

OFF-CAMPUS TRIP PLANNING FORM
IJAMS NATURE CENTER
Knoxville, TN
865-577-4717

Risk Assessment

What hazards are present? (Heavy traffic area, water, large crowds, etc.)

Ijams Nature Center is a 165 acre wildlife sanctuary located within the city limits of Knoxville, TN. The park has been offering student field trips since 1976. The hazards present include weather related (tornado, hurricane, flooding), insect stings, exposure to poison plants and cuts and scraps associated with being outside. 3 water features are present within the park boundaries, two ponds, the Tennessee River and Meads Quarry lake.

Who will be affected by hazards? (Students, Chaperones, Teachers, etc.)

Students, chaperones and teachers and Ijams staff and volunteers will be affected by the presence of the hazards listed above.

How can risk be eliminated or reduced? (Avoiding certain areas, extra supervision, etc.)

Risks are eliminated or substantially reduced through methods including, but not limited to:

1) Field Trip design

- Ijams **Science Discovery Programs** are designed around state curriculum guidelines with safety as the foremost consideration.
- Programs feature an indoor introduction to Ijams and nature activities, including animal presentations.
- Outdoor activities include naturalist-led walks on Ijams' trails accompanied by parents and chaperones from the school.
- At no time is a child left unattended.
- All hikes are led by a qualified naturalist trained in general orientation to the park including natural history, trails, and flora and fauna of Ijams. Activity training includes correct procedures for collecting plant and insect organisms for study and appropriate procedures in the event of an injury.
- To prevent children wandering off the trails, Ijams ensures that adequate adult-child ratios are met. Each school party is split into groups of 10-15 children.
- Ijams requires that the school children are accompanied by parents and chaperones. Therefore, each group of 10-15 children is accompanied by one naturalist and two chaperones forming a 1-5 ratio of adult-child or less.

2) First Aid

All of Ijams staff members that lead groups attend annual first aid workshops including CPR. Weekly staff meetings include a standing agenda item to share safety tips and promote the importance of safety awareness. All naturalists carry a basic first aid kit

3) Communication

Ijams staff and volunteers carry with them cell phones or walkie-talkies on all field trip hikes and activities.

Onsite Animal Presentations at Ijams

Ijams staff members present non-releasable animal programs (usually 20minutes in length) to the general public or special groups, such as school groups or seniors.

To prevent a child or person coming into contact with an animal, and in the unlikely event being bitten or scratched, all animals are shown under the following strict conditions:

- All presentations are performed by trained Ijams staff members.
- Presentations are conducted at least two feet away from the audience
- Audience members are not allowed to touch the animals at any time.
- Animals are brought to the audience, which is already assembled and in a state of quiet.
- Animals are not involved in stunts or tricks of any kind.

Water Features

The ponds at Ijams are the site of many field trip activities. These activities are designed to teach subjects including pond ecology, animal habitats and environmental impact on ecosystems. All activities follow the Ijams guidelines for safety. At no time are children, teachers or chaperones in the water. The Tennessee River forms the northern border of the Park. It is accessible to view from a 300 foot long boardwalk that has a 3 foot railing with spacers 4 inches apart.

Emergency Plans

What steps will be taken in the event of an emergency? (Who is contacted? How is communication handled? Who makes decisions?)

Ijams Nature Center has an extensive Emergency Plan in place.

- Maps of building evacuation routes are prominently displayed in all rooms of visitor's center and Miller Education building.
- Tornado and hurricane drills are part of the weekly safety protocol reviewed at staff meetings.
- Knoxville City Police and First Responder teams are familiar with Ijams and the Knoxville Rescue squad has performed training activities on the park grounds.
- Steps taken for injuries on the grounds, trails, etc.
 1. Injured party will be evaluated by Ijams naturalist and other adults in the group who may be First Aid certified.
 2. Ijams naturalists will communicate through cell phone or walkie-talkie to the Onsite coordinator, the nature of the injury and call 911 if appropriate
 3. If appropriate, one chaperone will leave the group to report back to the building for additional supplies or help.
 4. If appropriate, the remaining group shall proceed to its destination while a chaperone remains with the injured party.
 5. Ijams staff or volunteers will station themselves along the route to direct emergency personnel, beginning at the front entrance of the nature center.
 6. After the injured party is completely taken care of, the Onsite coordinator shall submit a detailed report of the incident, interviewing all appropriate personnel and visitors.

Contact Jennifer Moore at 865-577-4717 ext 30 or email at jmoore@ijams.org with any questions concerns or comments.