

Frequently Asked Questions

How much do parties cost and is a deposit required?

Parties are \$220.00 for members and \$245.00 for non-members up to 20 people (6.50 per person thereafter). A non-refundable deposit of \$50.00 is required at the time of booking. We accept MasterCard, Visa, Discover, American Express, Check or Cash. You can drop the deposit off at the gate, mail it in or pay via credit card over the phone.

What types of parties are available?

Parties are held in the Koch Family Lodge Event Rooms A & B, include unlimited (20 min max) rides on the Carousel during the party, a visit through the Budgie Aviary (seasonal) and a visit through the Kley Building.

When are parties available?

The zoo hosts birthday parties on weekends at 10:00 AM & 2:00 PM. Parties last 2 hours. Parties may be available during the week upon request.

What does the party include?

Exclusive use of a private room for 2 hours; Zoo Host and party attendants will visit a portion of the Zoo; Zoo admission for 20 guests (age 3 and up) good for all day; complimentary tram service before and after the party; one "25% off one item" coupon in the Zoo's gift shop; paper products (plates, napkins, cups, forks). You supply the birthday cake (or dessert) of your choice. Beverages and food options are available via the zoo concessionaire. Check out Birthday Party Menu. We take care of cleaning up the mess!

What age groups are the parties for?

Zoo parties are for all ages!

What Zoo a la carte options are available?

Additional a la carte options to enhance your party include:

- Rhino Feeding: \$95.00 (maximum of 15 guests) behind the scenes is offered at 2:00 PM parties
- Private Giraffe Feeding: \$30.00
- Budgie Feeding: \$30
- Food Options – Full menu available
- Renting both Carousel Rooms, A & B - \$75.00 extra
- Tokens for Additional Attractions - \$1/token

How far in advance should I book a party?

We recommend calling well in advance (1 – 2 months depending on the time of year) to reserve your preferred date.

How many guests does the basic price include?

The \$220/\$245 price includes 20 people. Any guest beyond 20 will cost an extra \$6.50/person. This includes adults, members and children (age 3 and up). Children 2 & under are FREE. Carousel Event Rooms have a capacity of 30 people, or 60 should you rent both for an extra charge. We do need an estimate of the number of guests prior to your party.

What are the lunch options? Can we bring in food?

You may bring in birthday cakes, cupcakes or cookies for you guests. Items should be ready to serve. We do have a refrigerator/freezer if you need to keep drinks or cakes cold. If you would like lunch or additional snacks provided for your guests, please contact the zoo concessionaire at (812)-435-0840 or email jhoehn@venuworksevv.com for menu options or to place an order.

Can I bring gifts, balloons etc.?

You are welcome to open gifts in your party room and add any decorations. However, for the safety of our animals, We Do Not Permit Balloons, Pinatas or Confetti to be on zoo grounds. Additional gift items are also available in the gift shop if desired.

When do I pay for the party?

The deposit is required at time of booking. The remaining balance is due at the end of your party. Your host will count your additional guest and let you know your total (minus the deposit). Checks are payable to Mesker Park Zoo & Botanic Garden. Cash and Credit Cards are also accepted.

Should I tip my host?

Tips are optional of course, but if you feel your host has provided a good party, a tip is certainly appreciated.

What if I don't want to pay for all of the parents that come to the party?

If the children are old enough to attend the party without their parents, we do not charge for those parents that are simply walking their children to the party room. If the parents wish to stay and you do NOT want to cover the extra cost (\$6.50), then please note on your invitation that they will need to pay separately at the front gate. You can note on the invitation that the party includes children only.

What if there is severe weather or we need to cancel the party?

Parties continue rain or shine, so please bring appropriate attire if your party occurs on a cold or rainy day. But no worries, we make up for the rain by having extra special animal tours-fun will still be had! Should there be a snow emergency called for the entire city, please note that the Zoo would not open. In the event you should need to cancel at the last minute for any reason, please call the main zoo line (812.435.6143) as early as possible to let us know.

What time should I arrive & where do I park?

It is suggested that guests arrive 15-20 minutes prior to party time to allow adequate time for parking and walking to the party room. The first portion of the party usually includes the tour, so it is extremely helpful if your guests arrive promptly.

Does the party include tram service?

Although there is not a tram tour scheduled as a part of the official party, birthday party guests do receive free tram service throughout the day. They can utilize the tram to and from the party if desired. Please note that the party tour does include walking; if you have guests that prefer not to participate in the tour, they are welcome to wait in the party room.