



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Death Valley National Park
PO Box 579
Death Valley, California 92328



Academic Fee Waiver Application Guidelines

The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA), Public Law 108-447, provides the National Park Service statutory authority to allow “outings conducted for non-commercial educational purposes by schools or bona fide academic institutions” to obtain a waiver of park entrance fees. Commercial enterprises are not eligible for fee waivers, but school groups using a commercial vehicle for transportation only may apply for a fee waiver.

Fee Waiver Qualification Standards:

Academic Fee Waivers (formally Educational Fee Waivers) are not granted automatically. Applicant groups must submit an application and meet criteria for approval of their request.

The National Park Service has established the following four criteria as requirements for approval of an entrance fee waiver request. **Please read carefully.**

1. **Eligibility:** National or international applicants must prove they are a school or bona fide academic institution by submitting one of the following types of documentation:

- A statement confirming educational or scientific tax exemption from the IRS or the applicant’s national, state, or local tax authority; or
- A statement, from a bona fide academic institution meeting one of these eligibility standards, confirming that the group is visiting for the purpose of providing transferable academic credit based on a curriculum; or
- A statement of accreditation or recognition as an educational institution from a legitimate international, national, regional, state, or local authority for the applicant’s location.

2. **Educational Purpose of the Visit:**

- Applicants must provide a written statement (documentation) verifying that the visit supports a specific curriculum for which academic credit is offered. Documentation such as the course syllabus or a copy of the school’s course catalog or handbook will satisfy this requirement.

3. **Relevance of Park Resources or Facilities:**

- To simply state the trip objectives are for “educational purposes” is insufficient. There must be a direct relationship between the purpose of the visit and the use of the park. 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. A course outline, lesson plan, or copy of the course curriculum meets this requirement.

Provide a detailed itinerary with the application:

- Applicants must provide an itinerary stating the date of arrival, areas to be visited each day the applicant is in the park, and the date of departure.

Submission of Applications:

- The Fee Management Office must receive all applications for fee waivers at least one month in advance of the anticipated visit.
- Applications that are incomplete may be denied.

Please email applications and all required documentation to:

Death Valley National Park
Fee Management Office, Fee Waivers
deva_afw@nps.gov
Death Valley, CA 92328

Additional Information:

- Groups arriving without an approved fee waiver will be charged an entrance fee.
- When a planned visit is recreational, you enter as an “organized non-commercial” group.
- Fee Waivers are for educational use and is restricted to observation only. Any ground disturbance requires a research permit and proper NEPA and Section 106 Tribal and Historic Preservation Office consultation.
- Service, civic, and fraternal organizations e.g. Scouting, Rotary, Elks, etc. do NOT qualify for an Academic Fee Waiver, unless they meet the Fee Waiver Qualification Standards listed above.
- Entrance fees for non-commercial organized groups are \$10.00 per person. Individuals 15 years of age and younger are exempt from entrance fees, all other individuals 16 years of age and older will be charged a per person entrance fee. America the Beautiful – the National Parks and Federal Recreation Lands Pass, or Death Valley National Park Annual Pass holders and their immediate family (parents, spouse, and children) do not have to pay the per person entrance fee.
- As they are already exempt, bona fide educational groups of children less than 16 years of age do not need a fee waiver, however a waiver is required for the free entry of adult chaperones. A reasonable number of chaperones, drivers, and teachers will be admitted free to accompany the students.
- Pursuant to the FLREA, academic fee waivers are granted only for entrance fees and do not apply to expanded amenity or camping fees. Group camping reservations may be made for the Furnace Creek Campground at www.recreation.gov or 1-877-444-6777.

- Currently, Scotty's Castle is closed due to flood damage, but there is an additional fee waiver application to visit Scotty's Castle, and this can be granted after the initial waiver has been approved. Please contact the Castle directly to apply, specifying the date and time you would wish to take a tour of the facility.

For further assistance, contact the Fee Management Office at 760-786-3249.