recycle empty plastic bottles and containers, cardboard boxes and paper bags, aluminum cans, LAY's brand chip bags, and plastic bags.
3. Smoking, both traditional and electronic, is not allowed within 40 feet of the Aquarium property. This includes our terrace and entrance/exit ramp. Cigarette receptacles are available on the bluestone in front of the Aquarium.

Aquarium Gift Shop Policies for Student Groups

1. Students, regardless of grade, are not allowed in the Aquarium Gift Shop without a chaperone.
2. There must be 1 chaperone for every 5 students in the gift shop at all times.
3. A maximum of 20 students are allowed in the gift shop at once.
4. Backpacks are not allowed inside the gift shop. Unattended items are the sole responsibility of each individual. Lost and found items are located at the Security Office.