

PINNACLES NATIONAL MONUMENT STANDARD OPERATION PROCEDURE (SOP) FOR EDUCATIONAL FEE WAIVERS

CRITERIA FOR EDUCATIONAL FEE WAIVERS

National Park Service (NPS) regulations allow school groups and other bona fide national and international educational institutions to obtain a waiver for park entrance fees, provided that the visit is for educational or scientific purposes, and the resources or facilities the group proposes to use support those purposes.

Organizations that are generally considered service, civic or fraternal, i.e., Scouting, 4-H Club, Elderhostel, Rotary, etc., do not qualify for the education fee waiver, unless the group meets the applicable criteria below.

Educational fee waivers are not granted automatically. Applicant groups must show they qualify for the waiver.

Requesting an Educational Program is addressed at the end of this SOP.

There are three criteria the group must meet to qualify for an educational fee waiver as stated in NPS-22, Chapter 10:

1. Eligibility

Applicants must prove they are a bona fide educational or scientific institution by submitting **one** of the following types of documentation:

- A statement confirming educational or scientific tax-exemption from the Internal Revenue Service or the applicant's national, state, or local tax authority; or
- A statement, from a bona fide educational institution, confirming that the group is visiting for the purpose of providing transferable educational credit based on a curriculum; or
- A statement of accreditation, or recognition as an educational institution, from a qualified national, regional, state, or local authority at the applicant's location.

2. Educational Purpose of the Visit

Applicants must provide a written statement confirming that the visit supports a specific curriculum for which academic credit is offered.

If the group is on a commercial tour, the applicant must state how the tour supports the curriculum.

3. Relevance of Park Resources or Facilities

Applicants must provide a written statement identifying the park resources and/or facilities that will be used to support the educational purpose of the visit, and how they are relevant to that purpose.

APPLYING FOR AN EDUCATIONAL FEE WAIVER

If you meet the above criteria, submit the following to Pinnacles National Monument at least 30 days in advance of the anticipated visit:

- A completed Educational Fee Waiver Request (PINN-171 form), state the name and correspondence address of the institution; contact name(s) with telephone number(s) and email address; date and approximate time of arrival and departure; entrance gate (east or west) vehicles will enter; number of vehicles; number of students; number of chaperones, including faculty. There must be a ratio of one adult/chaperone to every 10 students (1:10).
- Attach to the PINN-171 form, a letter on school letterhead explaining what the educational purpose is and how it is related to park resources. Include course outlines, lesson plans, or a copy of the curriculum. A general statement that the visit is for “educational purposes” is insufficient.
- Attach to the PINN-171 form, current official documentation from a Federal, State or local government entity that recognizes your group as an educational institution. Or submit an accreditation letter or other evidence attesting to educational status. It is insufficient to merely state or imply this on the organization’s letterhead. Your fee waiver request will not be processed without one of these documents attached.
- For schools K-12 an outline of student work required. For college courses state the course number, description and/or a copy of the catalog description.
- Provide credit hours based on a specific course of instruction to group participants.
- If your group is chartering the services of a commercial bus company, the school/educational group must apply for the fee waiver, not the commercial tour/bus company, and must state how the tour supports the curriculum.

SCHOOL LEVEL APPROVAL & MAILING IN THE FEE WAIVER REQUEST

The PINN-171 form needs to be approved by the school principal, department head or other appropriate official, other than the instructor, before forwarding to Pinnacles. Mail all required documentation to:

Pinnacles National Monument
Attention: Fee Office, Educational Fee Waivers
5000 Highway 146
Paicines, CA 95043

CONTACT PERSON FOR EDUCATIONAL FEE WAIVERS

The Educational Fee Waiver Coordinator at Pinnacles can be contacted by calling (831) 389-4486, ext. 245. Leave a message with your return phone number. Fax number is (831) 389-4489.

OTHER INFORMATION REGARDING EDUCATIONAL FEE WAIVERS

- Fee waivers will not be issued on the spot at entrance stations.
- Refunds for any fees paid will not be granted to those vehicles without the approved PINN-171 form.
- Educational fee waivers do not include waiving Pinnacles Campground fees.
- Educational fee waivers are not granted solely or partially on distance to their facilities and/or economic justification.
- “Blanket” educational fee waivers for all national parks will not be issued or accepted. Groups must submit separate requests to individual parks for approval.
- By submitting the PINN-171 form, instructors agree to follow the Code of Federal Regulations which allows fee waivers only for educational and/or scientific institutions that are using the park for educational purposes and you certify that the trip outlined above meets these requirements and request that fees be waived.
- Complete educational fee waiver requests and support documents can be processed without any delays. However, they can not be approved with missing documentation, and may not be approved by the date of the scheduled educational visit.

FEE WAIVER DENIALS

If your request is denied, you will receive a letter from the Chief Ranger of Pinnacles explaining why your group does not qualify.

ONCE AN EDUCATIONAL FEE WAIVER IS APPROVED

Once your request is approved by the Pinnacles Chief Ranger, your PINN-171 form and supporting documentation will be forwarded to the Office of Interpretation and Education. Interpretation and Education will mail your approved fee waiver, supporting documentation, and teacher packets to your school.

A copy of the approved PINN-171 form and support documentation will be maintained by the Pinnacles Fee Office in accordance with NPS-22 guidelines.

MAXIMUM GROUP SIZE & REQUIRED CHAPERONE TO STUDENT RATIO

The maximum group size is 35 people at one time on the trail. Larger groups need to break down into smaller groups and use an alternate trail route to lessen the impact on Pinnacles' trails and other park visitors' experience. The ratio of chaperones to students is 1:10.

DISPLAYING EDUCATIONAL PARKING PERMITS DURING THE VISIT

Upon arrival the day of the visit, the instructor for the group should present the Pinnacles' approved PINN-171 form at the Pinnacles Visitor Center, Chalone Entrance Station or Chaparral Ranger Station. The ranger on duty will print an educational fee waiver receipt for each vehicle with the group. No receipts can be issued at the Bear Gulch Nature Center.

The only alternative to the printed receipt, is for the instructor to provide a copy of the PINN-171 form to each vehicle driver for their dash board. It is the responsibility of the instructor for each vehicle to have an appropriate receipt, or copy of the PINN-171 form displayed. Fee compliance regulations are enforced daily.

REQUESTING A PINNACLES EDUCATION PROGRAM

Detailed information on educational programs can be obtained by going to the Pinnacles website www.nps.gov/pinn. To request one of Pinnacles' Education Programs and/or Education Ranger, submit an Educational Program Request (PINN-112A form) to:

Pinnacles National Monument
Division of Interpretation and Education
5000 Highway 146
Paicines, CA 95043

(831) 389-4486, ext. 262
(831) 389-4489 FAX

Attachments (2):

Educational Fee Waiver Request (PINN-171 form)
Educational Program Request (PINN-112A form)