



Welcome to The Arc's Convention!

Here is a welcome guide.

We hope this will help you learn more about our convention.

We also hope this will help you know more about the lovely city of New Orleans, Louisiana (NOLA).

CONVENTION TIPS:

What is The Arc's convention?

Our convention is a 3-day long event for advocates, professionals, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), and their families.

Our convention is an opportunity for people to learn more about The Arc, federal policy, and other issues that impact people with IDD.

We have very important speakers who share their expertise and wisdom with us as keynote and breakout sessions.

We also have time for people who work at chapters of The Arc to share good programs for people with IDD and their families.

It is very business-y and professional.
But, we also always have some time for fun, too!

Our convention in NOLA may be loud and noisy.
This is because NOLA is known for jazz music.
Make sure to bring headphones with you to the convention if you are sensitive to noise.

What does it cost to go to the convention?

When you come to the convention, there are costs involved. You should budget for:

- You to fly or travel to convention
- Your registration fee for convention
- Hotel costs
- Food during convention
- Travel around NOLA
- Any other things you want to do while in NOLA

Flying, driving, or traveling to convention

The cost for you to travel to and from convention will be different for each person.

This is based on where you live.

You can search online to find prices for how much it will cost you to come to convention.

You can also ask for help from someone you know.

This can be a friend, family member, support staff, or a local chapter of The Arc.

Your registration fee for convention

Our convention costs money to attend.

Our registration fees are:

- \$325 for a person with IDD or personal care attendant to attend if you register ON OR BEFORE August 27th
- \$425 for a person with IDD or personal care attendant to attend if you register AFTER August 27th

You can find out more about our costs at <https://convention.thearc.org/>.

Your hotel costs

Our convention last for 3 days.

The hotel block we offer costs \$209 plus tax each night you stay there.

You can also book another hotel if you want.

There are a few ways you may be able to save money.

If you know someone who is also attending convention, ask them to share a room with you.

Or, ask your local chapter for help.

They may be able to donate some money for this cost.

Paying for food in New Orleans

You will need to plan to pay for your food and snacks while at convention.

You can find cheaper places to buy meals in NOLA.

There are fast food places nearby the hotel.

But, if you want to eat other types of food, you will need to be prepared to pay more.

You can learn more about nearby restaurants here:

<https://www.neworleans.com/plan/>.

There are some things you can do to help keep your food costs low.

You can pack some food in your luggage.

This food should be dry snacks like granola bars, cereal, and nuts.

You can also consider packing fruit like bananas and apples.

Some people pack these in bubble wrap so the fruit does not bruise.

If you are flying:

- Make sure to only pack dry snacks in your carry-on bag.
- If you check your luggage, you can bring a bigger suitcase and pack a small cooler inside it with food. Remember to stay within the luggage weight limit guidelines.

If you want to bring liquids:

- Make sure your hotel room has a mini fridge. You may need to call the hotel to make sure you have this in your room.
- Consider purchasing milk, juice, or other liquids when you get to NOLA. Liquid may spoil or leak on your luggage while you travel.
- Don't buy more than what will fit in a mini fridge.

Sometimes, we recommend people to buy food at a grocery store. You can use your food stamps for food in other states, if you have them. But, our convention hotel is in a food desert. This means you would need to use a taxi, Uber, or Lyft to go to the store. And, the convenience stores nearby can be very expensive.

You may also consider using a grocery shopping service, like Instacart or Amazon Fresh.

Remember: It can take 1-2 days to get food after you make your order.

Travel around NOLA

There are many ways you can get around NOLA.

By Car:

You can use taxis, Uber, or Lyft.

Taxis tend to be more expensive than Uber or Lyft.

But, you can compare prices on phone apps when you need a ride.

Remember: Uber and Lyft prices change based on several reasons.

By Public Transportation:

The New Orleans Regional Transit Authority runs public transportation in NOLA. There are streetcars, buses, and ferries.

You can find out more about public transportation options at

<https://www.norta.com/>.

They also have a phone app that you can download and use.

Make sure you check out the accessibility of different routes, if you need it.

By Walking:

Our hotel can give you a walking map.
You can ask for one at the front desk.
You can also use your smartphone for walking directions.

Getting To/From the Airport:

There are many ways to get to/from the airport.
They have airport shuttles, taxis, Uber, and Lyft.
You can also request a wheelchair accessible van.
Find out more at <https://www.neworleans.com/plan/transportation/airport-shuttle/>.

NEW ORLEANS TIPS

There are many things to see and do in NOLA.

NOLA is home to the nation's **World War II Museum**.
This is a very interesting museum.
They have planes, medals and other things from the war.
The volunteers at the museum are often veterans who have their own stories to tell!

The **Cafe Du Monde French Market** is a popular place in NOLA.
You can try a beignet (pronounced bin-YAY!).
Beignets are a sweet donut-like treat.

There are very cool **Cemetery Tours** and **Ghost Tours**.
There are also many fortune tellers on the streets who may offer to tell your fortune.
These activities can be fun, but they can also ask you for money.
So, think about this with caution.

You can visit the **Shops of the Colonnade French Market**.

You can shop for keepsakes and souvenirs.

You may also be able to pick up some fruit.

If you visit the shops, go early.

They get very crowded.

Harrah's NOLA is the casino in town.

Bourbon Street is another attraction in NOLA.

NOLA is a very "adult" town.

There is good music and lots of people celebrating.

You may also see women on Bourbon Street dressed in skimpy clothes. Or, they may not be wearing tops.

They might act very friendly to try to get you to come in and drink.

Consider avoiding Bourbon Street after dark if this would make you uncomfortable.

Words of Caution

Be prepared to see many people "sleeping hard" or homeless people.

They may approach you and ask for money.

They may often want more than you can afford to give.

If you do not want to give them money:

- Keep your eyes forward
- Walk past them
- Do not talk with them or respond to their requests

Do not wear your nametag on the street since it tells others that you are from out of town and may make you a target of crime.

As a safety measure, consider going out at night with a group or friend.

If you have any problems, please reach out to The Arc staff.

They will try to connect you with others who can help.

Questions about our convention or New Orleans?

Contact events@thearc.org.