



FIELD TRIP FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I ensure we get a visit date that works for our group?

Book early! The earlier you request a reservation, the better, especially for spring dates. Reservation requests are processed in the order they are received. We have limited capacity for school groups and regularly update the website when a date sells out. Early planning will also help you secure bus transportation from your school.

How do we pay for our group visit?

We accept credit cards, checks and cash on the day of your visit. If you would like to pay in advance, we can process a credit card over the phone or you can mail us a check. **We DO NOT accept purchase orders.** Invoices are emailed with the reservation confirmation. Please use the invoice to request a purchase order from your organization.

Can I schedule a private program for my students?

Yes, on Tuesdays only. We are closed to the public on Tuesdays and offer schools the choice of one program during their visit. On Wednesdays and Thursdays, SCI is open to the public. Groups may attend the daily public programs.

Does the Science Center of Iowa offer group tours?

We do not offer group tours. We will provide an itinerary for your group if you have requested a lunch time, program or lab. The rest of your visit is for open exploration. We encourage you to break your students into smaller groups and assign a chaperone or school staff member to lead them through a rotation of the various exhibits. Smaller groups will allow more time and opportunity to explore our [exhibits](#).

Why do you need advance notice if we need to lower the number of attendees?

We strive to make the Science Center of Iowa accessible to all students. SCI is an indoor experience and we cap the number of student groups we schedule to ensure proper staffing and a good experience for everyone visiting the Science Center of Iowa. We request a two weeks advance notice to any reduction in a group's attendees. This allows us to schedule as many student groups as possible and staff accordingly. If groups over estimate the number of attendees, we risk not properly staffing our facility and potentially turn groups away because we have reached our cap.

Do you have space for lunch?

Yes! We do offer space for lunch from September 1-May 31. There is an option to request a lunch space on the reservation form. A facilities fee is charged for the set up and cleaning, based on your group size. Food is not permitted in the exhibits and groups may not eat in any area beyond the main entrance desk. If the weather nice, your group is welcome to eat on the green space outside the Science Center of Iowa. We do not have indoor space for lunch during the summer.

Can we use SCI Memberships in lieu of the group student fee?

The Science Center of Iowa memberships are not valid for group visits. This is disclosed when joining SCI. An \$8 fee is assessed for all school group students, regardless of membership status. Memberships were designed for an individual or family experience and not built for group usage. We strive to provide educational opportunities for all students. To do this as a nonprofit, we rely on the student fees to help cover the expenses we incur. As a courtesy to members and to encourage chaperone participation, we allow parents to use their membership in lieu of the chaperone fee.

Is there a charge for chaperones?

We encourage chaperones and offer special discounted pricing of \$15 per chaperone. All parents who wish to chaperone will need to check in on the day of the visit and pay the reduced chaperone fee of \$15 or present their membership for entrance. To guarantee a safe and memorable experience, chaperones must remain with their group throughout the visit, ensuring a fun and secure learning journey for all students.

Can chaperones bring siblings?

We discourage chaperones from bringing siblings. We offer discounted entrance fees for chaperones to encourage adults to attend with their student to engage and supervise. Additional siblings detract from this purpose. However, we do realize that occasionally, parents cannot chaperone if they do not bring their younger children. In this case, there will be a \$15 fee for additional children.

Do you validate parking?

We will validate parking for ***school owned vehicles only***. Chaperones may park in our parking ramp and register their vehicle with our parking provider. QR codes are posted throughout the ramp. Parking is \$4 for the first hour and \$1 for each additional hour. Failure to register a vehicle parked in our ramp could result in a \$40 ticket. Limited city street parking is also available.

Where do buses park?

We have bus lanes reserved in the front of our facility. SCI staff will be available to help direct parking. Occasionally, drivers may be asked to park their buses off-site. If this is necessary, directions will be provided.