

Amarillo Zoo

Zoo Camp Policies

Policy guide for parents and guardians

Cancellation policy

NO refunds are given for cancellations made less than 14 days prior to the first day of camp. For cancellations made more than 14 days prior to first day of program a 70% refund will be given. Participants must provide a written notice to qualify for a 70% refund. The Amarillo Zoo reserves the right to cancel any program. In the event that the Amarillo Zoo cancels a program, all program fees will be refunded. Refund processing takes two to three weeks.

No refunds will be issued for no-shows or after the start date of the session for which you are registered.

Accommodation Request

Amarillo Zoo strives toward providing inclusive programs to all community members. People of all abilities are invited to consider registering for any program at the Amarillo Zoo has to offer provided they meet the minimum eligibility requirements.

Age Requirements

Age requirements are not negotiable and strictly enforced. Campers must fall within the specified age category on the first day of camp.

Lunch

Camp Zoofari is a “high energy” activity, so campers should eat a filling breakfast before they come. Campers will be provided a small snack morning and afternoon. ALL campers must bring a lunch. Campers may purchase Zoo lunches for \$3.50 (hotdog, chips and a soft drink). We cannot provide refrigeration for camp lunches so please prepare an appropriate lunch. Vending machines with cold soda are available. We will also have cold water and lemonade available at the camp.

Campers may bring a personal water bottle. Because of safety concerns, glass containers are prohibited. A microwave will NOT be available for use.

Required Forms:

Each child must have the following documents on file at the zoo before the start of the camp session in which your child is registered; otherwise he/she will not be allowed to attend the camp. Forms can be either mailed in prior to the camp or dropped off on the morning of the first day.

- 1. Emergency information and health inventory:**

This form contains contact information in case an emergency should arise while your child is at camp and we need to contact you. You must list several emergency contacts with daytime

numbers. Make sure you as the parent/guardian are listed first. This sheet must be filled out in full before your child may attend camp.

2. Immunization record:

All campers should submit an immunization record. We will accept a copy of forms from your physician or copies of your documents on file at your child's Texas school.

3. Standard waiver and Parent Agreement:

This form gives your child permission to participate in all zoo camp activities. This form also includes an Amarillo Zoo photo release information.

4. Drop-Off/Pick-Up Form:

This form lists the adults authorized to pick up your child. Your child may be released at any time to an adult listed on this form. Make sure to list yourself as the parent/guardian on this form. We have a very strict pick up rules at the Zoo. We will not release your child to anyone who is not on this form. We also request a photo ID.

Sign-in and Sign-out Procedures and Extended Care

Check-in/check-out process

Sign-in and sign-out will take place inside the front gate at the Amarillo Zoo

On the first day of a camp session, the instructors and aides will meet you at the zoo entrance gate. Parents or responsible adults will complete the program participant form (if we have not received it) and sign their child in. Please make sure that all authorized pick-up adults are on the sheet and that the emergency contact information is correct and up to date. When an adult meets the instructor at the entrance gate for pick-up, he or she must show picture ID card to camp staff, who will match their name to the list of authorized adults. If the adult is not on the authorized list, we cannot release the child until a parent or responsible adult is contacted. Again, photo ID will be required to pick up a child on each day of summer camp. Please remember that these policies are in place for one reason -- the safety of children attending Zoo Camp

Sign in procedure: Children should arrive between 8:45 and 9:00 am unless they are in before care. An adult over the age of 18 must sign in each child on the attendance sheet upon arrival. The sign in table will be set up at the zoo main entrance from 8:45 – 9:00am. . In order to provide a secure environment for your child, you **MUST** bring your child inside the Zoo to sign him or her in and out of camp, and you need to have a photo ID with you.

Sign out procedure: Children must be picked up no later than 3:15 pm (unless they are after-care). An authorized adult must sign the child out at the camp table located at the zoo main entrance.

Please be prompt when picking up your child; he or she will not be allowed to remain in the Zoo without an adult. Campers not picked up by 3:15 p.m. will be placed in After Care, for which you will be charged.

The safety of your child will always be the most important thing to us at the Amarillo Zoo. You will provide us the names of adults who are authorized to pick up your child from camp. Your child will not be released to anyone not on your list or do not have proper ID. Please advise your authorized adults to bring a valid photo ID with them when they pick up your child.

Extended Care

Before-care runs from 7:30am until 8:45am and *after-care* runs from 3:15pm to 5:00pm. You must pre-register your child if you wish to have them in the extended care program.

Late Policy

Zoo camp ends promptly at 3:15pm each day. Unless your child is register for extended care please make sure to have your child picked up prior to 3:15pm. Parents arriving late will be charged a late fee \$25 dollars.

We understand that sometimes circumstances beyond your control occur, and we will be as accommodating as possible. If a problem arises that prevents you from arriving by 5:00 p.m., please call the Zoo at 806-381-7911.

Stuff to Bring....

- ✓ Book bag
A book bag or light shoulder pack is a great place to store sunscreen, water bottles, lunch, sunscreen and hat. Make sure to label your child's name on all items brought to camp
- ✓ Lunches
A non-perishable lunch and drink should be packed every day. Lunches will stay in the camper's book bag until lunch time. There will be no refrigeration or microwave provided for lunches. All food must be non-perishable. A small insulated cooler and frozen packs are suggested. Snacks are recommended for campers staying for after-care. The zoo does have a concession stand and hotdog lunch combos can be purchased for \$3.50. Parents that want to purchase lunches for their child need to make arrangements prior to the first day of camp. Soft drink vending machines are also available.
- ✓ Shoes and Socks
For your child's safety, tennis shoes are required. Sandals, Crocs and flip-flops are not allowed.
- ✓ Clothes
Dress your child in cool, comfortable play clothes that can get dirty. Many camp activities will be done outside.

- ✓ Sun and Insect protection

The Zoo does not provide sunscreen or insect repellent. Parent should supply these items for their children.

- ✓ Rainy Days

Camp activities will take place regardless of weather. A hooded raincoat is recommended for rainy days. Please, do not bring umbrellas. In the event of severe weather, parents may choose not to drop their child off for camp or may choose to pick them up early. In the event of quick-onset severe weather, Zoo staff will move campers into an interior room in one of the Zoo buildings. Parents may pick up their children at any time if they feel the weather will turn severe or dangerous.

And stuff to leave at home....

Below is a list of items not permitted at camp.

- ✓ Toys or games
- ✓ Video games
- ✓ Cell Phones- if your child carries a cell phone for communication purposes, please advise them to leave the phone in their backpack, lunch box, or pocket.
- ✓ Jewelry
- ✓ Weapons or anything that looks like a weapon (this includes pocket knives)
- ✓ Animals

Discipline Policy

It is the goal of the Amarillo Zoo to provide a safe and pleasant experience for all children. As such, our rules are reviewed with the campers at the beginning of each program. The camp staff will use a three strike rule. Initially a verbal warning in camp followed by these more progressive modes of handling behavioral problems. Please inform the camp staff if there are any behavioral problems we should be aware of with your child and the best methods you have found to cope with them.

The Amarillo Zoo has a Discipline Policy which is stated below:

If any of the following behaviors are observed the camp staff will immediately notify the parents:

1. Running away from the camp site or instructor
2. Bullying and/or harassment of others
3. Hitting
4. Deliberately destroying zoo or park property
5. Stealing
6. Harassing or attempting to injure a zoo animal

First step: The first offense will include a time out where the child will sit out of an activity.

Second step: The second offense the parents will be called and notified of the problem. We will be happy to discuss with the parent/guardian any form of behavior modifications they may suggest and welcome the parent to talk to the child over the phone as well.

Third step: The third offense will involve a phone call to the parent/guardian asking them to pick up their child. If a child has asked to leave the zoo camp due to behavior, there will be no refund for that camp.

Zoo Camp Behavior Guidelines:

1. Remain quiet and respectful when others are taking. Please raise your hand and wait to be called on by the teacher.
2. Keep hands, feet and all other objects to yourself at all times.
3. Please pick up after yourself.
4. Do not leave the camp area without an adult camp staff member.
5. No running on zoo grounds.
6. Follow the instruction of the zoo camp staff and/or zoo camp volunteers.
7. Do not tease, injure or harass any of the zoo animals.
8. Please respect the property of others.

Procedures of the Zoo Discipline Policy:

The Zoo Camp staff will:

- Alert parents to the problem behavior
- Document behavior
- Consult with the parent to develop a plan of action for behavior management
- Parents and camp staff meet with the child to discuss the incident

If the problem persists, the camp staff will:

- Require that the child be picked up from the camp immediately
- Possibly recommend expulsion from the zoo camp program

An immediate suspension from the zoo camp will result if the child:

- Endangers the physical safety of staff, other children or zoo exhibit animals

- Endangers himself/herself.
- Intentionally destroys property.

If a child's behavior threatens their own safety and/or health, or that of other children and staff, it may be grounds for expulsion from the zoo camp program.

Health and Wellness

Administering Medications:

Zoo staff cannot administer or supervise the administration of any forms of oral or topical medications. If your child requires medications during their time at camp it is require the parent/guardian make arrangements for an authorized individual to come to camp and administer the medications. Zoo camp staff can supply ice and band-aids for minor injuries.

Medications

The Zoo is NOT responsible for administering medication to children. Please consult a pediatrician so medication can be administered outside camp. In order to ensure a positive experience for all campers, it is IMPERATIVE that you notify us of special needs or medical conditions your child may have.

Sick Camper Policy:

The zoo cannot care for sick children. Please do not send your child to camp if he/she is ill. We are concerned for the health and welfare of each child as well as our staff; therefore, we require that each child be picked up as soon as possible in the event he/she becomes ill while at camp. If a child becomes sick at camp they will be separated from the other children and picked up as soon as possible by an authorized adult. The zoo will provide a quiet place with a cot the child can rest until the parent/guardian arrives. Any child with symptoms such as green mucus, raspy cough, fever, undiagnosed rash or diarrhea will be asked to be taken home until he or she recovers. Any child that has been treated by a physician while participating in the zoo camp will be required to provide a clearance letter from the physician for their child to continue in the zoo camp program

Allergies

Allergies are common among young children. If your child has an allergy (i.e., food – including nuts and seeds, plant, animal, stinging insects) please discuss it with Zoo staff. We will take appropriate precautions to protect your child's health but allergies must be listed on the medical release form including the severity of the allergy. We may use nuts/seeds in crafts or visit areas where animal's diets may include these items. Please make us aware if this may be a problem so we can plan accordingly

Camp Staff:

Our camp staff is a group of dedicated professionals and animal experts. All staff members have gone through a criminal background check and drug screen required by the City of Amarillo. Camp staff members also receive training in Red Cross First Aid and CPR as well as youth protection training.

Staff Background Check Policy

Public programs staff, volunteers and interns will be subject to the following background check policy

- ✓ Amarillo Zoo commits to providing a safe environment and will take appropriate steps in requiring those that work or volunteer with youth, vulnerable adults and/or the elderly provide criminal background checks as a condition of their employment or volunteer assignment with Amarillo Zoo.
- ✓ All potential new/rehired employees and regularly scheduled adult volunteers that work for Amarillo Zoo will be required to complete the Texas Department of Public Safety and the Amarillo Police Department Request for Criminal History Information form prior to the first day of work or volunteer assignment. Employment and volunteer assignments will be contingent upon a clear background check
- ✓ Potential new/rehired employees and regularly scheduled adult volunteers that work in areas that have direct contact or supervision over youth, vulnerable adults and/or the elderly will be required to complete an authorized training program for youth protection training.

Contact Camp

Please use the phone numbers and contact information listed below for contacting the camp during camp session.

Phone:

Amarillo Zoo Main Line (9:00am – 5:30pm, Tues-Sun)	806-381-7911
Zoo Education Department (8:30am-5:30pm, Tues-Sat)	806-381-5605
Visitor Services Coordinator Cell Phone	806-671-2817

Email: zoo@amarilloparks.org

Address correspondence to:

Amarillo Zoo
PO Box 1971
Amarillo, Texas 79105