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## **PHILADELPHIA ATTRACTIONS CATER TO VISITORS WITH DISABILITIES** *Many Popular Philly Sites, Museums & Parks Offer Accessible Accommodations*

**PHILADELPHIA, April 26, 2017** – Philadelphia proudly offers its visitors the ability to explore popular attractions with a sense of independence. From the **Liberty Bell** to **The Franklin Institute** and the **Barnes Foundation** to the **Please Touch Museum**, the 17<sup>th</sup>-century city's modern amenities accommodate travelers and explorers who have physical and developmental needs. As a citywide accommodation to residents of Pennsylvania, more than 30 Philadelphia-area attractions\* offer \$2 per-person admission for PA ACCESS cardholders and up to three guests. For more information on this program, visit [art-reach.org](http://art-reach.org). For more resources about accessible Philadelphia, go to [visitphilly.com/accessibility](http://visitphilly.com/accessibility).

### **Historical Sites & Attractions:**

- 1. Independence Visitor Center (IVC)** – The first stop for visitors to Philadelphia's Historic District is more than just a source of maps, brochures, tickets, tour information and the all-important accessible restrooms. The center's National Park Service desk offers daily loans of manual wheelchairs from 8:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. on a first-come, first-served basis—a picture I.D. is required. The same desk also lends assistive listening devices, a receiver with headphones and a portable loop system compatible with all telecoil-equipped hearing aids, cochlear implants and induction loop receivers. 6<sup>th</sup> & Market Streets, (800) 537-7676, [PHLvisitorcenter.com](http://PHLvisitorcenter.com)
- 2. Independence National Historical Park (INHP)** – Both iconic and lesser-known National Park Service sites—20 blocks within Philadelphia's Historic District—clearly lay out their accessibility offerings on the INHP website. (215) 965-2305, [nps.gov/inde](http://nps.gov/inde)  
Highlights include:

- **Independence Hall** – The Hall's East Wing and first floor are wheelchair accessible and feature a photo album of the Assembly Room, which is accessible via stairs only. The Hall's West Wing, home of the *Great Essentials* exhibit, including original printed copies of the *Declaration of Independence* and more, is fully wheelchair accessible. For those with low hearing or deafness, the *Birthplace of a Nation* pamphlet offers written information about the rooms on the tour. Free ASL interpretation is available at the Hall for anyone with timed tickets—available by calling (877) 444-6777 or visiting [recreation.gov](http://recreation.gov)—and with 14 days' advanced request via (215) 597-7130. 520 Chestnut Street
- **Liberty Bell Center** – The Bell's modern home is wheelchair accessible and offers an open-captioned and audio-described video presentation, along with assistive listening devices. A replica of the text that's on the Bell in the exhibit area lets visitors touch the raised inscription. 6<sup>th</sup> & Market Streets

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- **Benjamin Franklin Museum** – Three city blocks from Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell, Ben Franklin's onetime home and workspaces are fully wheelchair accessible via entrances on Market and Chestnut Streets. There's an accessible restroom on the first floor; an elevator accesses the museum itself. Throughout the exhibit are tactile objects to explore via touch. 317 Chestnut Street, (215) 965-2305, [nps.gov/inde](http://nps.gov/inde)
- 3. **Betsy Ross House\*** – The wee home of America's most famous flag maker has an accessible restroom in its gallery, and has removed steps and added a railing to its breezeway to facilitate entry to the first floor. The attraction offers a complimentary audio tour with visual aid for visitors without physical access to the building—and Betsy herself has been known to leave her upholstery shop to greet these guests in her courtyard outside. 239 Arch Street, (215) 629-4026, [betsyrosshouse.org](http://betsyrosshouse.org)
- 4. **Museum of the American Revolution (MoAR)\*** – Before the opening of the country's first museum dedicated to the United States war of independence, MoAR made sure its docents received accessibility training from Art-Reach staff. The result: The Historic District's newest attraction is fully wheelchair accessible, lends out assistive listening devices and wheelchairs at its front desk, shows its films with easy-to-read captions—and is developing more programming to share the compelling true stories of the American Revolution with more people. 101 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, (215) 253-6731, [amrevmuseum.org](http://amrevmuseum.org)

**Museums:**

- 5. **Barnes Foundation\*** – One of the finest collections of Impressionist, Post-Impressionist and early Modern paintings in the world is fully wheelchair accessible, although some of the collection galleries may be unable to accommodate larger mobility devices. Manual wheelchairs are available free of charge on a first-come, first-served basis; the Barnes suggests patrons who do not normally use a wheelchair bring a companion to help maneuver around smaller spaces. Wheelchair accessible restrooms are available on the main floor and lower level. Assistive listening devices are available for use in the auditorium and with the collection gallery tour. Headsets and t-coil loops are available free of charge. Sign language interpreters are available with three weeks' advance notice; visitors must have tickets booked at the time they make the advance request for an interpreter. Film and video presentations have open or closed captioning. Service animals are welcome, and paid personal care assistants are not charged admission when accompanying their clients. 2025 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, (215) 278-7200, [barnesfoundation.org](http://barnesfoundation.org)
- 6. **National Constitution Center\* (NCC)** – At this sleek, modern Independence Mall venue, visits include the multimedia theatrical production *Freedom Rising* and continue through interactive displays about U.S. branches of government, civil rights and constitutional amendments. The NCC is wheelchair accessible throughout and lends wheelchairs free of charge from the information desk. Assistive listening devices are available for programs in the F.M. Kirby Auditorium and Sidney Kimmel Theater; iPod Touch captioning devices are available for *Freedom Rising* and *Living News*. Opened captioning or printed scripts assist in the interpretation of most videos, soundtracks and displays. Free sign language interpretation is available with two weeks' notice. Large print scripts are also available for performances. The box office loans out large print versions and a Braille copy of the *U.S. Constitution*. 525 Arch Street, (215) 409-6600, [constitutioncenter.org](http://constitutioncenter.org)

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- 7. National Museum of American Jewish History (NMAJH)\*** – One block from the Independence Visitor Center, this contemporary, multi-story venue tells the true, compelling stories of early to modern Jewish migrants to the United States, the more than 360-year history of Jewish Life in America. NMAJH offers wheelchair access throughout, and loans standard wheelchairs free of charge to visitors on a first-come, first-served basis—a form of I.D. is required as collateral. All films and videos are captioned, and assistive listening devices are available without charge for Dell Theater programs. All way-finding signage includes Braille. While most artifacts are not touchable, there are child-friendly props and costumes throughout the galleries. Service dogs are welcome. Paid personal care attendants accompanying their clients are admitted free of charge. 101 S. Independence Mall East, (215) 923-3811, [nmajh.org](http://nmajh.org)
- 8. Penn Museum\*** – The University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (Penn Museum) offers multiple approaches for multiple audiences—from grades K-12 to families and adults. The museum's elevated Warden Garden and Main Entrance (Kamin) are wheelchair accessible via a new ramp. The museum partners with Philly Touch Tours, an organization that coordinates cultural and historical tours for blind and low-vision guests, to provide gallery tours of ancient Egyptian and ancient Roman artifacts. Self-guided experiences called “Tactile Trips Around the World” are offered throughout the year. The museum works with the Penn Memory Center for adults with dementia and their families. The special education staff leads sensory-friendly “Evening Expeditions” for families with children ages eight and up, and homeschool family days, both offering multisensory explorations of galleries and hands-on activities. 3260 South Street, (215) 898-4000, [penn.museum](http://penn.museum), [penn.museum/visit/accessibility](http://penn.museum/visit/accessibility); Philly Touch Tours, (215) 790-9079, [phillytouchtours.com](http://phillytouchtours.com)
- 9. Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA)\*** – The spacious galleries of the nation's first art museum and art school, known for its permanent collection of 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century American masters Benjamin West, Thomas Eakins, Winslow Homer and Mary Cassatt, and 19<sup>th</sup> century through contemporary American art, are accessible through the Broad Street entrance of the Hamilton Building and then via passenger elevators. A limited number of wheelchairs are available from the front desk. Visitors can request a tour for a group with special needs by calling (215) 391-4132. Personal care attendants enjoy free admission. Service animals are welcome. 118-122 N. Broad Street, (215) 972-7600, [pafa.org](http://pafa.org)
- 10. Philadelphia Museum of Art\*** – With its Office of Community Engagement and Access leading the way, the Philadelphia Museum of Art aims to share art with everyone. The museum has one of the largest art collections in the nation, spanning the ancient world, medieval times, the Renaissance, Impressionist movement and modern day. Visitors who use wheelchairs are able to access the art via the West Entrance. Three sizes of wheelchairs are available to borrow. Trained service dogs are permitted throughout. Among options for self-guided tours are large-print maps, audio tours and FM (radio-wave) assistive listening devices, including induction (neck) loops. Sign-language interpreters are available free of charge, with two weeks' notice. Specially adapted guided tours—including themed touch tours and touchable interpretations of paintings—are available for guests with mobility, hearing, visual, intellectual or other needs. The museum holds regular workshops for visitors with developmental disabilities and also arranges for off-site outreach presentations. To request Braille or other maps, visitors can contact museum staff at [accessprog@philamuseum.org](mailto:accessprog@philamuseum.org). 26<sup>th</sup> Street & Benjamin Franklin Parkway, (215) 763-8100, [philamuseum.org](http://philamuseum.org)

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**Especially, But Not Only, For Kids:**

- 11. The Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University\*** – Philadelphia's dinosaur museum is fully wheelchair accessible; best entrance is on 19<sup>th</sup> Street. Exhibits and activities of special interest to the visually impaired include *Outside In*, featuring touchable small animals and Dinosaur Hall's *Big Dig*, showcasing bones and skulls, along with various specimens on display and in shows throughout. Service animals are especially welcome in spaces without live animals. Free-of-charge ASL interpretation requires two weeks' notice. The Access to Science Initiative arranges special mornings for children with autism and their families, and pre-visit materials help prepare children with different levels of developmental abilities for their exploration of the museum. 1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, (215) 299-1060, [ansp.org](http://ansp.org)
- 12. The Franklin Institute\*** – The expansive, most-visited museum in the tri-state area is all about science, from namesake Benjamin Franklin's experiments and discoveries to the latest in robotics, technology, astronomy, biology and more. Visitors who use wheelchairs can enter the region's most popular science museum via the 20<sup>th</sup> Street business entrance or the parking garage elevators into the Bartol Atrium. Visitors who wish to borrow wheelchairs can head to the Atrium information desk or 20<sup>th</sup> Street business desk. The Institute recommends patrons who don't normally use wheelchairs bring someone to assist them through the expansive site. Paid personal care attendants accompanying visitors with severe disabilities enter at no charge. Requests for ASL interpreters must be made three weeks in advance by calling (215) 448-1226 voice/TTY. Visitors requesting ASL interpretation must reserve and pay for tickets at least two weeks in advance. Rear Window captioning is available upon request for certain programs in Fels Planetarium. Sensory maps are available for permanent and temporary exhibits. Several times a year, Sensory-Friendly Sunday (8 a.m.-12:30 p.m.) welcomes children and adults with sensory differences to experience the museum in a less busy, less overwhelming setting, with staff trained to make visitors comfortable. 222 N. 20<sup>th</sup> Street, (215) 448-1200, [fi.edu](http://fi.edu)
- 13. Please Touch Museum<sup>®\*</sup>** – This boundless family destination is dedicated to changing children's lives as they discover the power of learning through play. Young children explore, discover, learn and engage the senses in interactive play spaces that include water tables, vehicles, rocket ships and more. Please Touch is entirely wheelchair- and stroller-accessible, right down to the vintage Dentzel carousel. Adult wheelchairs are available free of charge from the admissions desk. Service animals are welcome. There is always a designated quiet space of the day, and staff is trained to help all kinds of kids, including those who'd like to borrow sound-reducing headphones. The Please Touch also offers free quarterly "Play Without Boundaries" morning events that provide a modified, sensory-friendly museum experience exclusively for families of children with special needs. 4231 Avenue of the Republic, (215) 581-3181, [pleasetouchmuseum.org](http://pleasetouchmuseum.org)
- 14. Philadelphia Zoo** – America's first zoo is fully wheelchair and stroller accessible and rents manual wheelchairs by the day for \$8 and electric scooters for \$30. Zoo education staffers are trained in cognitive and communication disabilities. Customized tours meet all manner of groups' needs and require two weeks' notice. Government-funded personal care attendants receive free admission when accompanying their companion. Guest relations requests notification upon the arrival of service animals, which must be leashed or harnessed, and have limitations on access. KidZooU, with its hands-on approach to learning about animals, uses the Universal Design concept to create an inclusive and enriching experience for children. Pre-visit materials are available on the zoo's website. 3400 W. Girard Avenue, (215) 243-1100, [philadelphiazoo.org](http://philadelphiazoo.org)

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VISIT PHILADELPHIA® is our name and our mission. As the region's official tourism marketing agency, we build Greater Philadelphia's image, drive visitation and boost the economy.

On Greater Philadelphia's official visitor website and blog, [visitphilly.com](http://visitphilly.com) and [uwishunu.com](http://uwishunu.com), visitors can explore things to do, upcoming events, themed itineraries and hotel packages. Compelling photography and videos, interactive maps and detailed visitor information make the sites effective trip-planning tools. Along with Visit Philly social media channels, the online platforms communicate directly with consumers. Travelers can also call and stop into the Independence Visitor Center for additional information and tickets.

*Note to Editors: For high-resolution photos of Greater Philadelphia, visit the photo gallery of [visitphilly.com/pressroom](http://visitphilly.com/pressroom).*