

---

# Sensory Guide

---

## Obama Presidential Center



OBAMA  
FOUNDATION



**Thank you for your patience as we await final photography for this guide. Until then, on the following pages please find our draft in progress.**

---

Welcome to the Obama Presidential Center! There are many ways to use our campus. This guide focuses on visiting the Museum.

There are many visitors to the Museum, and the Museum includes a variety of interactions with staff, media, and exhibits.

With this guide you will be able to find places that are often quieter or less crowded. Feel free to ask any staff member wearing a name badge for help finding these spaces.



---

If you and your family drove to Campus, you may start your day in the Parking Lot. The Parking Lot is equipped with bright overhead lights to ensure visibility and safety. Clear and prominent signs, painted lines and symbols will indicate parking spaces, pedestrian walkways and access to elevators.

While the level of noise may vary depending on the time of day, you should expect occasional loud noises such as car or motorcycle engines, horns, back-up alarms, doors slamming and conversations. The temperature can also vary greatly depending on the time of year.

Our Entry Pavilion in the Museum Building is often crowded and noisy. To spend the least amount of time in this space we recommend buying tickets online in advance and leaving backpacks and/or large bags at home. *You may still have to wait in line at Security.*



---

There is another entrance to the Museum through the Forum. This is often less crowded and noisy than the Entry Pavilion. We recommend that you purchase your tickets in advance if you wish to use this entrance as our main ticketing desk is located in the Entry Pavilion. *You may still have to wait in line at Security.*



---

If you need a quiet space before entering the Museum exhibition floors, the Our Story lounge, located on the Lower Level of the Museum building has comfortable couches and bright natural light.

The Courtyard Lounge is usually less crowded and noisy than the adjacent Our Story space.

---

Both the Courtyard Lounge and Our Story lounge can be accessed by either taking the Elevators to the Lower Level or going down the Grand Staircase.



Rendering of the Grand Staircase

---

The Plaza Overlook on the Level 1 Mezzanine offers stunning views of the campus and is sometimes quieter.



Rendering of the Plaza Overlook

---

The Museum Galleries have many different types of environments. The Museum contains over thirty media programs generally two to five minutes in length. Media programs are shown in a variety of formats, including multi-floor and immersive projections in low light environments. While there are no excessively loud or surprising noises, there are areas of focused-sound that could be considered loud for some listeners. There are no dramatic lighting effects such as strobes or flashes at any point in your visit. The fourth floor has been designed with limited media, and is a good place for visitors in search of an area with less stimulation.



---

If a quiet space is needed while exploring the Galleries, the Mezzanine levels low lighting levels and benches to sit. These floors also have restrooms with Family Restrooms.

---

There is also a Wellness Room in the Lower Level of the Museum Building. Wellness rooms have seating, a small table, adjustable light, white noise machines, and sensory toys, a yoga mat, and cleaning materials to use after you are done.

---

The library on campus is a branch of the Chicago Public Library which is committed to making their locations warm and engaging spaces. The Library has both natural and artificial light. It is a bright space to promote reading and studying. The Library aims to maintain a quiet atmosphere, but there still might be background noise such as hushed conversations, pages being turned, or typing on computers. There is a variety of seating options with different textures and comfort levels.

---

Home Court at the Obama Presidential Center is an athletic center that could be active at any given time—from basketball games to fitness sessions. Loud noises such as yelling, clapping, feet stomping, music, whistles and air horns might be heard throughout the building at various times. Home Court also features bright, well lit areas and public address systems.

---

There is a Wellness Room available in Home Court if you need a quiet, private space during a program. The Wellness room has seating, a small table, adjustable light, white noise machines, sensory toys, a yoga mat, and cleaning materials to use after you are done.

---

Tafari's Kitchen is the sit-down restaurant option. Located in the Forum off the Hadiya Pendleton Atrium and before Security, Tafari's Kitchen features an open kitchen that might result in a variety of sounds and smells permeating the atmosphere of the main dining room.

The dining room includes a mixture of colors, textures and lighting styles. In addition to the open kitchen design, the restaurant could be noisy with the typical sounds of glassware and dishes clinking, conversations and ambient music depending on the time of day and how busy the restaurant is.

---

The Cafe is a grab-and-go restaurant. Located in the Forum on the Lower Level, the Cafe is behind Security. You do not, however, need a ticket. The Cafe might be crowded and noisy depending on the time of day. There are a variety of seating options in the cafe including benches and chairs with accessible seating options. There is both natural and artificial light.

---

The Store is located in the Forum on the Lower Level, the Store is behind Security. You do not, however, need a ticket.

The Store has entirely artificial lighting and may have spotlights or other bright lights to highlight certain items. Items are displayed on shelves, tables and display cases. The Store can often be noisy and crowded depending on the time of day.

There is seating both across the hall in the Cafe or down the hall in the Our Story space if you need a quieter place to wait for your party.