

## *Stress Free Field Trip Guide*

1. **Make a reservation by emailing [comoeducation@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:comoeducation@ci.stpaul.mn.us)**. Once your reservation is made, you will receive a confirmation letter. **PLEASE double check the dates and times are accurate.**
2. **Recruit quality chaperones.** Your group is required to have a **7:1** ratio of students to chaperones. **If you do not have the proper number of chaperones, the entirety of the group will not be let in.**

### Before your field trip

- **Chaperones:**
  - Be sure you have confirmed you have a 7:1 ratio of students to chaperones.
  - Make sure all chaperones have received the guideline/etiquette flyer.
  - Make sure all chaperones and the bus driver have the lead teacher cell phone number and Como's phone numbers listed on the confirmation letter.
  - Make sure all chaperones have the pick-up time and location.
  - Make sure all chaperones and the bus driver know the rules about exiting the grounds. **If anyone exits Como Park Zoo and Conservatory's gates or entry points, they will not be let back in.**
  - Help your chaperones succeed in managing their group and consider having group participants wear nametags.
- **Lunches:**
  - There are several outdoor locations for groups to eat. **You may not eat lunch inside any buildings.**
  - Lunch options on grounds include; Como Harbor Amphitheater, Donor Plaza (by the tortoise statue), South patio (by the field trip entrance) or Como Commons (between Gorilla Forest and the zebras).
  - Another option is exiting the Zoo and Conservatory after your field trip and eating just prior to getting back on the bus.
- **Plan for an early arrival:**
  - The time slot listed in the confirmation is the only time your group will be let in. Plan to arrive early and have the students and chaperones broken up into their groups of 7:1 and waiting in line at the **Field Trip Entrance**. This entrance is off Cleveland Court between the Carousel and Como Town. **Field trips will not be admitted through the in the Visitor Center.**

- Confirm the bus driver knows the new drop off locations and parking rules and regulations.
- Bus parking is street parking only. No buses are allowed in lots.
- **Plan your day accordingly:**
  - The SPIRE Sparky Show is back and is scheduled daily at 11:30 and 2:30.
  - Garden Safari Gifts and the Zobota Café are open daily in the Visitor Center.
  - There are many gardens within the Marjorie McNeely Conservatory and the surrounding areas. Familiarize yourself so you can plan in case the bus arrives early or the group needs a meeting spot for your **chaperones and their 7 students** to congregate before meeting the bus. Additional congregation or picnic spaces are across the street from Como Town at the West Picnic area.
  - **Again, once a group has left the Zoo & Conservatory grounds, they will not be allowed back in.**

#### Day of Arrival

- **Arrive early!**
  - The drop off location is at the roundabout in front of the Visitor Center.
  - Have your group walk towards the Carousel and then turn towards Como Town.
  - The entrance gate is located at the end of the white tent.
  - Follow the entry signs for group check-in.
  - Please line your group up in their groups of **7 students & 1 chaperone**.
  - Once it is time for entry, the entirety of your group will be counted for reservation purposes and to double check the student to chaperone ratio of **7:1**.
  - Once the numbers are confirmed, the entire group will be let in.
  - If the bus driver is one of your chaperones, that person's group can wait inside the gate until the driver returns.
  - If the driver is not a chaperone but wants to visit, they will need to come to the Field Trip entrance after parking the bus and let us know the name of the group they are with for entry.
- **Be courteous to other visitors, the plants and the animals!**
  - Please stay on the paths and no running. Take pictures of plants but leave them here for others to enjoy.

- Please be respectful of the animal's habitat by using inside voices and not tapping on the glass.
- The animals at Como have enough to eat so please do not share your food with them.

### Departure

- **Thank you for coming!**
  - When it is time to leave, field trip groups will exit through the Visitor Center like the general public.
  - The bus driver can pick your group up at the circle drive in front of the Visitor Center where they dropped the group off.
  - If at any time you need assistance, please ask a staff member or call us at one of the following numbers:
    - 651-487-8272, 651-487-8201, 651-487-8273

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **What if I have a chaperone who is driving separately?**

If you have chaperones driving separately, they can park in one of the parking lots. Encourage them to arrive early as parking can be difficult to find at certain times of the day. Let them know about the Field Trip entrance at Cleveland Court. The group will need to connect and account for all the chaperones before they can enter the Zoo & Conservatory.

#### **What if we are running late?**

If you are running late, please call one of the following numbers and we will do our best to accommodate you: 651-487-8272, 651-487-8201, 651-487-8273

Please bear in mind that spaces are limited and there will be other groups that will be entering at their time slot. This may result in your group waiting to or potentially not being able to come in. **Please plan accordingly.**

#### **What are your hours?**

10am – 6pm beginning May 1, 2002

#### **Where can students fill up their water bottles?**

There are three water bottle filling stations. One is in the Visitor Center by the restrooms, one is at Pier 56 and the other is just past the fern room in the Conservatory near the bathrooms.