



ZZZs Under the Seas Camp-In Program Leader Packet

Sleep with the fishes at the Texas State Aquarium! Join us for an overnight adventure full of excitement and discovery as your group participates in evening programs and hands-on activities. Each overnight experience includes a bedtime snack and hot breakfast the following morning.

Some exhibits may not be available the night of your camp-in due to other events at the Aquarium.

Program Itinerary (subject to adjustments)

6:30pm Check-in & Welcome

- Please remember to eat dinner before checking in.
- Check-in at main Aquarium doors (up the ramp from parking lot). Group Leader must be present. You may not enter early or without camp-in staff.
- Before programming can begin, you must turn in the following required paperwork to our staff:
 - Roster with the names of all people spending the night
 - Behavior Agreement signed by all adults (pages 4 & 5 of Leader Packet)
 - Signed waiver for all children and adults
- Welcome by staff with brief orientation and general guidelines

6:45pm Programming

- Explore Aquarium habitats, guided by our staff
- Programming schedule depends upon several factors: timely arrival, purchase of Creature Feature and/or Diver in the Water experiences, exhibit availability, and weather.
 - Diver in the Water (if booked, scheduled time may vary) 15-20 minutes
 - Creature Feature (if booked, scheduled time may vary) 15-20 minutes
- Chaperones assist by providing support, guiding campers to appropriate areas, and ensuring campers behave safely and respectfully. Adults are expected to join the fun too.

8:30 pm Snack

- Options include goldfish, snack mix, fruit snacks, cookies
- Juice

9:00 pm Indoor Programming

- Campers will complete a challenge at the end of the night

10:00pm Prepare for Bed

- Group gathers for night time orientation
- Change into PJs, brush teeth, etc.
- Set up sleeping bags in exhibit areas. Staff will guide groups to sleeping areas.
 - Chaperones will need to space themselves throughout and at the ends of group.

11:00pm Lights Out

- No use of flashlights or phone lights unless to guide camper to restroom.
- All participants must remain in sleeping area unless using restroom. Campers must be accompanied to the restroom by an adult.

6:15am Wake up & Pack up

- Campers will wake up, pack up sleeping bags, and change for morning.

7:00am Breakfast

- Campers must have all belongings packed and ready for departure prior to eating breakfast.
- Breakfast*
 - Whataburger taquito (sausage, bacon, or potato)
 - Whataburger hash browns
 - Fruit
 - Juice
 - Milk
 - Coffee for adults

8:00am Departure from the Aquarium

- Group or individuals from the group may re-enter free of charge when Aquarium opens to the public.

** No outside food or beverages allowed, unless for dietary restrictions or allergies and approved by Aquarium staff. Individuals requiring special dietary items or with dietary allergies should communicate these restrictions to Education Engagement Specialist PRIOR to event. In some cases, alternative food items can be provided (e.g. gluten free snack) and others can be restricted. Food items that cannot be provided by Aquarium will need to be provided by camp group or camper.*

General Information and Guidelines

Payment, Cancellation and Refund

Group reservations will be accepted until space available has been filled. The maximum number of participants is 75, and each participant must be at least six years of age. We will confirm your reservation date in writing; an itinerary and participant expectations will be included with your confirmation. Reservations must be made at least two weeks in advance. However, due to the popularity of our programs, we recommend making your reservations as early as possible.

Final payment must be made two weeks prior to event date. Payment cannot be received during the Camp-In event. Groups with outstanding payments two weeks prior to event day risk cancellation.

- A \$250.00 deposit is due within two business days of booking your reservation. Your deposit is non-refundable, but can be transferred to a future reservation date. It is required that this date be within one year of the original booking date.
- A participant count is due at time of deposit. If your participant number changes we must receive notice no later than **two weeks** from your scheduled event, and we must receive a group roster at this time. You may not add campers or adult chaperones after that time. If numbers reduce, fees will not be adjusted. A minimum of one adult per ten children is required. All participants (adults and children) must bring a signed waiver to participate in the program.

Parking and Evening Contact Information

Parking is permitted in either Aquarium lot. Please be aware the Aquarium cannot be held liable for any damage and/or theft occurring in the parking lots. Be sure to remove all valuables and securely lock vehicles.

If you need to contact program staff after 5:00 p.m. on the evening of your program, please call 361-215-8658.

Chaperone Role

Adult participants are depended upon to ensure all campers abide by guidelines in the Behavior Agreement and follow Camp-In Staff instructions for the duration of the program. Participant (and animal) safety is a high priority at the Aquarium, and we need adult chaperone assistance to guarantee everyone has a safe, happy, and ZZZs filled night!

What to Bring

- Closed-toe shoes - *shoes must be worn at all times except when in bed*
- Sleeping bag and pillow
- Sleeping pad or roll (no air mattresses)
- Sleepwear
- Toiletries- *shower facilities are NOT available*
- Flashlights (Adults only)
- Any medicine must be brought and administered by an adult chaperone and must include the prescription information.
- Electronics are permitted for photo and alarm purposes only. If they become a distraction, Camp-In Staff will request group leader pick them up.

The Participant Behavior Agreement is attached below. Be sure to read, complete, and return for your ZZZs Under the Seas program.



Camp-In Participant Behavior Agreement

Instructions

Please review the following behavioral expectations with your group participants -- both children and adults. By signing the bottom of the page, your group is acknowledging and committing to follow all stated behavioral expectations. Please bring this signed copy of the Behavior Agreement with you and turn in to Camp-in Staff during check-in. The Group Leader is responsible for the behavior of the group and must be on site for the duration of the camp-in.

Group Leader Name: _____

School/Organization Name: _____

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

The Texas State Aquarium is a place of learning, fun, and discovery! To make sure that all visitors have a great time at the Aquarium, it is important to abide by these behavioral expectations:

1. **Stay with your group.** All participants, including adults, should stay with the Camp-In Staff or assigned group for the entirety of the tours and activities and should follow directions of the Camp-In staff. During snack and breakfast, all participants must remain in the lobby. Notify Camp-In Staff if any participants need to leave the group or activity areas for any reason.
2. **Walking Feet Only.** The Aquarium has many turns, twists, stairs, and water that can easily become dangerous when participants are not walking.
3. **Always be respectful of the Aquarium exhibits and building.** Please do not touch the exhibits; they are made of acrylic, not glass, and scratch easily. Please follow pathways and sidewalks, and avoid stepping on, over, or under railings and planted areas.
4. **Help care for the animals.** When permitted, touch them gently. Aquarium staff will guide touching experiences to ensure campers and animals remain safe.
5. **No outside food.** No outside food is permitted during the event, unless explicitly approved by the Aquarium (e.g. dietary restrictions). Snack and breakfast will be offered in the lobby area; food and drink are not allowed in any other exhibits or spaces.
6. **Stay out of restricted areas.** Many areas will be off limits or restricted during the camp-in to ensure participants and animals remain safe. These areas include some exhibits, the café, food court, upstairs, offices, and labs.
7. **“Lights Out” means lights out.** Once campers are settled into the sleeping area and “lights out” has been announced, all participants (adults and children) are required to stay in designated sleeping areas with all electronic devices stowed for the night. Flashlights should only be used when escorting a camper to the bathroom and should not be used to observe animals. Exploring other spaces is strictly prohibited during these hours. Exceptions include visiting the lobby for restrooms, water fountains, and/or any medical needs. All children must be escorted by an adult to leave sleeping area.

