

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, Feb. 26, 2026

More Free Parking Coming to Balboa Park for City Residents

**BEGINNING MARCH 2, SEVEN PARKING LOTS WILL BE AVAILABLE AT
NO CHARGE TO RESIDENTS VERIFIED THROUGH ONLINE PORTAL**

SAN DIEGO – Beginning Monday, March 2, city of San Diego residents who have been verified through an online portal will be able to park for free all day at seven of the 12 parking lots within Balboa Park. Parking fees will still be charged in the remaining five Premium parking lots, though verified city residents pay half price online.

Throughout the park, approximately 70% of the total number of spaces in the parking lots will be free to verified city residents starting Monday.

To obtain free parking, city of San Diego residents must plan ahead and register their vehicle's license plate at sandiego.ThePermitPortal.com.

Other changes are included to help make the park more accessible and welcoming to San Diegans.

Here's what's new as of March 2:

- Seven General parking lots -- Level 2 and 3 -- will offer free all-day parking to verified, registered residents of the city of San Diego: Pepper Grove, Federal, Upper Inspiration Point, Lower Inspiration Point, Marston Point, Palisades and Bea Evenson.
- Parking enforcement in the park will begin at 8 a.m. and end at 6 p.m. instead of ending at 8 p.m.
- Drivers with a disabled-person license plate or placard may park for free all day at any available spot in the parking lots and on park roads, not only the ones marked in blue for ADA parking.

To become verified as a city of San Diego resident, applicants will be required to upload one document proving residency, such as a driver's license, utility bill, property tax bill or rental agreement. Residents and nonresidents will need to pay a one-time \$5 registration fee, which covers the vendor's costs to process the applications and is not collected by the City. Following registration city of San Diego residents will need to select the General, Level 2 and Level 3, free parking pass. Once verified, the account and free pass are valid for three years. The resident verification process could take up to two business days. This timeline could vary depending on the number of applications received.

Please note that residency verification must be done online in advance and cannot be done at the meter kiosks within the park. The option to choose a free city resident pass is now available via the parking permit portal – no need to wait until March 2 to apply. City residents who have previously purchased parking passes do not need to reverify residency. They will need to login and select a free pass, which will be available instantly on their account.

A grace period before parking enforcement begins will allow visitors time to register and become acquainted with the new system. Parking enforcement officers will begin issuing warnings the week of March 9 and ticketing will begin March 16.

Step-by-step instructions for how to register via the portal are available on the [City's Balboa Park parking webpage](#), along with helpful videos and maps.

Those interested in in-person assistance with the permit portal registration can visit or call the [Digital Navigator Program](#) at select San Diego branch libraries and recreation centers. With this free service, navigators will walk people through the process, either in person or on the phone. A schedule of locations and times is available on the [Digital Navigator schedule web page](#), or by phone at 1-800-350-6945. Live simultaneous translation services are available for non-English speakers.

Visitors living outside San Diego city limits – including those living within other areas of San Diego County – may still park for free at Lower Inspiration Point for three hours. To obtain the free three hours, visitors must input their license plate number at the parking meter kiosk in the lot. A free shuttle is available for transportation from the parking lot to the center of Balboa Park.

Daily, monthly, quarterly and annual passes are still available for purchase online for non-city residents, and for city of San Diego residents wishing to purchase a Premium All-Park Pass to park at any of the lots, including those designated Level 1 (Premium). Those lots include Space Theater, Casa de Balboa, Alcazar, Organ Pavilion and South Carousel.

Verified residents choosing to park in the Premium Level 1 lots without a monthly, quarterly or annual pass will be able to purchase the discounted daily rate online. Daily parking passes will be available for purchase by verified city residents at the meter kiosks in the park in the near future, in addition to the non-resident rate which is currently displayed at the kiosk.

Here is the fee schedule:

Parking Rates	Level 1 (Premium)	Level 2 (General)	Level 3 (General)

	Space Theater, Casa de Balboa, Alcazar, Organ Pavilion, South Carousel	Pepper Grove, Federal, Upper Inspiration Point, Marston Point, Palisades, Bea Evenson	Lower Inspiration Point
City of San Diego Resident	\$8/day; \$5/four hours	Free	Free
Nonresident	\$16/day; \$10/four hours	\$10/day	\$10/day; first 3 hours free

For a map of the parking lots please visit the [Balboa Park parking webpage](#).

Free parking remains available for employees and volunteers working in Balboa Park in the General Level 2 and 3 lots and on park roads along Balboa Drive.

Parking fees at the meters along the street parking spaces in and around Balboa Park remain unchanged. Everyone, including city residents, must pay the posted amounts on the street meters. A map of the streets with parking meters is available on the Balboa Park parking webpage.

For questions about the payment portal call the Digital Navigator Program at 1-800-350-6945. For all other questions including refund requests, go to sandiego.gov/ContactParking.



###