

The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens Now A Certified Autism Center To Further Enhance Accessibility

PALM SPRINGS, CA, UNITED STATES, August 25, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The Living Desert](#) Zoo and Gardens is now a [Certified Autism Center™](#) (CAC), a designation granted by the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards ([IBCCES](#)) and is awarded to organizations that complete training and certification to better understand and welcome autistic visitors and their families. As part of the certification process, IBCCES will also conduct an onsite review to provide additional ways the Zoo can accommodate visitors, as well as create sensory guides for each exhibit.

"The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens is proud to become a Certified Autism Center™ deepening our commitment to provide a best day ever experience for all of our guests," said Allen Monroe, President/CEO. "The team is dedicated to ensuring all of our guests, including those with autism or sensory needs, have equal opportunities and accessibility to participate in memorable, engaging, and inclusive experiences here at The Living Desert."



By completing the CAC process, The Living Desert joins a wider movement initiated by Visit Greater Palms Springs, to achieve the Certified Autism Destination (CAD) designation. The CAD

designation means that visitors have multiple trained and certified options to choose from when in the area, including entertainment, recreation, and hotel choices.

“Focusing on accessibility is essential for all organizations, especially with the millions of travelers and their families who are autistic or have sensory

needs. There are still few destinations with a variety of options that have taken the extra step with strategic programs and partners to understand and enhance accommodations for these visitors,” said Myron Pincomb, IBCCES board chairman. “We’re thrilled to see the progress in the Greater Palm Springs area – with more to come – and are looking forward to continuing our work with the team at Living Desert as this community initiative grows.”



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*Myron Pincomb, Board
Chairman of IBCCES.*

The Living Desert also offers sensory bags containing fidget tools, noise-canceling headphones and other resources are available for checkout for those with sensory needs. The Zoo offers wide, paved pathways, making exploring accessible for strollers and wheelchairs. Wheelchairs and ECVs (electronic convenience vehicles) are also offered for daily rental. The Living Desert also offers monoculars and Assistive Listening Device to aid guests with low vision or hearing impairments. If a guest needs

assistance and has an aid to accompany them, the aid is offered a complimentary daytime admission ticket to the Zoo.

For more than 20 years, IBCCES has been the leader in cognitive disorder training and certification for healthcare, education, and corporate professionals around the globe. IBCCES created programs specifically for hospitality and recreational organizations such as hotels, theme parks, museums, and other attractions so staff would be more knowledgeable and other accommodations could be offered to this growing, but underserved, part of the community. IBCCES is the only credentialing board offering these types of programs, which include training from subject matter experts and autistic self-advocates, as well as long-term support and continuous learning, onsite reviews, and more.

IBCCES also created AutismTravel.com, as a free online resource for parents that lists certified locations and professionals. Each organization listed on the site has met Certified Autism Center™ (CAC) requirements.

About The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens

The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens is a nonprofit, accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, ensuring the highest standards of all aspects of animal care, education, conservation, public service, and operations. The Zoo is active in conservation research, habitat protection, breeding programs and education initiatives around the world, as well as in its own community. The Zoo has been a top destination in the Palm Springs area for more than 50 years. The Living Desert is located at 47900 Portola Ave, Palm Desert, CA 92260. For more information: (760) 346-5694 or visit livingdesert.org.

About IBCCES

Committed to providing The Global Standard For Training and Certification in The Field of Cognitive Disorders – IBCCES provides a series of certifications that empower professionals to be leaders in their field and improve the outcomes for the individuals they serve. These programs are recognized around the world as the leading benchmark for training and certification in the areas of autism and other cognitive disorders.

Meredith Tekin

IBCCES

+1 904-508-0135

meredith@ibcces.org

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