



# Zoo Teen Volunteer Questionnaire 2026



Peoria Zoo  
c/o Education Department  
2320 N Prospect Rd  
Peoria, IL 61603  
zooed@peoriaparks.org  
**DEADLINE: April 30, 2026**

Important notes for ZooTeen applicants:

- **Students must be at least 13 years old and entering freshman year of High School as of fall 2026.**
- Please give the included Recommendation Form to an adult (not a relative) who can speak to your abilities, such as a teacher, coach, youth group leader, etc.
- Please complete the questionnaire and short answers in your own handwriting. You may type your essay. Notice: Peoria Zoo will provide reasonable accommodations in the application and interview process for applicants who indicate the necessity. If you need accommodations, please contact Peoria Zoo Education at 681-3559 or email zooed@peoriaparks.org.
- **You must attend the training session. No exceptions. Training will be Friday June 5 and Saturday June 6, 9:00 am – 3:30 pm.**
- 40 volunteer hours are required before September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026 to successfully complete the program. This does not include training.
- Volunteer Fee: \$25 to cover the cost of T-shirt and Training Materials. If this causes any financial burden, please contact Peoria Zoo Education at 681-3559. (Volunteer Fee is due at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of the Zoo Teen training session.)
- Second year Zoo Teen volunteers will be required to keep a yearly up-to-date TB test on file if working with

By completing this questionnaire you are authorizing any listed references (those who fill out the Recommendation Form) to give information concerning yourself, whether or not it is in their records, and you release them and their companies from any liability whatsoever.

You certify that all statements given on this questionnaire are correct, and realize that any falsification, omission of information or misrepresentation of this or any other personnel record may prevent the start of volunteer work. In the event of volunteering, you agree to abide by all present and subsequently issued rules of the Peoria Park District.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

High School: \_\_\_\_\_

Last School Day in Spring 2026: \_\_\_\_\_

Expected Year in High School Fall 2026: \_\_\_\_\_

First Day of School Fall 2026: \_\_\_\_\_

Adult shirt size: S M L XL 2XL

How did you hear about our volunteer program? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any condition or disability for which you may require accommodation to perform the essential functions of a task or activity? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No If Yes, please explain \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you have any allergies/health concerns that may be important in reference to zoo work? (Examples: Allergies to fur, bees, or hay) \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No If Yes, please list: \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you have previous work/volunteer experience? If so, where and what were your responsibilities?

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What opportunities interest you? Please circle all that apply:

Conservation programs

Public Education

Animal Science

Community Service

Leadership Development

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

What skills do you want to develop as a member of the Zoo Teen program?

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The Zoo values the following characteristics. Please indicate how other people (friends, family, teachers) would rate you in the following areas, using the scale provided:

Scale: 1=Below Average; 2=Fair; 3=Average; 4=Good; 5=Excellent; 6=Outstanding

Oral Communication Skills	1	2	3	4	5	6
Dependability	1	2	3	4	5	6
Maturity	1	2	3	4	5	6
Self-Motivation	1	2	3	4	5	6
Teamwork Skills	1	2	3	4	5	6
Follows Directions	1	2	3	4	5	6
Willing to learn/try new things	1	2	3	4	5	6
Flexibility	1	2	3	4	5	6
Positive Attitude	1	2	3	4	5	6

SHORT ANSWER: Select two of the traits from the previous page's list that best describe you. Please give a specific example of how you have demonstrated this trait.

Trait #1: \_\_\_\_\_ Specific Example: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Trait #2: \_\_\_\_\_ Specific Example: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have an interest in a particular area of the zoo or a particular species of animal? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**CONSIDERATIONS**

***Students must be at least 13 years old and entering freshman year of High School as of fall 2026.***

This program is not a summer recreation program. It will involve an ability to work independently after required training.

First year ZooTeens will have **no contact** with Zoo animals.

***Before submitting this questionnaire, students with a heavy schedule of summer activities, i.e., sports, camps, long vacations, jobs, etc. should consider whether or not they have the time to commit to the program. The program does require 40 volunteer hours, not including training.***

All regular volunteer assignments are contingent upon the successful completion of screening requirements.

**Your signature authorizes the investigation of all information pertaining to the screening items as may be necessary.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

# Zoo Teen Essay

Postmark Deadline: April 30, 2026

Please write a short essay (between 150-250 words) Tell us why you think the Zoo is a place you would like to volunteer and what you would like to gain from your volunteer experience.

# ZooTeen Recommendation Form

The Peoria Zoo  
c/o Education Department  
2320 N Prospect Rd.  
Peoria, IL 61603  
zooed@peoriaparks.org/(309) 681-3559  
**Deadline: April 30, 2026**

Name of ZooTeen Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## ZooTeen Applicant

Please give this recommendation form to a teacher, coach, youth group leader or any other adult that knows you in a structured setting. Parents and family members should not be used as references. This recommendation form needs to be mailed in a sealed envelope, so as a courtesy, please provide the person completing your recommendation with a stamped, addressed envelope.

## Evaluator

The teenager who gave you this form is applying to be a member of the Peoria ZooTeen program, a service and leadership program at Peoria Zoo for teenagers in high school. Please complete the following recommendation form and return to the address listed above (the teenager should have provided a stamped, addressed envelope for your convenience); **this form must be postmarked by April 30, 2026**. Your comments are greatly appreciated and will help us determine if this applicant will enjoy success as a member of the ZooTeen program.

Name of Evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator Contact Phone (if follow up is needed): \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ How long have you known the Applicant? \_\_\_\_\_

## I recommend this applicant for the ZooTeen Program (circle one)

With great enthusiasm      With confidence      With slight hesitation      With serious reservation

What would you say is the applicant's strongest quality? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What is one area that the applicant could improve? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you believe the applicant is capable of working independently after required training? Why or why not?

\_\_\_\_\_

**Please use back of page for additional comments**