

Community Programs Field Trip Planning Guide



New England
Aquarium

Protecting the blue planet

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Field Trip Checklist

When You Book

- Consider adding curriculum-enhancing programs to your visit: an IMAX film, Behind-the-Scenes Tour, Explorer Class, or Whale Watch. Please note that Community Programs cannot cover the cost of any of these additional experiences.
- Review goals for your visit.
- Review the Field Trip Preparation Workshop packet for ideas on how to use the provided activities with your students during your visit.
- Contact the Teacher Resource Center (617-973-6590) for more information or to make an appointment to browse and check out additional resources and field trip preparation materials. Visit us online. www.neaq.org/fieldtrips

Three Weeks Before Your Trip

- Debrief the information provided during the required Field Trip Preparation Workshop with your staff. All chaperones should feel comfortable with the rules, procedures, and educational activities. Contact Community Programs with any follow-up questions at communityprograms@neaq.org.
- Arrange your lunch plans: Harbor View Café lunch vouchers, Quincy Market, restaurant package, etc. Acquire appropriate, rigid, hard-bottomed bins if your group is bringing lunch.
- Finalize your head count and communicate any changes to Community Programs for final approval.
- Share Aquarium safe handling instructions with chaperones. Make sure they are aware of your field trip goals and that they must stay with the students at all times.
- Confirm bus or public transit transportation.

One Week Before Your Trip

- Submit final payment, if applicable.
- Preview the How to be a Shark and Ray Whisperer video and the Field Trip Orientation video with students and chaperones. www.neaq.org/fieldtrips

Bring the Following Items With You the Day of Your Trip

- Confirmation email and invoice
- An accurate head count of children and adults
- Activity sheets for students www.neaq.org/teacherguides
- Pencils, pens, and a hard writing surface for each student
- Bus drop-off/pickup permit, placed in the bus window before arrival, and bus parking directions, if necessary

Upon Arrival

- Have the head chaperone check in for your group at the Will Call and Passes/orange line. An Aquarium staff member will meet your group on the plaza and explain the behavior policies. Students' hands will be stamped for Aquarium admission, and chaperones will receive chaperone stickers.
- If you plan to eat lunch in our Harbor View Café, let our staff know when checking in. We do not schedule lunches, but can offer guidance on options.

Welcome

*Hello from the New England Aquarium!
Please read this before your visit.*

How Much Time Is Needed to Visit the Aquarium?

Please allow at least two and a half hours to visit all the galleries, the Simons IMAX® Theatre, Gift Shop, and Harbor View Café. Whale watch trips last three to four hours.

What to See and Do

- Take advantage of our daily scheduled presentations.
www.neaq.org/presentations
- Check out an IMAX film.
- Look for our trained staff to help answer questions, point out interesting animals, and give presentations.
- Add an Explorer Class or do one of our more in-depth activities.
Details are available online. **www.neaq.org/fieldtrips**

Field Trip Add-Ons

Gift Shop Specials

You can arrange to purchase fun and educational souvenirs for your group at a discounted price. They will be ready and waiting upon your arrival! Contact the Aquarium Gift Shop at 617-973-5266.

How to Plan a Successful Trip

- The Teacher Resource Center has curriculum resource materials free for loan, and staff members are available for consultations.
- New Teacher Guides are available on our website to enhance the field trip experience. For more information, visit us online. **www.neaq.org/teacherguides**

Our exhibits and programs fulfill state and national curriculum standards. Skills of inquiry, life and environmental sciences, mathematics, and language arts are all areas that can be incorporated into lesson plans and visits to the Aquarium. Contact trc@neaq.org or 617-973-6590 for more information or to make an appointment.

Things to Know

Chaperone Policy

Chaperones must be at least 18 years old and stay with their group at all times to ensure the group follows Aquarium animal safety policies. The chaperone sticker given upon check-in must always be worn so Aquarium staff and children can identify their chaperone.

Animal and Visitor Safety Policy

Please review our guidelines with your students.

To ensure the well-being of our animals, visitors may not chew gum or use laser pointers inside the Aquarium building. Food and beverages are not allowed in exhibit areas or outside of designated locations.

Please do not spit, run, curse, roughhouse, shout, or smoke inside the building. Please don't tap on the glass; the sound travels and disturbs the animals. We want all visitors to have a great experience. Failure to comply with these policies may result in expulsion of the offending student or your entire group from the Aquarium.

Please use caution with loose possessions, such as cameras, glasses, and hats, when looking into open exhibits. GoPro and smartphone extension poles and selfie sticks are not allowed inside the Aquarium. Wheeled shoes are not allowed inside the building. We are not responsible for any lost items.

Payment Policy (as applicable)

For Aquarium-only visits, final payment is due upon arrival. For IMAX, education, and combination programs, final head count and final nonrefundable deposit are due one week before the date of your visit. Please note: If you do not provide full payment upon arrival, you will be asked to provide a valid credit card for final payment before entry. If you do not provide payment, your group will be refused entry to the Aquarium.

Cancellation Policy

If you need to cancel your group trip due to weather, please **call our Central Reservations Department at 617-973-5206 and email communityprograms@neaq.org** as soon as possible. Please leave a message if it is after hours. Refunds will be granted only if the school district or Aquarium has been closed due to inclement weather. You must call to cancel any scheduled visits if your school district closes due to weather. Otherwise any deposits will be forfeited. Please call to reschedule your group within 90 days of your original scheduled date. Your rescheduled date must be in the same calendar year as your original date. Any deposits will be forfeited after 90 days.

Safe Handling Instructions

The Trust Family Foundation Shark and Ray Touch Tank

To ensure the best experience for your students and chaperones and our animals, please review this video before your trip: www.neaq.org/fieldtrips.

Although these animals are not dangerous by nature, they may bite if they are handled incorrectly. These rules help to reduce stress on the animals and are important for your safety as well as the safety of our animals.

Please note: Chaperones must be with their groups to facilitate the instructions listed below. Students without chaperones will not be permitted into the exhibit. We strongly encourage you to be an active participant to enhance the experience for you and your group.

DO

- Chaperones must assist students with animal handling.
- Position your hand flat, palm down, and gently place it in the water.
- Keep your hand still and wait for animals to swim toward you. Once an animal swims underneath your hand, gently glide your hand along the back of the animal.
- Allow the animals to come to you. Only touch the animals that swim directly under your hand.
- Keep your voice down to an indoor level. Shouting or screaming can startle the animals.



DON'T

- Do not touch the underside or tail of the animal. These areas are sensitive and may startle the animal if touched. Stingrays' mouths and gills are underneath, and their tails help them sense danger that they cannot see from behind.
- Do not hold or grab onto any part of the animal, as this can cause injury.
- Do not touch the sand at the bottom of the exhibit. If you have sand on your hand when you touch an animal, it can scratch the surface of the animal's skin.



Check-In and Lunch Procedures

Upon Arrival

Please be advised that 9:00 a.m. is the earliest time at which you can begin the check-in process.

Group Check-In

Upon your group's arrival, have the head chaperone check in at the Will Call and Passes line. Please note that the entire group must be present before checking in. Chaperones will need to give the final head count and any remaining payment, as well as obtain an Aquarium map, schedule, yellow sticker for each chaperone, and find out where to store any lunches. If lunch vouchers or concession packs were ordered, these will be ready for pickup.

An Aquarium employee will greet and direct your group once check-in is complete. Please contain your group on the Aquarium plaza away from the bus drop-off area and the Aquarium. After the head chaperone has checked in and each child has received a hand stamp for admission, your group will be led into the Aquarium.

Lunch Times, Bringing and Storing Lunches

Please bring all group lunches in a plastic bin, rigid hard-bottomed container, or cardboard box and label it with your organization's name. After your group is checked in and greeted, chaperones will be directed to the designated lunch storage space to drop off the lunches. Please pick up all your lunches at once from the lunch storage space so that we may accommodate all groups efficiently.

Lunch space in the Café is not always available. We will do our best to accommodate your group, but there could be a wait for large crowds. We suggest groups of 30 or more eat in shifts. Staff members can offer suggestions for outside areas where your group can eat lunch.

Coats and bags cannot be stored with lunches. Rental lockers are available for personal storage.

Harbor View Café

Want to make lunch easier and more affordable for your students? Purchase our Group Lunch Vouchers in advance. Vouchers are \$10.00* plus tax and allow students their choice from each category:

- **Entrée:** any salad or sandwich, chicken nuggets and fries, any burger, any pizza
- **Drink:** fountain soda, milk, chocolate milk
- **Dessert:** cookie, brownie, piece of fruit

**Pricing subject to change.*

Payment for lunch vouchers will mirror the payment policy of the program you have chosen.

There is no reserved seating in the Harbor View Café. It is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Some of our lunch options may contain nuts.

Please note any food allergies when you place your voucher order.

Arrival

Bus Drop-Off/Pickup

Onsite bus parking is not available. Please make sure your bus uses the bus identification permit in this packet. Buses can idle for up to 10 minutes.

Schedule a pickup time with your driver and have your group outside at the scheduled time. The bus can wait for only up to 10 minutes and may be asked to leave if your group hasn't arrived at the scheduled time.

While the Aquarium does not have bus parking facilities, we do have a recommendation:

Boston Autoport

100 Terminal St., Charlestown

Parking available from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

When exiting the drop-off area, drive straight to the intersection with State Street. Turn left on State Street. At the traffic light, turn right onto Atlantic Avenue. Continue on Atlantic Avenue as it becomes Cross Street, then North Washington Street. Continue on North Washington Street and cross the bridge. At the first set of lights (City Square), turn right onto Chelsea Street. Follow Chelsea Street to the end, which positions you under the Tobin Bridge. Once under the bridge, you will travel over a small water channel. Once over the channel, you will see signs for Bus Parking on a wood fence. Turn right into Mystic Pier 1 property and proceed to Station 1. Wait for attendant to sign in. Please call 617-242-2300 for current parking fees.

Car Parking

The New England Aquarium does not own or operate any parking garages, but we do have arrangements with several local garages. Please visit www.neaq.org/visit/parking for information on rates, distance to the Aquarium, and oversized vehicles.

Directions

The Aquarium is located at 1 Central Wharf, near the Marriott Long Wharf Hotel and close to Faneuil Hall/Quincy Market. Directions can change without notice. www.neaq.org/visit/hours-directions

From the South (I-93 northbound)

Take I-93 northbound. Take Exit 23, marked "Gov't Center, North End, Aquarium, Quincy Market." Turn left at Surface Road and continue for three blocks. Turn left at Milk Street, and the Aquarium will be straight ahead.

From the North

Take I-93 southbound to Exit 24 A-B (Callahan Tunnel/Government Center), which is the first exit after you enter the Thomas P. O'Neill Jr. Tunnel. Take the right or "A" side of the divided exit (Government Center). Stay left to turn onto Surface Road at the light. Go two blocks to Milk Street and turn left. The Aquarium will be straight ahead.

From Cambridge

Take Memorial Drive north to the intersection of Route 28 (McGrath-O'Brien Highway) and turn right; you will pass the Museum of Science. When you come to the intersection with Storrow Drive, go straight across the intersection into the tunnel for I-93 south. Take I-93 southbound to Exit 24 A-B (Callahan Tunnel/Government Center), which is the first exit after you enter the Thomas P. O'Neill Jr. Tunnel. Take the right or "A" side of the divided exit (Government Center). Stay left to turn onto Surface Road at the light. Go two blocks to Milk Street and turn left. The Aquarium will be straight ahead.

From the West (I-90 east to I-93 northbound)

Take the Mass Turnpike to I-93 north. Take Exit 23 off I-93, marked "Gov't Center, North End, Aquarium, Quincy Market." Turn left at Surface Road and continue for three blocks. Turn left at Milk Street, and the Aquarium will be straight ahead.

Temporary Drop-Off/Pickup Permit

Place this permit on the front windshield of the bus.

There is a 10-minute window for drop-off/pickup. Bus parking is available for a fee at the Boston Autoport, 100 Terminal Street, Charlestown, MA 02129.

