

This document is meant to inform prospective educators and students about our summer and fall field trip season, outlining program changes, safety protocols, availability, capacities, and frequently asked questions (FAQs). Any additional questions or concerns can be directed to Meghan Wiesbrock, the manager of schools and camp at mwiesbrock@mortonarb.org, or Megan Kuhl-Horbin, the school programs specialist at mkuhl-horbin@mortonarb.org.

The Morton Arboretum closely monitors public health recommendations to guide onsite operations. Be sure to check the [Know Before You Go](#) page on our website to get the most up-to-date information.

PLANNING YOUR FIELD TRIP

To help ensure the safety of our guests and staff, we will monitor the state and CDC guidelines in response to the pandemic. Therefore, we might need to make changes to your registration to reflect these decisions.

- **Do I need to be vaccinated to go on a field trip?** No, guests do not need to be vaccinated to visit the grounds.
- **In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, what is the Arboretum doing to ensure the safety of me and my students?** The education staff will adhere to your school or district's Personal Protective Equipment policies as identified by the teacher filling out the registration form. Additionally, bathrooms and high-traffic areas are sanitized throughout the day. COVID-19 vaccination is also an employment requirement for all staff at The Morton Arboretum.
- **Are you offering half-day and full-day field trips?** Yes. Self-guided field trips are available during open hours (7:00 a.m. to sunset); exceptions include the Children's Garden (open 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) and self-guided backpack programs (available in the spring and fall between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.) Our guided programs (available in the spring and fall) adhere to the following schedule:
 - Full-Day Guided Field Trips: 9:45 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.
 - Morning Guided Field Trips: 9:45 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.
 - Afternoon Guided Field Trips: 11:45 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.
- **Will we be able to eat lunch during our field trip?** Yes. Our available lunch locations are outdoors, at either the picnic tables or on tarps. The Thornhill Picnic Shelter is reserved for guided programs and Summer Science Camp; preference is given to full-day guided programs. Schools will be assigned table space based on their group size; other school groups may be assigned tables within the vicinity of your group's tables. Self-guided field trips will be assigned a lunch location at Meadow Lake Picnic Area; the picnic tables are not reserved. For questions, please contact Meghan Wiesbrock (mwiesbrock@mortonarb.org) or Megan Kuhl-Horbin (mkuhl-horbin@mortonarb.org).
- **How many students can participate in our field trip?** Please visit [our website](#) for current program capacities based on program type. Typically, our self-guided programs have a limit of 200 students and our self-guided backpacks have a limit of 100-200 students based on the program. Depending on the type of guided program you want to participate in, we can usually accommodate between 160-180 students. If you are bringing more than that, you would have to plan on coming to the Arboretum over the course of 2 or more days.

DURING YOUR FIELD TRIP

Please be considerate of others by practicing social distancing around the Human+Nature sculptures, and in other areas of the Arboretum, such as parking lots and on trails. The Arboretum's current policies recommend masks when indoors or cannot be socially distanced, but they are not required.

- **Students should not attend the field trip if they are unwell.**
- **Will my students mix with other students?** Students will be separated into groups of 20 or less during their guided field trip. If this is not possible due to not mixing cohorts (classrooms), it must be communicated during the registration process so we can best accommodate your group. Your school might mix with students from another school on the trails, while using the bathrooms, during lunch on the grounds, or if inclement weather brings your group to an indoor location.
- **Do we have to wear a mask when we visit? Will the Arboretum staff wear a mask when interacting with me and my students? What is your mask policy?** The Personal Protective Equipment policies of your school/district will be communicated to us via the registration form you fill out and will be followed during your field trip. The Arboretum's current policy recommends that all individuals, regardless of vaccination status, be masked when indoors or in close contact with each other (but not required). While visiting the Children's Garden, Maze Garden, Arbor Court, and other high-traffic areas within the Arboretum, mask-wearing is recommended for non-vaccinated individuals (but not required).
- **Are bathrooms available during the field trip?** Depending on where your field trip will take place, port-o-potties with handwashing stations or indoor bathrooms will be available but would be shared with other students. Masks are recommended when using indoor bathrooms (but not required). All restrooms are cleaned repeatedly throughout the day.
- **Can I schedule a half-day field trip and then explore the grounds with my classroom after?** You would have to schedule the "exploring the grounds" as a self-guided field trip in your registration form (an additional fee). If this occurs after or before a guided program, then your field trip is scheduled as a full-day program (half guided, half self-guided). As such, full-day pricing will be charged for your trip. This helps us monitor the number of persons and school groups onsite to keep everyone safe.