

Forest Preserves of Cook County

BUS GRANT FORM

Each year the Forest Preserves of Cook County has a limited amount of funding set aside from our budget to help organizations attend Forest Preserve events, the Chicago Botanic Garden, or the Brookfield Zoo by providing buses. Restricted dates include the Garden's Orchid Show, Light Scape, and Night of 1,000 Jack-o-lanterns, and the Zoo's Holiday Magic light festival.

Since funds are limited, we want to make sure organizations receiving buses are using them to their full potential. Please review this application and fill it out to its entirety to be considered for a funded bus. Completion of this application does not guarantee a bus. In order to provide equal access, groups are limited to one free bus per calendar year.

To be considered for a bus, applicant must:

1. Provide a complete bus application form with a minimum of 3 weeks in advance of the proposed trip date.
2. Ensure that their group will be at least 25 people and no more than 44.
3. Be based in Cook County and serve primarily Cook County residents.
4. Have an annual operational budget under \$2 million.

Forest Preserves of Cook County BUS GRANT FORM

Send completed form to
experience.nature@cookcountyil.gov

NATURE EXPRESS BUS FUNDING FORM

Organization/Group Information:

Contact person:

Organization:

Type of Organization: ☐ Non-Profit ☐ Non-Governmental ☐ Faith-Based Organization

☐ Educational/school* Other:

Address: City/St: Zip:

Cellphone of contact person who will be on the bus with the group:

Phone number: Email:

Organization Mission:

What event or activity are you proposing to attend?

What is the goal for your group to attend this event or activity?

In the past, has your organization attended an event or program sponsored by the Forest Preserves of Cook County? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please describe:

* School field trips through the Nature Express Bus program are only permitted on weekends and after school.



BUS GRANT FORM-Forest Preserves of Cook County

Transportation Information:

Group size (25-44): Trip date-Opt. 1: Opt. 2:

Trip location: ☐ Chicago Botanic Garden ☐ Brookfield Zoo ☐ Forest Preserve of Cook County

Forest Preserve Location:

Pick-up time from your location: Departure time from destination (trip site):

Pick-up location: Destination:

Is a wheelchair accessible bus needed? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, how many wheelchairs?

Understanding of Agreement:

By filling out this form, I understand that a bus funded by the Forest Preserves is not a guarantee. The information here will help the Forest Preserves make a decision to fund a bus for my group. I understand that my application must be submitted a minimum of 3 weeks prior to my proposed trip date. If our request is granted, I will ensure that my group will be at 25-44 people. In the case of a smaller group, I will contact the Forest Preserves staff immediately and inform them of this update. Any cancelation of the Nature Express must be done with the Forest Preserves at least within five business days advance notice. Additionally, failing to meet the minimum of 25 people or failure to communicate with Forest Preserves staff about changes to my application may prevent my organization from being granted a bus in the future.

Once the bus has been approved for my group, the Forest Preserves will make the initial arrangements for the bus and send the confirmation notice, my organization will be responsible for confirming with the bus company the day before the trip to ensure the bus company has all the correct information. I understand that the Forest Preserves of Cook County is not responsible for the bus company nor the bus company employees. My organization will be responsible for any transportation waivers and or trip forms and for all adult supervision and chaperones for the trip. My organization will report any issues or concerns about the bus or bus company to the Forest Preserves in a timely manner.

My organization will also complete the post-trip survey regarding my group's experience.

☐ **I understand that failure to complete the survey may result in being ineligible for the Nature Express Bus program next year.**

Printed name:

Signature:

Date:

