

## DIRECTOR'S GUIDE 2026



JOIN US FOR OUR  
**2026**  
FESTIVAL  
SEASON



**ADJUDICATED FESTIVALS  
FOR STUDENT MUSICIANS  
THROUGHOUT CALIFORNIA**

**1-888-76-FORUM (1-888-763-6786)**

**WWW.FORUMMUSICFESTIVALS.COM**

ANAHEIM | SAN FRANCISCO | LOS ANGELES | SAN DIEGO



## Table of Contents

• <a href="#">About Forum Music Festivals</a>	3
• <a href="#">One-Day Festivals</a>	4
• <a href="#">Custom Overnight Festivals</a>	5
• <a href="#">What activities may we choose?</a>	6
• <a href="#">Can you arrange other performances?</a>	7
• <a href="#">Where can I find festival dates &amp; details?</a>	7
• <a href="#">How may I stay up-to-date?</a>	7
• <a href="#">Frequently Asked Questions</a>	8-16
o <a href="#">What happens at the festival?</a>	8
o <a href="#">Where do we perform?</a>	8
o <a href="#">Is there a dress code for performers?</a>	9
o <a href="#">Do I pick music from an approved list?</a>	9
o <a href="#">Do the judges need original scores?</a>	9
o <a href="#">How much music may we play?</a>	9
o <a href="#">What equipment is supplied?</a>	9
o <a href="#">When will we be scheduled to perform?</a>	10
o <a href="#">How are performing groups rated?</a>	10
o <a href="#">Tell me about the Awards Ceremony...</a>	10
o <a href="#">What about theatre etiquette?</a>	11-12
o <a href="#">Where will we get our theme park tickets?</a>	12
o <a href="#">Can a student use an annual pass?</a>	12
o <a href="#">What about parking?</a>	13
o <a href="#">What about gratuity?</a>	13
o <a href="#">Your Trip Assistant – Automated Text Messaging System</a>	13
o <a href="#">Do you offer scholarships?</a>	13
o <a href="#">Can you arrange our lodging?</a>	14
o <a href="#">What about ground transportation?</a>	14
o <a href="#">Do we need transportation from our school or hotel to the festival and to attractions?</a>	14
o <a href="#">Can you book the bus drivers' lodging?</a>	14
• <a href="#">Digital Ticketing Policies</a>	15-18
• <a href="#">Overnight Package Details</a>	19-21
• <a href="#">Forum Bus Policy</a>	22
• <a href="#">Financial Considerations</a>	23-24
• <a href="#">Travel Insurance</a>	25
• <a href="#">We want to participate! How do I register?</a>	26
• <a href="#">Professional Affiliations</a>	26
• <a href="#">What is your cancellation policy?</a>	27-28

Commented [KH1]: Should we move the ToC to second page?

Commented [MM2R1]: Yes, I think we should



## About Forum Music Festivals...

For over 30 years, Forum Music Festivals has hosted adjudicated music festivals throughout California. Founded by music educators, our focus blends nationally accepted music standards with encouragement for student musicians and support for their directors. Forum Festivals offers a fun, educational experience for student musicians at every level. We have welcomed tens of thousands of students and their directors over the last three decades and look forward to working with YOU this year.

Forum Festivals offers an exceptional quality festival at an excellent value for both all-in-one-day and overnight student groups.

Your time is valuable. We know that you have many choices. We want your experience with Forum Festivals to exceed your expectations. We're dedicated to creating an amazing performing experience for your ensemble. Here's to many more years of making great music together!



## One-Day Festivals

Our one-day festival packages are customizable and budget-friendly, so all schools and ensembles can participate in a festival.

Commented [MM3]: I am confused on the wording of this. Is it meant to say a local area festival?

### Every One-Day Forum Festival includes:

- Performance in concert-quality theatre
- Recorded & written comments by leading adjudicators
- Motivating, fun awards ceremony at the venue
- Rated, non-competitive or "comments only" performance options
- Complimentary recording of group's performance
- Customized plaque for each ensemble
- Recognition for student/section from each ensemble
- Admission to major theme parks & attractions
- Complimentary theme park ticket for each director
- **Your Trip Assistant** complimentary text message system to help keep your day-of details organized
- Meal voucher add-on options
- Flexible payment policy
- Scholarship program for returning schools or directors
- Travel protection may be added for your group for a small additional fee

Commented [MM4]: maybe "comments only" performance option?

Festival dates and prices are posted on our website at

<https://www.forummusicfestivals.com/>.

Visit our [Festival Registration](#) page or call us directly at 1-888-76-FORUM to register for a one-day package.



## Custom Overnight Festivals

Our custom overnight packages are designed to reflect your tour goals and interests. We are committed to setting up an unforgettable trip for you!

### Every Overnight Package includes:

All inclusions listed for one-day packages above PLUS:

- Lodging at a quality hotel near the festival or attractions
- Breakfast at the hotel included in every package
- 24-hour phone support during travel
- Customize a package just for your group!
  - Private music clinic with area clinician
  - Additional performance opportunities available
  - Special activities to make the most of your experience
  - Additional hotel nights
  - Attractions and cultural events
  - Group meals
  - Concerts & Shows
  - Sightseeing & touring opportunities

Commented [MM5]: Thoughts on adding additional performance opportunities to this list?

Contact us today by phone or website for a no-obligation proposal before registering. To register, visit our [Festival Registration](https://www.forummusicfestivals.com/festival-registration) page or call us directly at 1-888-76-FORUM.



## What activities may we choose?

Our one-day and overnight packages can be fully customized. Select from these activities, or we can suggest other options. Perform on a date that best fits your school calendar, and attractions may be visited on any date. Contact us for pricing and availability.

### Anaheim/Los Angeles Area:

- Disneyland Resort
- Knott's Berry Farm
- Universal Studios
- Six Flags Magic Mountain
- Medieval Times or Pirates Dinner Adventure
- Bowers Museum
- Jazz Kitchen, Bubba Gump's, or Buca di Beppo group dinners
- Museums, Presidential Libraries & Science Centers
- Pantages or Segerstrom tickets
- Symphony tickets

### San Francisco Area:

- California's Great America
- Six Flags Discovery Kingdom
- Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk
- Gilroy Gardens
- Exploratorium
- Museums & Science Centers
- Golden Gate Park
- Bay Cruises
- Alcatraz tour
- Bowlero
- San Francisco Symphony or musical theatre tickets
- Step-on guides for personalized city tour

### San Diego Area:

- SeaWorld San Diego
- San Diego Zoo or San Diego Safari Park
- USS Midway tour
- Harbor Cruise
- Museums & Science Centers
- Historic Old Town San Diego
- San Diego Symphony or musical theatre tickets

**Commented [MM6]:** Not sure about including this since it's not really an attraction. Maybe we can word as "guided tour of..." ?

**Commented [KH7R6]:** I think it's ok to leave as is since some folks do visit it on the tour or on their own

**Commented [MM8]:** Same issue with Golden Gate Park. Maybe we can just add a note for group meals?

**Commented [KH9R8]:** It's ok to leave as a free visit, free time space



## Can you arrange other performances?

YES! We have many different suggestions for groups to perform outside of the Festival, including theme park performances and workshops as well as public performances in well-trafficked venues. We can also book private clinics with area clinicians. Contact us directly to explore ideas!

## Where can I find festival dates & details?

You'll find the latest information on our website. Festival dates, one-day pricing, and answers to the most commonly asked questions can be found at [www.forummusicfestivals.com](http://www.forummusicfestivals.com).

[Request a Quote](#) for an overnight trip or customized one-day package. Additional helpful information is posted on our website as needed.

Of course, please don't hesitate to contact us by phone (1-888-763-6786) or email [office@forummusicfestivals.com](mailto:office@forummusicfestivals.com) anytime.

## How may I stay up-to-date?

We'd love to keep you posted on everything happening with Forum Music Festivals! Sign up for our monthly e-newsletter on our website and follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

Don't forget to tag us using @forummusicfestivals and #2026FMF and #ForumMusicFestivals and post your favorite Festival photos directly to our pages!

Fun and valuable promotions are offered via our e-newsletter and Facebook/Instagram posts—don't miss out on the latest promo for your upcoming trips.



## Frequently Asked Questions

### What happens at the festival?

Your day starts with a warm welcome at the check-in desk after you arrive at the performance venue. Plan to arrange your own transportation or Forum can take care of bus arrangements for you. Bus and private car parking is available at the venue – watch your performance schedule for specifics.

Turn in your original conductor's scores for the adjudicators and ask any questions you may have about the festival or your attraction visit.

A runner will guide your group to the warm-up room, then onstage for performance. The stage is pre-set according to your instructions on your set-up sheets.

Our announcer will introduce your group. Plan 2-3 pieces OR 12 to 15 minutes of music.

Two adjudicators will assess your ensemble's performance and provide recorded and written feedback. Part of the benefit of the festival is learning from other ensembles. You are encouraged to arrive early or stay late to enjoy & support other festival performers.

Topping off the festival is an exciting Awards Ceremony held at the venue. Your students won't want to miss it!

Before you leave the festival, stop by the front desk for your scores, the judges' written comments, and theme park tickets (as needed). Judges' recordings will be emailed to you within 48 hours. You'll also receive a recording of your festival performance.

Enjoy the rest of your day!

### Where do we perform?

Performing in a suitable venue enhances your performance. Festivals are held at well-equipped venues with lighting & sound systems - many are college theatres or recital halls. Separate warm-up rooms are available with limited equipment.

Directors and chaperones are responsible for all personal belongings including bags, instruments and cases, and other equipment. Please ensure an adult is left at all times with belongings. Forum staff are unable to monitor belongings.

Commented [MM10]: Should we re-word this to "by end of day Monday"? Just thinking about the SD boxes

Commented [KH11R10]: 48 hours after Saturday would be Monday afternoon right?

Commented [MM12R10]: You are correct, lol! I was thinking Friday but of course they're Saturday





### Is there a dress code for performers?

Informal attire is fine since many groups enjoy an activity after the festival. Many groups wear concert attire, but it's not a factor in judging. No dressing rooms are provided at the venue. Please plan to change before you arrive at the venue or after you depart from the festival.

### Do I pick music from an approved list?

No, but please select literature that showcases your ensemble's strengths. Adjudicators cite the most common error they see is music that's too challenging for the group. Performing difficult music poorly doesn't impress judges.

### Do the judges need original scores?

Yes, bring original scores for the judges. Copied scores are unacceptable unless accompanied by a publisher's letter. Purchased E-print scores are of course acceptable.

### How much music may we play?

Choral ensembles have 20 minutes on stage; instrumental groups have 25 minutes. This includes taking the stage, introductions, pausing between selections, and exiting. Plan on 12 to 15 minutes of music, typically about 2 to 3 pieces per ensemble.

### What equipment is supplied?

We provide the following equipment at our festivals:

- Tympani
- Grand Piano
- Bass Drum
- Choral Risers (size varies by venue)
- Chimes
- Xylophone
- Marimba & Vibraphone may be available pending venue
- Recorded accompaniment playback
- P.A. System/On stage monitors —up to 6 microphones

Other equipment may be available at individual venues. Please ask if you need anything other than what is listed below. Drum sets and amps may be available to rent. No snares, cymbals or small percussion are available.

A link to our stage set up form is emailed with your schedule. Submit the completed form to us at least 3 weeks prior to the festival. Our stage crew will position your set-up for your performance!



### When will we be scheduled to perform?

Performances are scheduled approximately 4 to 6 weeks prior to the festival. Directors receive their performance schedule by email.

Directors must inform Forum Festivals 90 days prior to the festival of any transportation limits or other concerns that have an effect on your arrival at the festival. A cancellation fee will be assessed for any performing ensemble pulled from the festival after the schedule is distributed. All director names and ensemble names listed on the performance schedule will be used for programs and trophies – please update Forum immediately if any changes need to be made. Once trophies or programs go to print, changes may not be possible or may incur a small fee.

### How are performing groups rated?

Forum Music Festivals' non-competitive, rated format means that directors choose to perform for either a rating (Gold, Silver, Bronze, Copper, Merit) OR a "comments only" non-rated award—Excellence in Performance. All groups receive a plaque at the Awards Ceremony as well as adjudicators comments. Groups are NOT ranked.

Because our adjudicators hear many groups throughout the year, you may evaluate your group's rating with groups of similar grade levels from across the country.

### Tell me about the Awards Ceremony...

Your students deserve a great awards ceremony! Our Award Ceremony celebrates your students' hard work and supports other performers. Awards typically last 15 minutes. Each ensemble receives a plaque plus a musicianship plaque to one student or section from each ensemble.

Awards are held at the festival venue. It's fun, positive, and motivational. Your group may enjoy the balance of the day with no interruption of your afternoon or evening.

Commented [MM13]: This section is currently listed as page 10 on TOC



### What about theatre etiquette?

Preparing for a festival performance is a fabulous time to review basic etiquette for young musicians— both as performers AND audience members. Explain to your students that everyone has worked very hard to get to this event.

*A good festival participant...*

1. Visits the restroom before being seated.
2. Silences electronic devices before the performance. This means, don't use your phone during a performance.
3. Never texts during a performance.
4. Does not talk during the performances.
5. Is kind to all performers, whether inside the theatre or outside. You are not rivals. You are supporters of every student's musical journey, regardless of their ages or abilities.
6. Absolutely does not eat or drink inside the theatre.
7. Keeps feet off on the back of seats.
8. Learns when to applaud (and when not to applaud.)
9. Understands that a festival is not a sporting event. Screaming, whistling, and shouting is unacceptable.
10. Never enters or exits the theatre while an ensemble is performing.
11. Remains seated during a group's entire performance.
12. Does not sing along during a performance (unless your choir is onstage performing).
13. Enjoys the performances!

### *Suggested Festival Etiquette for Directors*

Good concert/festival behavior is learned, and it is the director's responsibility to teach it.

*A good teacher of festival etiquette...*

1. Acts professionally as a model to students.
2. Includes expectations for chaperones as well as students.
3. Teaches students about when to applaud as audience members. (When the conductor's arms have come all the way down to his/her side).
4. Teaches stage deportment: Practice how to enter the stage and behave before the first downbeat.
5. Go quietly to their location.
6. No conversation at this time.
7. Look at the audience during applause.
8. Show respect and attention to the director.
9. Understands that a warm-up is not a rehearsal. Abide by the festival's schedule and leave warm-up and enter the stage on time. If onstage tuning is needed, keep it brief.



10. Times the prepared music. By timing your music, you show consideration for the judges, the festival staff, and other schools who have time constraints with busing and other issues.
11. Acknowledges applause with a smile and a bow and an acknowledgement of his/her performers.
12. Has featured students or sections stand and face the audience during applause.
13. Utilizes positivity.
14. Uses the power of words to inspire students to perform their very best.

### Where will we get our theme park tickets?

One-day participants receive physical theme park tickets at the front desk of the festival or emailed in advance, not at the theme park. Any exceptions will be directly communicated with the director. Directors may add or subtract tickets as needed for some attractions. Extra tickets issued to the director at the festival are billed after the festival. No tickets are accepted for refund after the festival.

Finalize your participant count 3 weeks in advance. Student tickets may be returned to the festival for some attractions, but a credit or refund is only permitted for the ticket cost itself. No refunds for the festival portion are offered when changes are made at the festival.

Theme Park tickets for family members may be purchased with cash at the front desk, (other than Disney). Family members may watch performances at no fee. For groups going to the Disneyland Resort, your tickets were pre-ordered & are not eligible for return or refund, according to Disney policy.

Knott's Berry Farm, Great America and Universal Studios will no longer be printing paper tickets—please reference the [digital ticket policy](#) for each park.

Overnight directors receive all tickets in a packet shipped one week prior to the festival. Please complete your Docusign confirmation or mail the confirmation form back to us before the trip so tickets will be activated.

### Can a student use an annual pass?

Students with annual passes should double check for any possible “black-out days.” A “festival only” fee is charged for those students, who may then use their passes for admission to the park. Other exceptions may apply depending on the theme park. Please reach out to Forum for specific information.

**Commented [MM14]:** I don't believe this is true any longer. Maybe "some attractions" ?

**Commented [MM15]:** Should we note that a limited number of tix available?

**Commented [MM16R15]:** and please inform FMF staff in advance if a large number of tix purchases is anticipated?

**Commented [KH17R15]:** I have a bunch of changes to make here - will update

**Commented [MM18]:** I am being really picky here, but can we say "all physical tickets" or something? Just so they understand some tickets may be at will call or for Knott's that they're still responsible for printing



### What about parking?

Each individual festival venue, theme park and attraction have their own parking specifications. Please watch your performance schedule letter (emailed to you 4-6 weeks in advance) for specifics for your venues. Bus parking and private car parking will be explained in detail here.

Please be prepared with cash or card for potential parking fees. Parking fees and tolls are the responsibility of the group. Unless previously arranged with Forum Music Festivals, all fees must be paid directly to the venue. Check with your transportation provider as some may have special agreements with the venue for reduced or free admission.

### What about gratuity?

For overnight groups or groups with custom one-day packages, most gratuities are included in your package pricing. We typically leave gratuity for private tour guides, etc. up to the discretion of the group. Forum will inform you when gratuity is included and when it is up to your discretion. If you prefer to modify any standard gratuity that we include or have additional questions on what is included in your package and suggested gratuity amounts, please contact Forum.

### Your Trip Assistant – Automated Text Messaging System

Your Trip Assistant is a convenient and completely customized alert system for directors! This complimentary automated text messaging system allows Forum Festivals to text reminders to you throughout your trip. No need for an onsite tour escort - receive reminders via text before your first warm-up time, prompting upcoming bus loading, theatre or concert start times, restaurant reservations and addresses, and more! Directors may opt out of Your Trip Assistant. Text messages apply only to your trip. Standard text messaging rates may apply – contact your carrier for details.

### Do you offer scholarships?

YES! Forum Music Festivals offers one student scholarship for returning schools or directors for each consecutive year of participation up to five years or 10% off total student balance, whichever is less. Scholarships apply to one-day and overnight packages (hotel, festival, breakfast, theme park) and are available to school groups that book directly with Forum Music Festivals, not through outside tour operators or travel planners.



### Can you arrange our lodging?

YES! Hotel accommodations are reserved at hotels near your activities. When selecting a hotel for your group, safety and security are of the highest importance. Groups are only lodged at quality hotels with interior corridors. Rooms are requested on the second floor or higher. We do not book student groups in rooms with outdoor access.

Our relationship with hotels helps keep your trip within budget. Any specific requests you provide to us are shared with the hotel. Check out our [overnight options](#) and request a custom quote today.

### What about ground transportation?

Our relationship with reputable bus companies yields competitive rates and you save money! Upon request, we'll provide a no-obligation quote based on your itinerary. Here's a couple of tips:

- Let's order buses as soon as you have a confirmed date. We'll get a clear picture of costs upfront, so you have an accurate quote. A deposit will be required to hold your bus.
- The Department of Transportation determines rules about off-duty hours for drivers. Safety is top priority. Drive time limits are key when planning your return trip.
- Traffic jams, bathroom breaks, & surprises happen. Our itineraries provide drivers with precise destinations. We confirm it all, so you don't have to!

### Do we need transportation from our school or hotel to the festival and to attractions?

Yes! You will need to make transportation arrangements unless Forum is handling this for you. Festivals are held off-site from attractions and are typically within 20 minutes from the hotel (if we are arranging your overnight package). Attraction distances will vary. Ask about hotel shuttles, public transportation or more options.

### Can you book the bus drivers' lodging?

Yes, we can book a hotel room for your drivers whether or not we have arranged your charter bus transportation for an overnight trip. Driver's rooms must be on the rooming list. Most charter bus companies require a paid day sleeping room for each driver if the group requires transportation at night. Charges for bus driver's rooms vary. This information will be listed on your estimate - no surprises!

Commented [MM19]: Shall we rework this blurb to be general transportation and mention airfare? Again, happy to write that up

Commented [KH20R19]: I'm going to move this around actually so stay tuned.



## Digital Ticketing Policies

*Additional theme parks or attraction partners may transition to digital tickets at any time—Forum will work to keep you informed of all check-in procedures as needed.*

### Universal Studios Ticket Policies

**Universal Studios** has transitioned to digital theme park tickets. Tickets will be accessible via your mobile device with QR codes. Universal Studios will no longer be printing paper tickets.

- Make final changes to your Universal ticket count to Forum 10 days prior to your festival date.
- Digital tickets will be emailed to you the week of your festival date unless otherwise requested.
- Tickets will not be emailed until the final payment has been received by Forum.
- Tickets will be accessible on mobile devices.
- Once you have the tickets, you may print them on your own, if you prefer.
- Please note that meal vouchers will NOT be emailed and will be available for pick up at Will Call on the day of your visit.
- Directors will swipe through each unique QR code at the front gate for Universal Studios for entry to the park for all students and chaperones unless you have printed your tickets for individual distribution.
- Digital tickets MAY be refundable for a certain time frame – please contact Forum directly to confirm if your tickets are eligible for refund.
- Tickets should be good until the end of the year pending block out dates – contact Universal directly to check availability.
- Front desk staff at the festival will not have additional virtual tickets for you. No Universal Studios tickets will be available for purchase at the front desk.
- Festival staff will also not be able to help with technical issues – these issues must be addressed at the front gate with Universal Studios staff.

Commented [MM21]: Should this title section be Universal?



## Disneyland Resort Ticket Policies

\*Subject to change without notice\*

Tickets for all Disneyland Park or Disney California Adventure Park visitors require pre-arrival purchase.

- Tickets cannot be added at the festival.
- Parents cannot purchase tickets at the Disneyland front gate unless space is available over and above reservations, which is unlikely.

All Disney visitors require theme park reservations.

- Purchasing a group ticket order by or before 60 days prior to the festival through Forum Festivals means your group will have a reservation to enjoy the park on a designated date.
- All tickets are date specific.
- Please notify us of the day(s) that you will use your Disneyland Resort tickets. We can't order your tickets without this information.

For Disney Magic Keyholders in your group:

- Students with Magic Keys are charged a "festival only" fee.
- Forum Festivals cannot secure a Disneyland Resort reservation for Keyholders.
- Your Keyholder student or chaperone must make their own reservation for the day the group visits the park. If the student fails to do so, plan for the student's pick-up at the festival.
- If your group is doing an Imagination Campus workshop or performance or participating in Judges' Invitational, a group ticket is required. No Magic Keys will be accepted by Disney for Imagination Campus or Judges' Invitational events.

Payment Schedule change:

- Our One-Day Festival payment schedule allows groups to pay half of the total group participation due 60 days prior to the festival and the final half due 30 days prior to the festival. If Disney is your park choice, that payment schedule no longer applies.
- For one-day participants visiting the Disneyland Resort, to ensure reservations for your group, we must receive your ticket order with final count AND 100% payment 60 days prior to the festival date since Disney will not guarantee reservations for orders after this time.
- For overnight participants, we will review your payment schedule to ensure that your 90-day payment will cover the cost of your Disneyland Resort ticket as well as other deposits due for your trip. If your payment plan is revised to cover this earlier timeline, we will contact you. Your payment due dates must be met promptly so we may order your tickets.
- Plan ahead - adding Disney tickets after the 60-day period will be very difficult, if not impossible.





Refund Details:

- Disney tickets are non-refundable. Please do not turn in tickets at the festival.
- Any student drops at the festival front desk are not eligible for refund for any portion of the festival package.

All groups should visit [disneytraveltradeinfo.com/dlr](https://disneytraveltradeinfo.com/dlr) for important and current information prior to visiting the Disneyland Resort.

Park Hopper Policy:

- If your group orders a Park Hopper ticket, please be aware of the Disneyland Resort policy:
  - Guests must enter their "first park" if arriving PRIOR to 11 AM. You will not be able to "hop" until after 11 AM.
  - The "first park" will be Disneyland Park unless you notify us of your preference before the tickets are ordered or if Disney requires that California Adventure Park is your "first park" due to reservation availability or Imagination Campus scheduling.
  - If the group arrives AFTER 11 AM, you may enter either park first.



## Six Flags Ticket Policies

**Knott's Berry Farm and California's Great America** have transitioned to digital theme park tickets. Tickets will be accessible via your mobile device with QR codes. Knott's Berry Farm and California's Great America will no longer be printing paper tickets. *Magic Mountain and Discovery Kingdom will continue to print paper tickets – we will advise you if this changes.*

- Make final changes to your Knott's/Great America ticket count to Forum 10 days prior to your festival date.
- Digital tickets will be emailed to you the week of your festival date unless otherwise requested.
- Tickets will not be emailed until the final payment has been received by Forum.
- Tickets will be accessible on mobile devices.
- Once you have the tickets, you may print them on your own, if you prefer.
- Please note that admission tickets and any meal vouchers may be emailed in separate emails.
- Directors will swipe through each unique QR code at the front gate for Knott's Berry Farm/Great America for entry to the park for all students and chaperones unless you have printed your tickets for individual distribution.
- Digital tickets WILL NOT be refundable after they are emailed to you. Once digital tickets are in your possession, we cannot accept any returns. Tickets may be used through the end of the calendar year.
- Front desk staff at the festival will not have additional virtual tickets for you. A very limited number of printed tickets will be available at the front desk for purchase with cash.
- Festival staff will also not be able to help with technical issues – these issues must be addressed at the front gate with Knott's Berry Farm or Great America staff.

## Knott's Berry Farm Chaperone Policy

Knott's Berry Farm will maintain their chaperone policy for groups. For Forum groups, that ratio will be based on one chaperone for every ten students under the age of 17.

- You will be required to have 1 adult chaperone (18 years+) in your group for every 10 students.
- Each group leader must submit a list of chaperone names and cell phone numbers to Knott's Berry Farm before your visit. The link to this form will be emailed to you closer to your festival date and will be returned to Knott's Berry Farm directly.



## Overnight Package Details

### How do I budget the cost of a trip?

Calculating trip costs should include lodging, meals, transportation, & activities. If you have a specific budget, let us know right away. We'll sketch out an itinerary to fit your group's interests & budget.

- Plan early. Students need time to meet fundraising goals. This yields a higher ratio of involvement. Start with a realistic number to avoid returning to students for additional funds. Building in a buffer gives you options — reduce final amount due, refund money, or plan a special meal or extra outing.
- Confirm with your boosters or district purchasing for specific payment processes (vendor approval, invoice processing time, etc.). Any delays in payment past invoice due date without prior approval or communication may result in the assessment of late fees.
- Create a timeline for collecting funds. Consider holiday breaks and payment processing time. Give specific due dates for payments that are early enough to coordinate with Forum's payment deadlines.
- Transportation is a large part of the travel budget. Determine these costs before giving a per person cost to students. Base these expenses on a realistic number of travelers so if there's a drop, your bus expense is covered. Other charges may apply— driver's rooms, parking or toll fees. Let Forum arrange your transportation so we can help ensure all the details are clear!

### What about meals?

Breakfast is included on all Forum Music Festival overnight trips. Theme Park or restaurant meal vouchers may be added as well as group meals at student-friendly restaurants or meal delivery.

Commented [MM22]: Can we also advertise meal delivery?

### How many chaperones should we bring?

Many groups recruit chaperones based on a 1 per 10 ratio. Check your district guidelines to verify requirements for chaperones, i.e. background checks, fingerprinting, etc. Be specific about your expectations before the trip. Although the trip is enjoyable, their job is to supervise students. Responsibilities can include bus counts, room checks, managing equipment, supervising behavior, or enforcing curfews. Chaperones often manage a preset student group.



### Do I need a tour escort?

Our itineraries are so thorough, you won't need a tour escort. However, a tour escort may ensure a seamless and worry-free trip for you! A tour escort can meet your group to handle itinerary details, as your budget allows. Let us know if you would like to build in the cost of a tour escort.

### How many are assigned to each room?

Students usually stay 4 or 5 to a room. Chaperones usually stay 2 to a room. Packages include a complimentary room for each director.

Pricing listed on your itinerary is a per person price based on quad (4/room) or quint (5/suite), triple, double, or single occupancy package with lodging, breakfast, & activities.

### Can the hotel keep our group together?

Your group's room block is based on your rooming list. Chaperone rooms are blocked between student rooms. Directors often request boys' and girls' rooms be on different floors. We'll communicate your requests to the hotel.

### Do I need to sign a contract?

No formal contract is required, but we do ask for a liability release to be signed by the director or an administrator upon registration for your overnight trip. A Forum team member will send this to you via DocuSign. ALL participants (students, chaperones, and directors) will be required to sign a participant release agreement 30 days prior to your trip. These can be completed using DocuSign via a shared webform or sent to participants' emails. A list of email addresses with names should be submitted with your rooming list (75 days prior to travel) if this method is preferred. Our team will help keep track of completed forms.

### How do I submit my rooming list?

After registering, you'll receive an email giving you access to our online rooming list form with your due date indicated. Complete the form for all travelers (students, adults, drivers). We need your rooming list at least 75 days prior to your trip. Certain hotels require earlier due dates, but our staff will advise you if this applies to your trip.

### Can I make changes to my rooming list?

Changes occur in student travel, so we're as flexible as possible. Additions are allowed through Forum, based on hotel availability. After submitting your rooming list, you may change the rooming list one time at no additional fee. After that, a charge for each subsequent revision applies. No changes to the rooming list are allowed after the 30-day deadline. Please see our cancellation policy for more details.

Commented [MM23]: I am wondering about including a section on participant release forms, just due dates and that it is required by all participants- thoughts? I can write this up

Commented [KH24R23]: Yes - let's do it. Write something and insert where appropriate.

Commented [MM25R23]: @Katie Hailum let me know what you think

Commented [KH26R23]: Looks good!



## Can you arrange other trip activities?

Absolutely! We arrange everything from theatre, symphony tickets to bowling parties, museums, sightseeing tours, clinics, workshops, and everything in between.

## Important Dates for Overnight Trips:

- 30 Days after Registration:
  - Hotel & Bus deposits due.
  - Return Liability Release (sent via DocuSign)
  - Share travel protection options with your participants so they may meet deadlines.
- Note: Airfare will be billed separately based on carrier due dates and requirements
- 90 Days prior to first date of travel:
  - Payment #1 (50% of balance) due
- 75 days prior to festival:
  - Submit final rooming list online.
  - Send list of names/emails for DocuSign releases or share web form link with your participants.
- 4-6 weeks prior to festival:
  - Final performance schedule released.
- 60 days prior to first date of travel:
  - Payment #2 (25% of balance) due
- 30 days prior to festival:
  - Participant Release forms due for ALL participants (sent via DocuSign)
  - Set-up sheets and director's comments due (sent with final performance schedule)
  - Final payment due (based on rooming list)
- 3 weeks prior to travel:
  - Itinerary finalized.
- 1 week prior to travel:
  - Pre-trip package shipped to school with tickets, itinerary, and helpful information.



## Forum Bus Policy

- While uninterrupted travel during the late night and early morning is not prohibited by law, we recognize that night-time driving can contribute to drowsiness in the driver. We strongly encourage groups to plan alternate itineraries to avoid a late evening departure. For that reason, trips will no longer be booked by Forum Music Festivals that require drivers to drive between the hours of 2:00 AM and 4:00 AM. Drivers must be off the clock during these middle of the night hours.
- Seat belts will be requested and provided unless otherwise notified.
- Please know California law now requires seat belts be worn in buses equipped with them.
- If a district has a list of pre-qualified charter bus companies, we will confer with our client and double check the charter company's safety record so we may abide by the district's guidelines.

### Federal Regulations mandate that...

- Motorcoach drivers cannot drive more than 10 hours in a 24-hour period.
- Motorcoach drivers may not drive after having been on duty for 15 hours.
- Motorcoach drivers must have at least 8 hours off before their next shift can start (some bus companies may require more).
- Motorcoach drivers may not drive after 60 hours on duty over seven days or after 70 hours on duty over eight days.
- Driver hours are now tracked using electronic logging devices.

### California regulations mandate that...

- Charter buses and drivers who transport California students must complete SPAB certification. SPAB stands for School Pupil Activity Bus and is certified through the California Highway Patrol (CHP).
- Effective July 2018, California State Law SB20 requires that both drivers and passengers wear seat belts. Parents, guardians or chartering companies are being held responsible for making sure children 16 and under are buckled up. ANY charter bus manufactured with seat belts traveling through the state of California, regardless of where they originated, must comply with this law. Directors and chaperones must ensure all students are wearing seatbelts. Fines will be written for offenders.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us at [office@forummusicfestivals.com](mailto:office@forummusicfestivals.com).



## Financial Considerations

### What is the payment schedule?

Forum Music Festivals will reserve a spot in the performance schedule based on receipt of registration fees. All fees must be paid in full before the festival. Delinquent schools will be removed from schedule. Pay by credit card on our website or submit a check to Forum Music Festivals.

Confirm with your boosters or district purchasing for specific payment processes (vendor approval, invoice processing time, etc.). Any delays in payment past invoice due date without prior approval or communication may result in the assessment of late fees.

### One-Day Packages Payment Schedule:

Payments after the registration fee (due 2 weeks after registration) are divided into two due dates: 60 days prior to festival and 30 days prior to festival.

If you prefer to have an alternative payment schedule, please contact [cristin@forummusicfestivals.com](mailto:cristin@forummusicfestivals.com). We are happy to work with you.

Directors should update student and chaperone numbers no later than 10 days prior to the festival. New invoices will not be issued after that time.

\*Please see [Disneyland Resort Ticket Policy](#) and [Digital Ticket Policy](#) for packages that include Disney, Universal, Knott's or Great America tickets

### Overnight Packages Payment Schedule:

Payment schedules can sometimes be customized to meet the needs of your fundraising activities.

- 30 Days after Registration –
  - Registration fee & hotel deposit due.
  - Motor coach deposit, if applicable.
  - Airfare will be billed separately based on carrier requirements.
- 90 Days before First Date of Travel –
  - 50% estimated balance due.
- 60 Days before First Date of Travel –
  - 25% estimated balance due.
- 30 Days before First Date of Travel –
  - Final balance based on final Rooming List.
  - Final motor coach balance due.
  - Scholarships and discounts deducted from this invoice.



### Additional Overnight Details

- Schools must submit an accurate rooming list 75 days before the festival date so we can forward a final invoice to you at 60 days, payment due 30 days before the trip. Most hotels require a room list 30-60 days before the travel date or the reservation may be dropped. Some hotels have earlier due dates, but we will advise the director, as needed.
- Directors may make one change at no charge after the rooming list is submitted. After that, a fee is charged for added changes. Rooming list changes are not accepted within 30 days prior to the trip. Pricing is subject to hotel availability at the time the group approves the trip, which may affect per person pricing from the initial proposal.

### Additional Financial Details

Registration after 90 days: Late registrations after 90 days prior to your festival are welcome, space permitting. All payment due dates will be adjusted accordingly.

Payment Details: The registration fee does not apply toward trip balances. Invoices will be emailed to the director prior to each due date. Notify Forum Music Festivals of changes in student numbers, travel date, or rooming list changes. Forum Music Festivals accepts district purchase orders, but all invoices must be paid in full prior to the trip. Students with theme park passes are charged a "festival only" fee for performing in the festival.

**Commented [MM27]:** I am wondering if the wording of this implies that we can accept POs as long as we have payment before the trip- Should we clarify "all invoice must be paid in full prior to due date" ?





## Travel Insurance

Forum Festivals highly encourages participants to purchase travel insurance. We offer travel protection as a separate add-on for individuals to purchase at their discretion through TravMark.

You will share this [Activity Coverage link](#) with your students/parents and they can individually decide whether they want to add protection or not to their trip. For any questions regarding the policy, please contact TravMark toll free at 1-877-500-1556 or email them at [info@travmark.com](mailto:info@travmark.com).

Student pricing on Activity Insurance for California residents is competitively priced with available *Cancel For Any Reason* (when conditions are met, including insuring 75% of all trip costs), please use the Activity Insurance link to confirm pricing.

Activity Insurance allows you to cancel your Program for any reason provided you purchase this plan within 21 days of the date your initial payment or deposit for your program is received and you cancel your program up to 2 (two) days before your scheduled Departure Date of your program.

Additional travel protection options may become available at any time. Please contact Forum for the most up-to-date recommendations.

Our [cancellation policy](#) will remain in effect but travel insurance may protect your investment outside these parameters.

Commented [KH28]: Should we link this?

Commented [MM29R28]: done

Commented [KH30]: I don't think this is accurate anymore - can you confirm?

Commented [MM31R30]: This is reflective of the changes that were made earlier this year, so unless there's been another change (I am pretty sure not) this is accurate

Commented [KH32R30]: Ok great!

Commented [KH33]: Should we add any information about other insurance options?

Commented [MM34R33]: I would like to, but was waiting to collect until after SYTA

Commented [KH35R33]: I just added a small blurb about other options coming

Commented [36R33]: Good call, I like this!



## We want to participate!

### How do I register?

Registration is simple...

- Create a profile at [forummusicfestivals.com](http://forummusicfestivals.com).
- Select festival registration or request a quote.
- Choose a date, location and attraction.
- We'll take care of the rest!
- Or give us a call with questions (1-888-763-6786).

Complete your registration and your ensemble has a tentative spot in the festival line-up. A \$120 non-refundable registration fee confirms the date for one or two performing groups. Entries are scheduled on a first come basis upon receipt of the registration fee. Additional ensembles over two from the same director are registered on a space-available basis at a \$120 registration fee for each ensemble.

Remember—registration is confirmed once registration fees are paid.

Schools attending on two different dates are required to register for each date and the registration fee is required for both dates. At the time of registration, please note any information that will affect your arrival at the festival.

## Professional Affiliations

American Choral Directors Association (ACDA)  
American String Teachers Association (ASTA)  
Disney Youth Travel Planner Symposium  
National Association for Music Education (NAfME)  
Student & Youth Travel Association (SYTA)



## What is your cancellation policy?

Registration fees are **non-refundable**. Theatre tickets are **non-refundable**. Bus deposits, hotel deposits, and some activities or meal vouchers **may not be refundable**. Please contact FMF directly for non-refundable specifics of your package.

Cancellation requests, signed by a school official (director, principal, district personnel, etc.), must be emailed or mailed to our office. The postmarked date on mail or the time reflected on the email will be used as the cancellation date. Please allow 60 days after the festival for refunds.

Festival registration fees for both one-day and overnight packages are considered **non-refundable** and do not apply towards festival balances.

**Cancelled one-day packages** are subject to the following refund policy:

<b>Prior to 45 days</b> before the festival	Full refund minus registration fee or any non-refundable deposits.
<b>45 days or less</b> prior to the festival date:	A time slot has been reserved for your ensemble in the schedule, and no festival refunds will be processed after that time. <b>Attraction refunds will be handled on a case-by-case basis.</b>

Commented [MM37]: I bolded and hi-lighted the last line, but revert if you don't agree

Once the performance schedule has been released (approximately 4-6 weeks prior to the festival), a \$250 cancellation fee will apply when directors remove an individual performing ensemble from the schedule, but do not cancel the group in its entirety. We are happy to add your additional ensemble as space permits, but directors must inform us when an ensemble will not perform prior to the release of the schedule so other schools may participate.



**Cancelled overnight packages** are subject to the following refund policy (applies whether entire group cancels or individual cancellations):

<b>Prior to 75 days</b> before first day of travel:	Full refund minus registration fee or any non-refundable deposits (theatre, bus, hotel, etc.).
<b>46-74 days</b> prior to first day of travel:	\$50 per person fee will be assessed. All other payments will be refunded unless designated as non-refundable deposits.
<b>45 days or less</b> prior to first day of travel:	No refunds approved for entire group cancellations. Participants unable to travel may be replaced by another traveler but a \$50 change fee may be assessed. Please contact FMF for options.
<b>30 days or less</b> prior to the first day of travel:	No refunds approved for individual cancellations 30 days or less prior to your trip. Please contact FMF for options.

\*Please note separate attraction refund policies as appropriate.

**A Note on Attrition:**

We understand changes occur in student travel. We accommodate changes to your package to the best of our ability. Pricing is based on current availability, fees & taxes based on the total number of participants (students, chaperones, & directors). If that number changes, we may re-price your package to adjust prorated costs, etc. Please note that if the package is re-priced due to attrition, it will likely increase the per person price by just a few dollars.

Commented [KH38]: Should I add some sort of closing statement?

Commented [MM39R38]: Maybe just "We are greatly looking forward to welcoming you!" or something short and sweet

***Our team at Forum Music Festivals looks forward to welcoming you!***



A STUDENT MUSIC FESTIVAL DESIGNED BY AND FOR MUSIC EDUCATORS.

EXEMPLARY SERVICE – OUR FRIENDLY AND KNOWLEDGEABLE STAFF OF CERTIFIED STUDENT TRAVEL PLANNERS WILL MAKE YOUR TRIP SMOOTH AND SUCCESSFUL!

ANY ENSEMBLE – ANY GENRE – ANY LEVEL - ANY SIZE!

EXPERIENCED AND SPECIALIZED ADJUDICATORS WITH CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK TO IMPROVE YOUR STUDENT ENSEMBLE.

VALUABLE PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITY WITH FLEXIBLE PAYMENT SCHEDULE TO COORDINATE WITH YOUR SCHOOL.

YOUR TRIP ASSISTANT COMPLIMENTARY TEXT MESSAGE SYSTEM TO HELP KEEP YOUR DAY-OF DETAILS ORGANIZED.

AWARDS CEREMONY AT THE FESTIVAL IS NON-COMPETITIVE AND HIGHLIGHTS OUTSTANDING MUSICIANSHIP.

ATTRACTION OF YOUR CHOICE – ANY LOCATION, ANY DATE!

**ABOUT US:** For over 30 years, Forum Music Festivals has hosted adjudicated music festivals throughout California. Founded by music educators, our focus blends nationally accepted music standards with encouragement for student musicians and support for their directors. Forum Festivals offers a fun, educational experience for student musicians at every level.

Sign up for our e-newsletter at [forummusicfestivals.com](http://forummusicfestivals.com) for the latest information.



©2025 Forum Music Festivals