Frequently Asked Questions

How should we reserve spots?

- Fill out our Group Inquiry Form or email sleepovers@scaquarium.org to book.

When is payment due?

- A 20% deposit is due within 10 business days of securing a date. The final amount is due 21 days prior to the scheduled sleepover.

What is the timeline for the event?

- The event starts at 6:30 pm and runs until 8:00 am the following morning.

What is the minimum age allowed?

- For school groups, we recommend students no younger than third grade participate in the sleepover. For other groups, please email sleepovers@scaquarium.org to determine what is best.

What is the maximum group size?

- We can accommodate school groups up to 200 people in size. For scout groups and family sleepovers the maximum size we can accommodate is 150.

What should we bring to the sleepover?

- Everyone should bring a sleeping bag and a pillow. Additional items to bring include:
  - Toothbrush and toothpaste
  - Toiletries
  - Any medication needed (to be administered by teacher, leader or parent/guardian only)
  - Warm clothes to sleep in
  - Ear plugs and sleep mask (optional)
  - Camera, journal and pen (optional)
  - Flashlight (with red light if possible)

Is parking available for the event?

- Personal vehicle parking is available in the Aquarium Garage and metered street parking. The South Carolina Aquarium does not have its own the parking garage and does not control the cost. Meters are ticketed Monday-Saturday from 9 am to 10 pm.
- The bus lane is available as free parking for buses and vans clearly marked with the organization’s logo.

Where can we unload?

- All vehicles must load and unload on the right side (the side closest to the garage) of our dedicated bus lane. This lane is located off Washington Street and is adjacent to the municipal parking garage. For your group’s safety, please do not load or unload on Concord Street, the street directly in front of the Aquarium.
• If you are arriving by car, there is a brick driveway with a roundabout to the right of the Aquarium (when looking toward the Aquarium from Concord Street) you may use for unloading. Any car left unattended in the lane, MUST be in park with hazards on and cannot be left for more than FIVE minutes.
• We are not responsible for any unattended luggage.

Can I arrive late?
• Check in is from 6:30-7:00 pm. If you know ahead of time that you will be arriving late, please let the sleepover lead know by emailing sleepovers@scaquarium.org. If you are running late day of, please call Aquarium security at 843-579-8507.

What meals are included?
• A pizza dinner, snack and a continental breakfast. If you have allergy concerns, please email sleepovers@scaquarium.org.

Can I bring my own food and drinks in a cooler?
• Outside food and drinks are not allowed during the event. Dinner, snacks and breakfast are included with the price of each ticket. If you are concerned about the menu for medical or allergy reasons, please contact us at sleepovers@scaquarium.org.

Where do guests sleep?
• Guests will sleep on the first and second floor around our Great Ocean Gallery. Depending on group size additional areas will be opened. For school group and scout sleepovers we do separate areas based on gender.

Can I bring my air mattress?
• Guests are encouraged to bring camping pads, inflatable pool mats or small camp cots for comfort. Guests are permitted to bring one twin-sized air mattress per one or more people OR one queen-sized air mattress per two or more people. These restrictions allow all guests to have the best overnight experience possible. This may not apply to groups larger than 150.

Can we use flashlights?
• Flashlights and flash photography can cause stress in many of our animals and animal safety is our top priority. Red light flashlights may be used by guests for safety reasons. We can provide red film to turn a normal flashlight into a red-light flashlight.

Are electrical outlets available in the sleeping areas?
• Electrical outlets are available in some sleeping areas. Additional outlets can be found in our classrooms. If you need an outlet throughout the night for medical equipment, please contact us at sleepovers@scaquarium.org.

How much of the Aquarium will be open?
• The main galleries of the Aquarium will be open with the exception of the Mountain Forest and Saltmarsh Aviary for guest safety. Touch tanks can be open for a portion of the event if you are interested.

What precautions are taken to ensure our safety?

• We view your safety as one of our top priorities. We have security staff members on duty 24 hours a day and an off-duty officer will be on site from 11 pm to 7 am. Event staff will also stay overnight and will be available to assist you at any hour.
• The Aquarium has staff trained in first-aid, CPR, and the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED). The building is also equipped with fire alarms and extinguishers. We have evacuation plans in place should it become necessary to leave the Aquarium for any reason. If you need help at any time during the event, please contact the nearest staff member and we will assist you.
• We do have cameras stationed throughout the Aquarium that are monitored by our security staff.

What if someone gets sick?

• If anyone in your group gets sick or injured, please notify a sleepover staff member or security immediately.

Can we leave early from an overnight?

• Guests are welcome to depart at any time after informing a sleepover staff member. The security gate is locked throughout the event. Guests who leave will not be able to re-enter unless they have informed a sleepover staff member.

Where do we change into our sleeping clothes?

• Restroom facilities will be available on the first floor of the Aquarium. In some cases, we can turn our classrooms into additional changing facilities.

Will the Aquarium Gift Shop be open?

• The Aquarium Gift Shop will be open by request. If you are interested in the gift shop being open to your group please email sleepovers@scaquarium.org.