



# GUEST INFORMATION PACKET

## 2022

## WELCOME

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**Thank you for booking your sleepover adventure with us! We are excited for you to join us at ZZZ's by the Sea.**

As you prepare for your adventure, please review all program and participant information contained within this packet.

If you have any questions about your sleepover or information contained in this packet, please contact us at 228-241-1236 or email us at [hwhite@msaquarium.org](mailto:hwhite@msaquarium.org).

## SLEEPOVER INTRODUCTION

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Guests will have the opportunity to sleep in one of our amazing galleries in Aquatic Wonders:

- Swirl Tank
- Shark Window
- Big Window

After arrival, you will be assigned to a sleeping area based on your group make-up, size, and needs.

### **Departure**

When departing, please make sure that you have collected all your belongings. Any items left by guests be placed in the Aquarium's lost and found located at Ticketing.

The sleepover ends at 8:45 a.m. the following morning. This is when the gift shop will be open for sleepover guests only. Entrance back into the park after 9:00 a.m. will only be permitted in the event of an emergency. All personal items will need to be moved to vehicles between 7:00-8:45 a.m.

Admission into the Aquarium is available after 10:00 a.m. Regular admission rates apply. To find these rates and purchase tickets, please visit our website at [www.msaquarium.org](http://www.msaquarium.org).

## SAFETY AND SECURITY

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**SAFETY** is the number one priority at Mississippi Aquarium. Everyone, staff, and guests are responsible for safety. The following policies and procedures are set for the safety of guests, staff, and animals at the Aquarium. Staff will go over emergencies, fire drills, emergency exits, and all other requirements at the beginning of the sleepover.

Aquarium staff and security officers are always available during sleepovers. Staff sleep in separate areas than guests; however, they are accessible throughout the night. The Aquarium has 24-hour onsite security. Please do not be alarmed when you see a uniformed staff member or security officer passing through the building. Security makes regular rounds throughout the facility during the night.

Main aquarium gates are locked after 4:30 p.m. Entrance into the Aquarium after 4:30 p.m. will require a Guest Experience staff member or security officer escort. The main sleepover building will be locked after lights out at 11:00 p.m. and be unlocked at 6:30 a.m.

To ensure the safety of our guests, the following protocols are in place for ZZZ's by the Sea:

- Guests attending the sleepovers under 18 must be accompanied by an adult 18+ and older.
- Smoking is strictly prohibited on campus, which includes electronic and vapor cigarettes.
- Alcoholic beverages are not permitted in sleepover programs.
- During any sleepovers, guests who are behaving inappropriately or violating safety protocols, may be asked to leave.

Please note, the following items are NOT permitted inside Mississippi Aquarium:

- Weapons, including but not limited to guns and knives
- No outside food or beverage including alcoholic beverages, is permitted
- Matches/Lighters
- Chewing gum
- Fishing poles
- Pets or emotional support animals are not allowed on aquarium grounds.
  - Service animals are permitted in all areas on campus except the aviary. If you have questions about our service animal policy, please contact us.

If there is an emergency and you need to contact someone attending the sleepover, please contact our security office at 228-669-2824.

## PACKING FOR YOUR ADVENTURE

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The secret is to pack light. We suggest:

- Sleeping mats
- Sleeping bags
- Blankets
- Pillows
- Sweater or Hoodie
- PJs
- Toothbrush and other small toiletries
- Battery powered phone chargers

We allow twin-sized inflatable beds, as long as they do not require electricity to inflate.

Electrical outlets are very limited and are not available in all the sleeping areas. It is recommended that you bring a battery-operated charger if you wish to charge electronic devices. If you need an electrical outlet because of special needs, such as a CPAP machine, please contact us so we can make sure to place you near an outlet.

For some, sleeping away from home can be difficult. We suggest that you bring eye masks and earplugs if you are sensitive to light and sounds.

Recommended items to leave at home:

- Toys
- Flashlights
  - For the safety of our animals, flashlights are not permitted during sleepovers. Lighting in sleeping areas will be reduced, and nightlights will be spaced throughout.
- Valuables:
  - Tablets
  - Laptops
  - Video games

# GUEST ARRIVAL AND PARKING

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## Directions

Mississippi Aquarium's physical address is:

**2100 E. Beach Blvd. Gulfport, MS 39501**

If you are arriving by **personal vehicle**, please park in the CTA (Coast Transit Authority) parking garage east of the Aquarium. Parking is **\$5 per vehicle** for the duration of your experience. CTA security officers monitor the parking garage 24 hours a day.

The parking garage is located at:

**1401 20<sup>th</sup> Ave. Gulfport, MS 39507**

For the safety of your vehicle and belongings, please make sure to leave all valuables out of sight!

## Luggage

Please make sure to bring all your luggage and other needed items with you to check-in. Items will be placed inside the main sleepover building until activities for the night have concluded.

## Check-in

Check-in is at 6:30 p.m. at the front entry plaza of the Aquarium, west of the CTA parking garage. If you are participating in the sleepover, please arrive no later than 6:45 p.m. to ensure you can unpack all gear and attend the safety briefing promptly at 7:00 p.m. All guests participating in sleepovers must attend the safety briefing.

Luggage should be brought to the main ticketing entrance when you check-in. Aquarium staff will meet group leaders or individuals in the plaza and direct guests to the appropriate location.

## Orientation

Our sleepover program begins promptly at 7:00 p.m. You'll meet our talented staff and volunteers during orientation and learn all about your sleepover. Make sure you arrive with plenty of time to be here for the meeting. It's information you don't want to miss!

## SNACK AND BREAKFAST

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A late-night snack and light breakfast will be provided by the Aquarium's food vendor. Personal drinks and food items are not allowed into the Aquarium except for dietary or medical needs. We recommend bringing a refillable water bottle or canteen. We have filtered water stations throughout campus to refill water bottles.

*Please note straws and glass containers are not allowed in the Aquarium.*

We ask all participants to plan accordingly and eat dinner before arriving at the Aquarium.

**Dinner is NOT included in the sleepover.**

### **Special Diets/ Snacks:**

- Guests with special dietary needs should contact the aquarium one week in advance of the program date to ensure adequate time to prepare.
- Outside food and drinks are not permitted unless there is a special dietary and medical need.
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If you have dietary or allergy questions, please contact us at least one week in advance of your program date.

# SLEEPOVER SCHEDULE

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## Evening

6:30–7:00 p.m. – Check-In

7:00–7:30 p.m. – Welcome Orientation

7:30–9:30 p.m. – Activities

9:30–10:00 p.m. – Snack

10:00 – 10:15 p.m. – Nighttime Orientation

10:15 – 11:00 p.m. – Quiet Time

11:00 p.m. – Lights Out

## Morning

6:00–6:45 a.m. – Rise and Shine

6:45–7:45 a.m. – Breakfast

7:45–8:15 a.m. – Animal Spotlight

8:15–8:45 a.m. – Reef Talk

8:45–9:00 a.m. – Departure and Gift Shop

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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## **Can I leave Aquarium during the overnight?**

Guests are more than welcome to leave the program at any time. Aquarium gates and entrances are locked after 4:30 p.m. Entrance or exit from the Aquarium between 4:30 p.m. - 9:00 a.m. will require either a guest experience staff member or security officer escort. Please bring any medical items or medications you may need with you. There are no refunds for leaving the program early. Security officers will be available for any guest that needs to leave due to an emergency.

## **Will food be available?**

Outside food and drinks are not permitted on sleepovers unless required for dietary or medical purposes. A late night snack and continental breakfast is included in your sleepover. We encourage guests to bring a refillable water bottle. Straws, alcohol, and glass bottles are not permitted on campus.

We do not provide dinner at sleepovers, so we encourage all participants to eat before arriving at the Aquarium.

If you or your child has a food allergy or other need, please contact us **one week** in advance of your sleepover date to ensure that our food and beverage vendor has time to prepare. There is no guarantee that a change will take place, but we will try to accommodate reasonable requests when given ample notice.

## **Can I bring electronics?**

Sleepovers are packed with fun activities to keep you busy all evening and morning. We strongly encourage you to leave expensive electronics or other items at home. Mississippi Aquarium is not responsible for items that are stolen, left behind, damaged, or accidentally taken.

## **Are there bathrooms or showers?**

Bathrooms are available throughout the sleepover in both the Changing Tides and Aquatic Wonders buildings. There are no showers on site, so please plan accordingly.

## **When does the sleepover end?**

The sleepover ends promptly at 8:45 a.m., when guests will go to the gift shop. After a sleepover, admission into the Aquarium will be at regular operating hours of 10 a.m.-5 p.m., and tickets are available at regular admission prices.

## **When should I arrive? Can I arrive late?**

Check-in for Zzz's by the Sea starts at 6:30 p.m. Early arrivals will have to wait for staff to arrive to get checked-in. The program starts promptly at 7:00 p.m. with a mandatory safety meeting for all guests who are staying overnight.



Guests who arrive after 7:00 p.m. will have to contact security for access into the Aquarium.

**What should we bring?**

- Sleeping mats
- Sleeping bags
- Blankets
- Pillows
- Sweater or Hoodie
- PJs
- Toothbrush and other small toiletries
- Battery powered phone chargers

**Will we get to tour the park or see animals?**

Absolutely! You will be escorted through the park for activities at various habitats.

**Will the gift shop be open?**

Yes, participants will visit the gift shop at the end of the sleepover before they exit the Aquarium.

**What is the maximum group size?**

The maximum group size currently is 50 participants.

**Are electrical outlets available?**

Electrical outlets are extremely limited and are not available in all the sleeping areas. If you need an electrical outlet because of special needs, such as a CPAP machine, please contact us so we can make sure to place you near an outlet.

**Where will we sleep?**

Participants will sleep in one of three galleries: Big Window, Shark Window, and Swirl Tank.

**Can I bring an air mattress?**

We recommend participants bring camping pads, yoga mats or small camping cots for comfort. While it is not encouraged, guests **can** bring twin-sized air mattresses as long as it does not require electricity. These restrictions allow all guests to have the best overnight experience possible.

**I do not want to sleepover. Can I drop my children off so I don't have to attend?**

Sleepovers are designed as a group and family experience. Children must be supervised by an adult at all times during the sleepover. Mississippi Aquarium requires at least one adult (18+ or older) for every 5 children present. Children 17 years old and younger must be accompanied by an adult.

## ADULT AND MINOR PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

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Below is a list of forms and items that participants must submit one week prior to scheduled sleepovers. Guests without registration, payment and signed waivers will not be permitted to attend the sleepover.

- ☐ Waiver and Release
- ☐ Chaperone Consent Form
- ☐ Screening Certification, Waiver and Release Agreement

Please notify us in advance with any questions or special needs you or your child may have. We will try our best to accommodate any reasonable request if given sufficient notice.