

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **1. What time is the Sleepover?**

Check-in begins at 7:00 p.m. The Sleepover takes place on Saturday starting at 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 a.m. the next morning.

### **2. Where do we park?**

Overnight parking will be in the parking lot behind the Natural History Museum. You can enter from Constitution Avenue on the west side, at the guard booth between 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Street NW. You must enter the museum on Constitution Avenue. Cars cannot be left on the street overnight. Your name will be left with the security officer at the parking booth. A pass will be given to you when you arrive which should be placed in the window of your car. Please limit the number of vehicles as spaces are limited. There is no additional charge for parking.

The parking lot will open to participants at 7 p.m. Guests must remove their car from parking lot by 9 a.m. the following morning or they will be subject to being towed or a fine.

### **3. How do we check in?**

Check-in is from 7-7:30 p.m. in Ocean Hall near the Explorer Theater. Everyone who attends a sleepover needs to check in at “will call” to submit their party’s release forms and receive a wristband to wear throughout the event. Families who have pre-registered will be listed on our roster and will need to give the name under which the reservation was made.

## **YOU MUST BRING A SIGNED RELEASE FORM FOR EVERYONE IN YOUR PARTY WHEN YOU CHECK-IN.**

After receiving your wristbands, you will be given IMAX tickets for the evening’s film and be shown to the Explorer Theater to store your overnight gear. All participants must attend orientation, which will start promptly at 7:30 p.m. in the Atrium Café.

We strongly discourage guests from arriving after 7:30 p.m.

If a participant needs to leave between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m., please contact a staff person during the sleepover. Children must be in the company of an adult throughout the entire sleepover. If an adult must leave and no other adult from the group is present, the entire party may be asked to leave.

Constitution Avenue entrance is a handicapped-accessible entrance.

### **4. What types of food will be served at the Sleepover?**

Overnight guests are strongly encouraged to eat dinner before arriving to check in for the program. An evening snack may include cookies, fruit, animal crackers, juice, coffee and tea. Breakfast will include fresh fruit, bagels and cream cheese, milk, muffins, pastries, coffee, tea and juice. This is not a complete list and not every item listed about will be available at every sleepover—this is merely a sample of the

kinds of foods offered. Under no circumstances can the food provided at an overnight be taken outside the designated eating areas.

**5. Can we bring our own food and beverages into the museum?**

No outside food or beverage will be allowed into the museum, except as provided below.

Outside food is allowed only:

If a guest has severe food allergies or specific dietary needs. In such cases, he/she is allowed to bring in an outside snack/breakfast under the following conditions:

- i. It must be sealed in a heavy-duty plastic container (in Tupperware, not in a Ziploc bag), labeled with the guest's name.
- ii. Items must be non-perishable, as overnight staff will not have access to refrigerate guests' food.
- iii. We can't guarantee the safety of the food brought into the museum, nor can we take responsibility for it if it is lost or stolen.

Any food not meeting these criteria or that is found in an exhibition hall will be immediately confiscated.

Any guests needing to bring in outside food should notify registration when ordering the tickets and also the overnight staff immediately upon arrival.

**6. Where do we sleep?**

Guests will sleep on the marble floor in Ocean Hall (with Phoenix the Whale).

**7. Can we increase the number of participants in our group?**

Space is very limited for the Sleepovers. If you want to increase your group size or make changes to your reservation, you must call 202-633-3030 from Monday-Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. If spaces are available you must pay immediately over the phone. Places are provided strictly on a first-come, first-served basis.

**8. What if someone cancels in our group?**

There are no refunds for the Sleepovers.

**9. How many people can attend a Sleepover**

The Sleepover can accommodate up to 125 people.

**10. What if someone gets sick during the Sleepover?**

Notify a Sleepover staff member if anyone in your group gets sick or hurt. Appropriate action will be taken.

**11. Can we leave early from the overnight?**

Yes, participants may leave early if needed. However, all participants from the group must leave unless another adult from the party remains with the children. No children may be left without an adult chaperone.

**12. When will NMNH Shops be open during the Sleepover?**

The Family Store will be open at 8:00am the morning after the sleepover.

**13. Are the exhibits and programs handicapped accessible?**

Yes. All Sleepover activities are fully handicapped-accessible.

**14. How many chaperones are required to participate with a group?**

Each group will be required to maintain a ration of one adult supervisor for three child participants.

**15. Where do we change into our sleeping clothes?**

Restroom facilities are available on the same level as Ocean Hall, adjacent to sleeping area, as well as on the lower level.

**16. When do I receive confirmation for the Sleepover?**

You will receive an email confirmation immediately after you register for the sleepover. Please print out this email and bring it to check-in on the date of your event along with your completed participant release forms.

**17. Are younger and older siblings allowed to participate during the Sleepovers?**

Younger and older siblings are not permitted to attend the Sleepovers if they are not between the ages of 8 and 12 years old. We receive many requests for people to bring children to the overnights that are outside our designated age range of 8-12 years old. For many reasons, we are unable to approve these requests. In the interest of fairness, we can't make an exception for some participants while refusing it for others.

**18. How old must a chaperone be?**

A chaperone must be at least 21 years old.

**19. Can I bring a birthday cake or cupcakes to celebrate my child's birthday at a sleepover?**

No. At this time, we are not equipped to handle this activity.

**20. Refunds and exchanges**

There are no refunds for these special events.

**21. Security and Emergencies**

The Smithsonian Protection Services department has staff members inside the building 24 hours a day.

We highly recommend keeping your valuables on your person at all times or at home. The Smithsonian does not take responsibility for any lost or stolen items.

**22. The next day**

Participants are welcome to explore the museum after 10 a.m. in the morning. If you want to stay, please put your sleeping bags and other gear into your cars before returning to the museum and move your vehicle to the street.