

## BIRTHDAY RENTAL FAQs



### Which Venues are Available for Birthday Rentals?

At Stone Zoo, the [Maple Glen Tent](#) can be booked for birthday rentals. At Franklin Park Zoo, the following venues can be booked: Franklin Park Zoo: [Nature's Pavilion Tent](#); [Oak Lea Tent](#); [Children's Zoo Meeting Barn Classroom](#); and [Tropical Forest Classroom](#).

### May I Tour the Venue Before I Book a Birthday Rental?

To ensure that pricing remains affordable, we are unable to offer private tours of the party venues. We can provide you with any information you may need in making a venue selection.

### How Many Guests Can I Invite?

You may invite as many guests as the capacity of your venue will allow:

- Maple Glen Tent (SZ): 50 people seated/100 standing
- Nature's Pavilion Tent, Oak Lea Tent and Pine Knoll Tent (FPZ): 120 people seated/300 standing
- Children's Meeting Barn Classroom (FPZ): 50 people seated/65 standing
- Tropical Forest Classroom (FPZ): 70 people seated/85 standing

### What Admission Fees do I Have to Pay?

There is no admission fee for children under the age of 2 and guests with ZNE memberships. Discounted admission is offered for non-member guests aged 2 and older at the rates of \$13/person at Stone Zoo and \$15/person at Franklin Park Zoo.

### Is Parking Included?

Parking at the Zoo is free. The Zoo does not have a designated parking area for birthday party guests, so we suggest arriving early to park. During the warmer months, valet parking may be available for a separate fee at Franklin Park Zoo.

### What is an Animal Encounter and May I Choose the Animal for the Party?

Animal encounters may be purchased for your party. An animal encounter is a 10-20 minute "meet and greet" with one of the Zoo's Animal Ambassadors and one of the Zoo's Educators or Zookeepers, who will tell your guests about the Animal and answer any questions guests may have. The Zoo has a variety of birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians as Ambassador Animals.

While we want everyone to enjoy an encounter, our priority is the health and well-being of our Ambassador Animals. Encounters depend on several factors, including: whether the Animal is booked for another program; the Animal's health, needs and behavior; and the weather conditions. We will ask you to select three or four preferences from a list of Ambassador Animals. Please understand that there is no feeding or touching of the Ambassador Animal.

### What Decorations Should I Bring for the Birthday Party?

We encourage decorations such as: table covers; themed centerpieces; themed plates, napkins, cups and cutlery; banners or garland that can be hung in front of tables; and table signage. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- Most of our venues are Tents and the wall space in the indoor venues is limited, so it is difficult to hang items. Banners that can be attached to the edge of a table are easy to accommodate.
- "When in doubt, leave it out." If you are unsure about if a décor item is permitted, please call or email us with any questions or leave the item at home.

- Party favors and goody bags are allowed as long as they do not contain any items on the Prohibited Item list in your contract. Please verify with us that your favors and goody bag/gift items are acceptable before the party.
- While some hosts prefer to “go all out” for a party, the Zoo may not be the best venue for that type of celebration. Any items or plans that require more than one or two people to set up will eat into your party time; we do not have extra staff available to help set up. If you wish to do an extensive set up, please purchase extra time.
- No decorations on the Prohibited Item list in your contract may be brought inside the Zoo.
- The Zoo reserves the right to remove any décor or items that may pose a risk to our animals.

### **Can I Drop Off Birthday Party Items at the Zoo Before the Party?**

No, birthday party supplies and/or food may not be brought to the Zoo for storage prior to the party day. We do not have any storage space available, and we cannot offer refrigeration.

### **Can I Store Birthday Party Items in the Venue Before or After the Party?**

No, there is no storage in the party venue before or after your party. Our venues are often booked with other events or used for other Zoo purposes; our staff is also unavailable until 30 minutes prior to your party starting.

After your party, we need to clean and prepare the venue for other possible events. Our venues are not secured locations and we cannot guarantee the security of any of your belongings. You will be asked to bring any gifts, party items and food that you wish to take with you back to your vehicle at the conclusion of the party.

### **What Time Can I Show Up for the Party? Where Do I Go When I Arrive?**

You should arrive for the party no earlier than 30 minutes prior to your reserved party time; our staff will be unavailable before that time. Prior to your party, the Zoo will inform you as to which Entrance you should use, Zebra, Giraffe or Maple Glen Gate (Stone Zoo). A staff member will meet you at that Entrance or Gate (Stone Zoo) 30 minutes prior to your party and will escort you to the venue.

### **How Will I Get All of the Food and Party Supplies to the Party Venue?**

We have a rolling utility cart to assist you. If you have a large amount of party supplies and/or food, we recommend that you bring your own cart or wagon to help transport all of your items.

### **What Time Should My Guests Arrive? What Do My Guests Say or Do When They Arrive?**

Your guests have access to the Zoo the entire day of your party and can tour at any time that day. Your guests may approach any open gate (they must wait in line if there is a line), give their name to the attendant and tell the attendant that they are at the Zoo for your party. Admissions will check them in and direct them to your venue. Feel free to share the Zoo map with your guests.

[FPZ Map](#) | [SZ Map](#)

### **Will There Be a ZNE Staff Member at My Party?**

A staff member will be present to escort you to your venue, help you set up, make sure your animal encounter happens as scheduled (if you purchased one), ensure your catering order is set up (if you purchased catering), and gather your belongings at the close of the party. The staff member will not stay for the duration of your party.

For those who ordered food through the Zoo's onsite caterer, you will have a point person for catering present on the day of your event.

### **In Lieu of Birthday Gifts, Can Guests Make a Donation to the Zoo?**

Absolutely! Anyone can make a donation at this link:

<https://www.zoonewengland.org/act/give-now-all-for-our-animals/>