



# SELF-GUIDED VISIT INFORMATION

2024/2025

## CONFIRMING YOUR VISIT

Please review your Program Itinerary and Order Summary prior to your visit.

If there are any discrepancies, email [birchaquariumprogram@ucsd.edu](mailto:birchaquariumprogram@ucsd.edu) or call (858) 534-7336.

### CHECKLIST: PREPARING FOR YOUR VISIT

- **Arrival:** Plan to arrive 10 minutes before your entry time to get checked in. Early and/or late arrivals may not be accommodated.
- **Teacher Check-In:** Check in with Education staff at the School and Youth Group Entrance. All adults will be given a chaperone badge that serves as tickets for students and adults.
- **Attendance Numbers:** Be ready to provide **exact numbers of students and adults** (teachers, parents, and staff) at check-in.
- **Chaperones:** Only adults (teachers and chaperones) within the designated number (see below) are free of charge. Extra chaperones can be added to your reservation before arrival, or they can purchase extra chaperone tickets at check-in.
- **Small Groups:** Separate your class into smaller groups with a chaperone. Instruct chaperones to begin their visit in different areas of the aquarium to avoid overcrowding.
- **Be Prepared:** Read all the policies below carefully for important information that may have changed since your last visit. Share with the other teachers in your group

### TIPS FOR YOUR VISIT

**Visit Length:** During construction, the Hall of Fishes is unavailable. The self-guided visit will take approximately **2 hours**, depending on age and group size. We recommend planning your bus pickup accordingly.

**Invoice:** Paying by invoice? Be sure to provide us with your school/organization's Tax ID/EIN and billing contact information (name, phone, email) **before** your visit to process the invoice.

**Plan Ahead:** Check out our **Field Trip Checklist** on our website to plan a smooth and seamless trip.

**Learning Resources:** Visit our website to access learning resources to enhance your students' experience. We offer **Teacher Guides** and **Aquarium Activity Sheets** to print in advance. Please bring your own clipboards and pencils!

**Free Pre-Visit:** Teachers may have one complimentary pre-visit to the aquarium before your scheduled field trip to plan for the day. **Teachers must make a reservation in advance by calling (858) 534-7336.** Any additional guests must pay admission.



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## SELF-GUIDED VISIT POLICIES .....

**Chaperones:** Adults within the designated ratio are free of charge. The number of free chaperones is dependent on the number of paid students present on the day of your visit.

**ALL TEACHERS, STAFF, AND PARENTS with your group are categorized as chaperones.**

- **Ages 2-TK:** one free teacher/chaperone per two students (1:2).
- **Grades K-12:** one free teacher/chaperone per five students (1:5).
- **Nurses/Aides:** Free, not included in calculation of chaperones.

Extra chaperone tickets are available for purchase through your group order or onsite at check-in.

Chaperones are required and expected to ensure students comply with Program Policies at all times. The teacher/group leader will be asked to sign a Behavior Contract (see attached) upon arrival. Groups who do not comply with these expectations may be asked to leave.

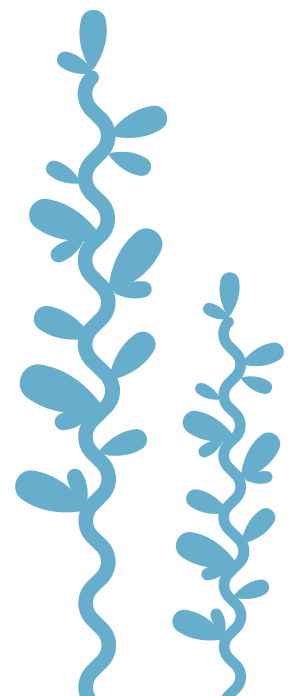
**Cancellation/Rescheduling:** Cancellations, changes, and rescheduling must be made **2 weeks in advance**. You will be responsible for a fee of **\$50 per order** if your visit is canceled or rescheduled less than 2 weeks in advance. No refunds are provided if you do not show up for your visit and you will be responsible for full payment.

**Visit Capacity:** You must adhere to maximum reserved student numbers. Due to limited capacity, we cannot guarantee entry if student numbers exceed the total reserved on your order.

**Early/Late Arrivals:** You must adhere to your scheduled check-in time. Early entry is not available. If you will be more than 10 minutes late for your entry time, please call (858) 534-7336. If you are more than 30 minutes late for your entry time, we cannot guarantee your entry.

**Bus Parking:** UCSD prohibits bus parking in the Birch Aquarium parking lot. Buses can park in Lot P705 on the corner of Regents Rd. and Genessee Ave. after dropping off at the aquarium.

**Gift Shop:** Students must be accompanied by a responsible chaperone at all times in the gift shop in groups no larger than 10 students per 1 chaperone. Groups may be asked to enter one at a time to moderate capacity.



## SELF-GUIDED VISIT POLICIES *CONTINUED* .....

**Payment Options:** We accept checks and credit card payments day-of, or can send an invoice to your school's billing department after the program. We cannot accommodate split payments or multiple payment methods. **Cash is not accepted.**

- **Invoice:** An invoice issued by UC San Diego Central Accounts Receivable Office will be emailed 2-3 weeks after your program date. The school/ organization's **Tax ID/EIN** and **billing contact information** (name, phone, email) are required to generate the invoice. Checks are due 30 days later to the address listed on the invoice. Do NOT mail checks to Birch Aquarium.
- **Check Payments:** One check can be written and accepted day-of. Do not write the check in advance as changes in student or chaperone numbers could change your total.
- **Credit Card Payments:** One credit card payment can be accepted onsite day-of or taken over the phone after your visit.
- **Purchase Orders (PO):** Purchase orders are not required but can be accepted at [birchaquariumprogram@ucsd.edu](mailto:birchaquariumprogram@ucsd.edu). An invoice will be emailed after your program date.

**Lunch:** Groups may use the designated picnic tables or the amphitheater-style seats by the Whale Fountain. We do not reserve eating areas. Lunch cubbies are available to store small lunch boxes or bags. Avoid storing backpacks, water bottles, or other large items in the cubbies. Coolers/ bins with secure lids can be kept next to the cubbies. Do not eat inside the aquarium or at the Splash Café tables.

- **Rainy Days:** There are no indoor areas for eating. If it is rainy, eat lunch/snack before or after your visit.
- **Splash Café:** If you are interested in lunch from Splash Café, contact [The French Gourmet](#) 2-3 weeks in advance to arrange for boxed lunches for your group. Avoid ordering in large quantities on the day of your visit, which can result in long wait times.
- **Summer:** Picnic tables may not be available during the summer (June-August).

**Photography/Videography:** We sometimes photograph visitors for educational and promotional purposes. Entry into the aquarium grants permission for use of these images. You are welcome to take photos (no flash photography inside the aquarium) and video for personal use, however commercial photography/videography is prohibited without permission from the Birch Aquarium Marketing Department.

