

Pickering Events LLC at Riverside County Fairgrounds Becomes a Certified Autism Center™

By completing the CAC process, Pickering Events joins a larger effort spearheaded by Visit Greater Palm Springs to become a Certified Autism Destination™.

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The International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES) awards the [Certified Autism Center™](#) (CAC) designation to Pickering Events LLC, operators of the [Riverside County Fairgrounds](#) in Indio. This certification recognizes Pickering Events' commitment to enhancing inclusivity for all guests with its staff completing an autism-specific training and certification process from IBCCES.

This training equips staff with

knowledge of necessary skills, resources and best practices for assisting autistic and sensory-sensitive guests. IBCCES also completed an onsite review during the 2024 Riverside County Fair & National Date Festival to provide sensory guides and additional recommendations to enhance accessibility.

"The Riverside County Fairgrounds exists to serve as a community gathering place," says fairgrounds CEO Chris Pickering. "Becoming a Certified Autism Center™ has prepared our team to host community members who may have felt left out of festivities in the past. We look forward to continuing to expand our offerings for guests with sensory needs including augmenting our sensory space: a calm and secluded oasis offered during the annual Riverside County Fair & National Date Festival presented by Fantasy Springs Resort Casino."

In alignment with the Certified Autism Center™ designation, the Riverside County Fairgrounds offers a range of accommodations to create a supportive experience for sensory-sensitive visitors. Staff trained by IBCCES are prepared to assist neurodiverse guests effectively, fostering a safe and inclusive environment. The Fairgrounds also provides a dedicated quiet space—a calm





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Fairgrounds CEO Chris Pickering

and secluded area for those needing a break from the lively atmosphere. To further support guests, printed sensory guides and clear signage are available at sensory-friendly zones and on certain rides, helping visitors anticipate sensory elements and make informed choices about their experience.

By completing the CAC process, Pickering Events becomes part of a broader initiative led by Visit Greater Palm Springs to attain the [Certified Autism Destination™](#) (CAD) designation. This certification ensures that visitors have

various trained and certified options for entertainment, recreation, attractions, and hospitality and lodging while in the area.

“We are excited to certify Pickering Events LLC as a Certified Autism Center™, highlighting their dedication to creating inclusive and accessible events for everyone who visits the Riverside County fairgrounds,” says Myron Pincomb, IBCCES board chairman. “We look forward to seeing the impact this certification will have on their entire community.”

Since 2001, IBCCES has been the leader in autism, neurodiversity, and 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, continuous learning, and more.

IBCCES also created AutismTravel.com, 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.

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About Riverside County Fairgrounds

The Riverside County Fairgrounds is a 91-acre county-owned and privately operated event center in Greater Palm Springs. Home to community celebrations including the Riverside County Fair & National Date Festival presented by Fantasy Springs Resort Casino in February, Riverside County Scare & Pumpkin Festival in October, and an array of private and public events.

About Pickering Events LLC

Pickering Events leverages decades of international award-winning fairgrounds leadership experience to preserve and enhance traditional community celebrations. Current clients include the County of Riverside (Riverside County Fairgrounds), City of Indio (Indio International Tamale Festival), Sonoma County Fair & Exposition, Inc. (Vendor Management), and California Exposition & State Fair (Special Events).

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.

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