Como Park Zoo & Conservatory Camp Behavior & Expectations Policy

Our goal is to create a safe, welcoming, and engaging camp experience where every camper can learn, explore, and have fun. To support this, we ask all campers and families to review and agree to the expectations below.

1. Respect for People, Animals, Plants, and Places

Campers are expected to:

- Treat all campers, staff, animals, and plants with kindness and respect.
- Use gentle voices and bodies around animals and in indoor spaces.
- Follow all zoo and conservatory rules designed to keep people and animals safe.
- Care for materials, supplies, and spaces by using them appropriately and returning them when finished.

2. Safe and Responsible Behavior

Campers are expected to:

- Stay with their group and follow staff instructions the first time they are given.
- Walk (not run) in buildings and on grounds unless directed otherwise for an activity.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves.
- Use equipment and exhibit areas only as intended.
- Tell a staff member right away if they feel unsafe, uncomfortable, or unsure.

3. Positive Participation

Campers are expected to:

- Try their best during activities and be open to learning new things.
- Use respectful language and tone with peers and staff.

- Allow others to participate without interruption or disruption.
- Help create an inclusive environment where everyone feels welcome.

4. Electronics & Personal Items

To support engagement and safety:

- Personal electronics (phones, tablets, smart watches, gaming devices) must stay at home or in backpacks unless staff give permission.
- Toys, trading cards, and valuables should stay at home.
- Como Park Zoo & Conservatory is not responsible for lost or damaged personal items.

5. Behavior Support

Our staff use positive behavior support strategies, redirection, and clear expectations. If unsafe or disruptive behavior continues, the following steps may occur:

1. **Reminder & Redirection**

Staff will restate expectations and help the camper make a safe choice.

2. **Break or Cool-Down Time**

Camper may take a short, supervised break to reset.

3. **Conversation with Parent/Guardian**

Staff will communicate concerns and collaborate on strategies for success.

4. **Early Pick-Up or Removal from Camp**

If behavior continues to be unsafe or significantly disrupts the experience for others, a camper may be sent home for the day or dismissed from camp.

Refunds are not guaranteed in these situations.

Behaviors that may result in immediate removal include:

- Intentional harm or attempted harm to another person or animal
- Leaving the group or designated area without permission

- Destruction of property
- Repeated unsafe behavior after intervention

6. Camper Support Needs

To help us set every camper up for success, families are encouraged to share any information that may help staff support their child (e.g., learning needs, sensory needs, communication preferences, behavior strategies that work well). All information is kept confidential and used only to support a positive camp experience.

Como Park Zoo & Conservatory has dedicated Camp Care Specialists on staff.
Camp Care Specialists provide additional support for campers who may benefit from:

- Help with transitions, routines, or emotional regulation
- Sensory or environmental adjustments
- Medication reminders or health-related needs
- Behavior support using positive, proactive strategies
- Assistance during camp activities

Camp Care Specialists partner closely with families, instructors, and camp leadership to ensure each camper feels safe, included, and ready to participate. If your child may benefit from additional support, please let us know during registration or reach out before camp begins so we can plan together.

Email: campcomo@ci.stpaul.mn.us

7. Minimum Requirements for Attendance

To attend Camp Como, campers must be able to:

- Stay with their group
- Toilet, wash, and dress themselves

- Participate in a group setting with general supervision
- Use safe, non-violent behavior and refrain from actions that could harm themselves or others

While our team is committed to supporting a wide range of needs, **Como Park Zoo & Conservatory is not able to provide all-day 1:1 supervision.**

Camp Care Specialists and camp staff can offer short-term or situational one-on-one support (e.g., during transitions, sensory breaks, or moments of dysregulation), but campers must be able to safely participate in group activities for the majority of the day.

Families who are unsure whether Camp Como is the right fit are encouraged to contact us before their camp begins so we can discuss whether camp will meet their child's needs.

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