



Society for Technical Communication

49th STC Annual Conference

Gaylord Opryland, Nashville, TN

Guide for People with Special Needs

Prepared by the STC Special Needs Committee

Look for us at the Orientation Session on
Sunday May 5th at 2:30 to 3:30 p.m.
and throughout the conference. We'll be wearing special badges.
If we can't help you, we can direct you to someone who can.



“Special” guests are welcome

STC has made every effort this year to make the Nashville Conference site more user-friendly than ever before to all registrants with special needs. The STC Special Needs Committee prepared this Guide to inform and assist all conference attendees with accessibility issues and ensure their stay is as comfortable and trouble-free as possible.

If you checked the box on your STC Conference application form indicating that you “require special accommodations, or any other physical assistance,” this Guide may help you. It clearly indicates where your room will be, the location of elevators and ramps, and the shortest distance between areas of the hotel.

As soon as you arrive at the Gaylord Opryland, and *if you have booked in advance**, a Middle Tennessee Chapter volunteer will be in the Cascades Lobby (main check-in area) to escort you from the hotel registration desk all the way to your room. All people with special needs will have rooms assigned in preferential locations as close to the meeting area as possible.

Gaylord Opryland hotel staff and Middle Tennessee Chapter volunteers will be posted at strategic places around the site throughout the Conference to help guests find their way promptly and comfortably.

When you get to the Conference registration area and pick up your registration package, you’ll find an Addendum to this Guide that contains any changes or additions since this Guide was printed.

Enjoy the conference! We will!
Your Special Needs Committee

*** Contact Bill Smith at bill@derri.com, or by phone at (615) 299-5533 to book an escort.**

**Don’t forget...Orientation Session Sunday, May 5, 2:30-3:30 p.m.
Room Washington A in the Presidential section**

This Sunday afternoon orientation session is for anyone with special needs interested in obtaining information about any last-minute changes or new developments at the Conference.

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The Gaylord Opryland Hotel

General Conference Site

The Gaylord Opryland is an incredible complex. It is made up of five main sections:

- the Convention Center
- the Cascades (main hotel check-in area)
- the Delta
- the Garden Conservatory
- the Magnolia

The Convention Center has three levels: Level 0, Level 2, and Mezzanine

This section of the Guide describes the situation you will find at arrival, at check-in time, and in locating your room.

Getting around the giant Gaylord Opryland complex is a formidable feat even for mobile people. Once you are settled in your room, however, STC has made sure that the meeting rooms are not far away and you can settle into a more manageable routine.

In case you get disoriented when you move around the hotel, staffed information desks are scattered throughout the Gaylord Opryland complex to help you find your way, and to answer any of your questions on the complex.

ADA Compliancy	The Gaylord Opryland is fully ADA compliant. This means it meets all necessary criteria determining accessibility of the site. For a list of these criteria, please refer to the Appendix.
Restrooms	<p>As all other installations, all restrooms at the Gaylord Opryland are ADA compliant and equipped to accommodate wheelchairs, and this includes the sinks.</p> <p>However, to enter these facilities, you must push open a door and navigate a narrow passageway around one or two corners. This could be difficult amidst crowds between sessions. If possible, either try to avoid peak-time crowds or return to your room to use the restroom. Also, those with electric scooters might find it a bit harder to go in and out of restrooms than folks with regular wheelchairs.</p>
Signage	In addition to ADA-compliant signs around the hotel, STC will add signs indicating areas such as the Vendor area, the Exhibition Hall, the Bookstore, and the STC Hospitality counter.
Wheelchairs	A few wheelchairs are available for borrowing at the hotel, but they are on first-come first-served basis. So if you feel you will need one, it would be a good idea to bring your own.
Electric carts	Electric carts are available for rental at \$30-35 for 24 hours.
Accessible Parking	Since the facility is ADA-compliant, there is accessible parking available.

Cascades Portico and Lobby

The Cascades Portico features a large, covered, multi-lane driveway paved with exposed aggregate (a popular paving surface in Nashville). The airport shuttle pickup/drop-off is there also and is covered. There are no benches in the Portico area. You enter the building either through a manually operated double door or through one of two generous-sized automatic revolving doors. These revolving doors feature a “Push to slow” button at about 30-inch height. You emerge onto a floor of alternating carpet and marble in the Cascades Lobby. Transitions between floor types are flush throughout the hotel and all carpet is slightly padded.

Your immediate objective, of course, is the registration desk, but the weary traveler will cover about 75 feet from curb to the first opportunity to sit down, in the lobby. Beyond the lobby seating area to the right is the large registration desk.

Registration desk

Don’t forget to ask for your complimentary *Guest Guide* at the Front Desk when you register. In it you will find helpful maps of guest rooms, meeting rooms, ballrooms, and exhibit halls, as well as a selection of restaurants, lounges, and restaurants available around the Gaylord Opryland. This Guest Guide probably contains the best map you will find of the Gaylord Opryland.

Getting to your room

STC has informed us that people with special needs will be staying in the *Magnolia South* section. These rooms are the closest to the Convention Center.

The code for room numbers is made up of three parts: Example: C2345, where C is the area (C = Cascades, D = Delta, G = Garden Conservatory, M = Magnolia), 2 is the floor, and 345 is the room number.

If you are concerned that you might get lost going from the Registration Desk to your room, it is possible to be escorted to your room by a volunteer.

If you arrive at the Cascades Portico, there are two routes you can take to get to the Magnolia South section. These are detailed below. We suggest that when you do proceed to your room, you have this Guide with you, as well as your complimentary Guest Guide. These will help you get to your room safely and not get disoriented.

Route A from the Cascades Lobby to your room

This route is the one that most people will take to get to their rooms. The distance from check-in to your room is approximately 500-600 feet. This route will take you through escalators, multiple long ramps, and long halls and walkways.

a) From the Main Lobby to the Cascades section

You need to exit the Cascades (main) lobby to enter the Cascades section, one of the three spectacular atriums. Most surfaces in the atriums are exposed aggregate – a finer grade aggregate than is normally found on driveways and outdoor walkways.

To begin, you go up a 75-foot ramp (fairly steep!) to a level area where you find an escalator that runs through a transitional section between the Cascades and Garden Conservatory sections. There is no place to sit along this ramp.

b) Alternative to the escalator to the Garden Conservatory section

As an alternative to taking the escalator to the Garden Conservatory section, you can take a few steps or a short ramp to elevators found on either side of the escalator. Take this elevator to level 3.

c) Crossing the Garden Conservatory section

You need to cross the whole length of this formidable atrium.

Emerging from either the escalator or the elevator, you cross a small ceramic-tiled floor to enter an impressive elevated walkway that runs the whole length of the Garden Conservatory section.

The walkway immediately splits into two paths. Although it is not at first apparent, the path to the right is most direct and will save you steps.

This long path contains no benches, but is mostly level until you reach the far end of the Garden Conservatory section.

d) From the Garden Conservatory section to the Magnolia section

At the end of the long path you just took, you go down a fairly steep 70-foot ramp to a brief level space, and down a second ramp. There is no place to sit along these ramps.

You will come across about 15 feet of slightly cobbled, smooth surface (potentially slippery if wet...) until you reach the carpet of the main hallway running through the Magnolia section.

e) In the Magnolia section

On the right, you finally find seats where you can rest, across from the Conservatory Café.

Continue past the shops (unless you let yourself be tempted...), and past the entrance to the Delta area, to the hallway on the right, and through the Magnolia South guestroom area. This very long wing has elevators at the beginning, at mid-point, and at the far end. Again, there is no place to sit in this long hallway.

At the end of this hallway, a second hallway runs to the left to yet another elevator and to the Convention Center. There is no place to sit in this second hallway either.

Because of its proximity to the Convention Center, it is the latter hallway (Rooms 363 to 395) that will accommodate people with special needs.

Route B from the Cascades Lobby to your room

There is an alternate route to go from the Cascades lobby to your room. If you prefer to bypass the potentially disorienting, although spectacular, sights and sounds of the Cascades and Garden Conservatory atriums, there exists a quieter and simpler route.

One good thing about this alternate route is that it contains no ramps. It is not much shorter than Route A, but it is level all the way.

a) From the Main lobby

As you exit the Cascades (Main) lobby, instead of going up the steep ramp, you take the long carpeted hallway to the left. Go to the very end of this hallway, where elevator C1 seems almost hidden.

b) Take elevator C1 to level 2

Exit to the left, towards a seemingly endless, but very quiet and straight hallway serving rooms on the north side of the building. Resist the urge to go out through any of the three exits from this hall into the atrium. These paths lead to steps.

c) Go to end of hallway

At the end of this long hallway, you emerge into the far end of the Garden Conservatory mentioned earlier.

d) Turn left

Turn left down the Magnolia hallway to the wing where you will find your room.

Hotel Restaurants

All restaurants in the Gaylord Opryland complex are ADA-compliant. Considering the high quality of this place, service should not be a problem.

Pools, gym, etc.

Because all hotel installations are ADA-compliant, it is assumed that pools and gym facilities are also compliant. No other data is available.

Delta River Flatboat Tours

Flatboats meander around the Gaylord Opryland complex. It is assumed that these are accessible to wheelchairs. Apparently, the tours are most enjoyable in the daylight hours, when you can see the fish in the water.

Walk to Opry Mills Shopping Mall

It is possible to get to the Opry Mills Shopping Mall directly from the Gaylord Opryland. This is a 7-10 minute walk. There is a paved walkway from the Delta Portico, south of the hotel. Check your map to locate this walkway, as it is not at first apparent. Ask around if you don't see it. This walkway also takes you to the home of the Grand Ole Opry.

The Convention Center

NOTE: The information given here is in addition to ADA-compliant criteria.

Access

As said earlier, rooms for people with special needs are in the Magnolia section of the hotel, closest to the Convention Center. These rooms are Rooms 363 to 395.

Elevators

At the north end of the hallway where the reserved rooms are located is an elevator that leads straight to the Convention Center.

Dining Room

In the dining room, there are always a few people to help bring the food to your table in case it is a buffet.

Restrooms

All restrooms around the Convention Center are ADA-compliant.

Rest Areas

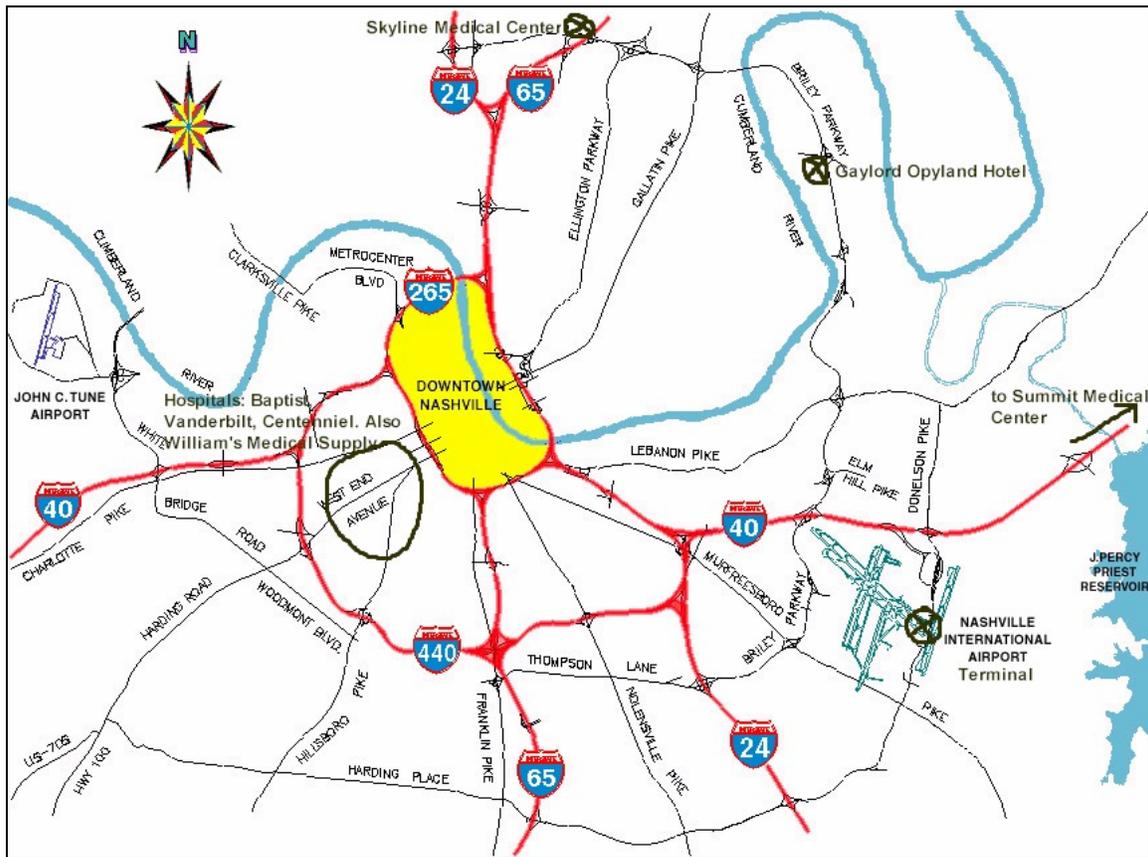
Long hallways usually do not have any rest areas, where benches or chairs are available. However, there are a few rest areas in strategic spots.

Kinko's Business Center

Although it is a private business, Kinko's Business Center is open at all times, unless for some reason it needs to close down for a while (repairs, etc.). All floor space inside the business center is level. Access is no problem, but it is a fairly small store, so it is advised to avoid peak time crowds.

Nashville area

Map of Area



Hospitals/Clinics

Among Nashville's many hospitals are:

Skyline Medical Center

3441 Dickerson Pk
Nashville, TN
(615) 769-2000

This is a new hospital and the closest one to the Opryland Hotel. It is about 6.2 miles, or 11 minutes northeast of the hotel.

Summit Medical Center

5655 Frist Blvd
Hermitage, TN
(615) 316-3000

This is a fairly new hospital with a national reputation. It is about 12.8 miles, or 20 minutes southeast of the Opryland Hotel.

Baptist Hospital of Nashville

2000 Church St
Nashville, TN
(615) 284-5555

This is an excellent hospital complex in a neighborhood west of downtown, about 13 miles, or 22 minutes (longer in morning rush hour) west of the Opryland hotel. This complex is filled with hospitals and clinics, including:

Vanderbilt University Medical Center,
(615) 322-5000

Centennial Medical Center,
(615) 342-5299

Police (non-emergency - other than 911)

Nashville/Davidson County Metro Police, 862-8600

Because this is a combined city/county government, this number is good in a wide geographic range from the hotel.

Wheelchair/scooter rentals

Williams Medical Supply, Inc.

1501 Church ST
Nashville, TN
(615) 327-4931

Pharmacies/drugstores

There are no pharmacies near the hotel. However, since the Gaylord Opryland is a full-service hotel, the Concierge is accustomed to handling such needs.

Orthopaedic emergency repairs

Williams Medical Supply, Inc.

1501 Church ST
Nashville, TN
(615) 327-4931

This company pretty much does it all for consumers when it comes to medical supplies and equipment. If Williams Medical Supply cannot fill the need, then surely the hotel Concierge can assist you.

Public transportation

Nashville Metro Transit Authority, **(615) 862-5950**

This is just your basic in-town bus service, and few people ride busses unless they have no other option.

Attractions

We recommend people contact these facilities directly with specific questions and special arrangements. The following links should provide basic contact information and descriptions.

Grand Ole Opry www.grandoleopry.com

Wildhorse Saloon

www.wildhorsesaloon.com

General Jackson Showboat

www.gaylordopryland.com/gen_jack.cfm

Springhouse Golf Club

www.gaylordopryland.com/springhouse.cfm

Ryman Auditorium www.ryman.com

Nashville Airport

General

The Nashville International Airport is ADA-compliant. There is a Welcome desk in the middle of the baggage claim level. The telephone number for the desk is **(615) 275-1674**. According to the airport web site (www.nashintl.com), "The welcome center often helps travelers determine which mode of ground transportation would be best for them. They know all of the shuttle services prices as well as taxi rates. They can advise you which route would be cheapest and which route would be fastest."

We have heard that they respond nicely to all sorts of needs, both informational and tangible needs.

Walking distances

Like most airports, distances from gates to the main terminal can be fairly long. If you are not using a wheelchair, expect the usual airport distances with a few ramped areas. You can borrow one of the airport wheelchairs. To get from the arrival level to the baggage level, go to the main concourse and take one of several elevators down to the baggage level.

Assistance

It is usually possible to get someone to help with your luggage (getting suitcases off the carousel, and getting your things to a shuttle bus or taxi). There are usually porters standing around the baggage claim area offering assistance (sometimes for a fee). Request help at the Welcome desk on that level if you don't see a porter available.

Taxis & Shuttle busses

In addition to routine shuttle service and taxis, wheelchair-accessible busses or vans are available. Call **(615) 889-1000** and ask for Guest Services to make those arrangements. The Gaylord Opryland has a shuttle between the hotel and the airport.

Appendix – ADA Compliancy

The Opryland Hotel complex is fully ADA-compliant. This means that the following criteria determining accessibility of the site are met:

Doors

32-inch minimum width, 8-pound maximum opening force, lever or U-shaped door handle, $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch maximum thresholds.

Elevators

Call button is 42 inches high, Braille and raised letter-characters, 20-second door delay, reopens upon obstruction.

Handrails

34-38 inches high.

Parking

Designated spaces and signage; access aisle next to parking space.

Ramps

36-inch minimum width; 1:12 maximum slope.

Restrooms

32-inch minimum width door with lever or handle; at least one 60-inch diameter turnaround; seat height 17-19 inches; grab bars 33-36 inches; sink 29-34 inch clearance above floor, insulated plumbing, lever faucet handles; paper towel dispenser 54 inches above floor (side reach), 48 inches (front reach); mirror bottom edge 40 inches above floor.

Pathways around site

36-inch minimum width; smooth surface; adequate lighting; signage.

Signage

Designated by accessibility symbol, not obscured.

Telephones

Ground space at least 30 inches by 48 inches; TTY.

Here are the names of several more places specialized in assistive technology in the Nashville, TN area. These are all **within 25 miles** of the Gaylord Opryland Hotel, and are *sorted by proximity to the hotel*.

AdaptiveWare

2700 Lakeland Drive
Nashville, TN 37214
(615) 884-8904

Middle TN Regional Resource Center (MTRRC)

1210 Foster Avenue
Nashville, TN 37210
(615) 532-3258

Custom Mobility, Inc.

2615 Lebanon Road
Nashville, TN 37210
(615) 885-7592

Vanderbilt University Medical Center

1211 22nd Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37232
(615) 322-5000

Vanderbilt Bill Wilkerson Hearing & Speech Center

1114 19th Avenue S.
Nashville, TN 37232
(615) 936-5000

TN Technology Access Project (TTAP)

Citizens Plaza, 11th floor 400 Deadrick Street
Nashville, TN 37248
(615) 532-3122

TN Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired

400 Deaderick Street, Suite 1100
Nashville, TN 37248
(615) 313-4914

Technology Access Ctr. of Middle Tennessee

Suite 126 2222 Metrocenter Boulevard
Nashville, TN 37228
(615) 248-6733

Brentwood Hearing Center

Suite 100 5544 Franklin Road
Nashville, TN 37220
(615) 377-0420

TN AgrAbility Project

2001 Woodmont Drive

Nashville, TN 37215
(865) 982-4262

High Hopes, Inc.

PO Box 150932
Nashville, TN 37215
(615) 269-6640

Accessible Solutions

3905 Charlotte Avenue
Nashville, TN 37209
(615) 292-5377

Medical Mobility, Inc.

316 Bluebird Drive
Goodlettsville, TN 37072
(615) 851-1400

Medical Mobility, Inc.

316 Bluebird Drive
Goodlettsville, TN 37072
(615) 851-1400

TN Rehabilitation Center

460 9th Avenue
Smyrna, TN 37167
(615) 741-4921

TN Mobility

1824 West Lori Lee Drive
Gallatin, TN 37066
(615) 230-9183

Felix Enterprises, Inc.

118 Reynolds Road
Franklin, TN 37064
(615) 599-7009