



# The Torch

The official newsletter for Indiana state employees

## We're #1 for state government efficiency

In a new report released this week by *U.S. News & World Report*, Indiana ranks first in the nation for government efficiency and fourth in the nation for affordability and opportunity. The report, available online at [www.usnews.com/news/best-states/indiana](http://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/indiana), evaluates the states in seven categories: health care, education, crime & corrections, infrastructure, opportunity, economy and government. Overall, Indiana ranks in the top half of all states nationwide.

“Strong leadership over the last 12 years has made our government efficient and our fiscal position healthy and solid,” Governor Eric J. Holcomb said. “As our state enters its third century, it’s my goal to continue this success and elevate our position on all fronts to take Indiana to the next level.”

*U.S. News* evaluated states across 68 metrics to create the Best States rankings. The rankings are based on tens of thousands of data points provided by McKinsey & Company’s Leading States Index. In calculating the rankings, categories were weighted based on a national “citizen experience” survey, conducted by McKinsey, that asked people to prioritize each subject in their state and provide their levels of satisfaction with government services.

- [Read the full story on IN.gov.](#)
- [Read Governor Holcomb’s message to state employees.](#)

### Celebrate our #1 ranking

The Indiana State Personnel Department is here to help you celebrate our top ranking for state governments nationwide. [Download the unofficial #1 foam finger poster](#) to display your state employee pride.



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*The Torch* is published monthly by the State Personnel Department and is available online at [www.in.gov/spd](http://www.in.gov/spd)

### Got a story?

Submit your story ideas to: [spdcommunications@spd.in.gov](mailto:spdcommunications@spd.in.gov)



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## File your taxes for free this season through INfreefile



This tax season, Indiana Department of Revenue continues to offer free federal and state filing through Indiana freefile (INfreefile).

Taxpayers with an adjusted gross income of \$64,000 or less in 2016 may qualify for INfreefile. Nearly two million Hoosier taxpayers qualify for this program. INfreefile allows taxpayers to use sophisticated question-and-answer style software from trusted vendors to file for free.

Taxpayers should visit [www.freefile.dor.in.gov](http://www.freefile.dor.in.gov) to learn more about the program and to see if they qualify based on the vendors' options. Qualified taxpayers can select the

vendor of their choice and complete their tax returns for free. Participating vendors include TurboTax, H&R Block, TaxAct, OLT Online Taxes, 1040NOW and FreeTaxUSA.

### Benefits of electronic filing include:

- **Faster refunds:** Electronically-filed returns are processed in 12 to 14 days, whereas a paper-filed return can take up to 12 weeks.
- **More secure:** Fewer people see your personal information.
- **Get more or pay less:** E-filing software may suggest credits and deductions about which you might not have known.
- **Better accuracy:** Electronically-filed returns have a two percent error rate versus 20 percent for paper returns.

INfreefile is part of the Free File Alliance, a national program developed in 2003 through a

cooperative effort between the IRS and tax preparation software vendors. More than 43 million taxpayers across the country have used Free File.

If taxpayers have questions or concerns about their returns, they should contact the department by calling 317-232-2240 or emailing [individualltaxassistance@dor.in.gov](mailto:individualltaxassistance@dor.in.gov).



*From Indiana Department of Revenue*

## INDOT is accepting applications for college scholarships

Attention college students! The Indiana Department of Transportation is again accepting applications for civil engineering scholarships of up to \$3,125 per semester.

INDOT's civil-engineering scholarship program offers \$3,125 per semester or \$2,083 per trimester for up to five years of post-secondary civil engineering education. Scholarship funds can be applied to educational expenses, fees and books. In return, recipients work for INDOT in a variety of full-time, paid positions during their summer breaks and upon graduation.

Students must be accepted or enrolled full time in one of Indiana's Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology certified civil engineering programs.

Eligible programs include Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne, Purdue University, Purdue University Northwest, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, Trine University, University of Evansville, University of Notre Dame and Valparaiso University.

Learn more about the INDOT Engineer Scholarship program and apply using the form at

[www.INDOTScholarship.in.gov](http://www.INDOTScholarship.in.gov).

Applications for the 2016-2017 school year must be postmarked by Friday, March 31.



*From Indiana Department of Transportation*

# Governor Holcomb declares April “Safe Digging Month”

Governor Holcomb issued a proclamation designating April as “Safe Digging Month” in the State of Indiana in honor of the safe digging efforts through the Common Ground Alliance and the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission.

Spring has arrived in Indiana and many Hoosiers are planning outdoor projects. Whether that’s planting trees, installing a new fence, updating a septic system, or any other project that involves moving dirt, homeowners and professional excavators need to have the buried utilities in the project area clearly marked so they can avoid damaging them.

In Indiana, it’s the law to either call 811 or visit [www.811now.com](http://www.811now.com) at least two full working days before any digging project. It’s a free service that’s available any time of the day or night--seven days a week.



Once 811 has been contacted, professional utility locaters visit your property and identify your buried utility lines with colored flags and paint, indicating which types of facilities are nearby. When you’re ready to begin your digging project, make sure to always dig safely around the utility marks, not directly on them. Remember, some utility lines may not be very deep!

Why do you need to be careful when digging, driving, or working in the dirt? Damaging a buried utility could be anything from an inconvenience, like cutting your cable line, to an emergency, like cutting a fiber optic cable that carries your town’s 911

service. It could even result in serious injury or death if you were to damage a power line or a natural gas pipeline.

Finally, if you plan to do your work in a public right-of-way, contact the appropriate state or local agency to obtain a permit prior to starting your project.

Remember, each time you plan a project that requires you to move dirt, contact 811 by phone or online at least two full working days before you begin. It’s free, it’s the law, and it keeps you, your family and your neighborhood safe. With a little planning, it’s easy to incorporate safe digging into your springtime projects!

The advertisement features a dramatic background image of a storm with dark clouds, a bright lightning bolt striking down, and a large plume of smoke or dust rising from the ground. The text is overlaid on this image.

**NATURE UNLEASHED**  
INSIDE NATURAL DISASTERS  
MARCH 11 - MAY 29, 2017

This exhibition and its national tour were developed by The Field Museum, Chicago.

Local contributing sponsors:

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**INDIANA STATE MUSEUM AND HISTORIC SITES**  
[indianamuseum.org](http://indianamuseum.org)

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# Wi-Fi, Business Class and Café Car on new Amtrak Hoosier State

Indiana Department of Transportation, community partners and Amtrak announce passenger amenities on board the [Hoosier State service](#) when it transitions to modern Amtrak railcars and locomotives on Wednesday, March 1. The train operates four days a week between Indianapolis and Chicago with intermediate stops in Crawfordsville, Lafayette, Rensselaer and Dyer.

Amtrak provides Horizon-series coach cars, each seating 68 passengers and including accommodations for passengers with disabilities. A café car with an attendant has table seating on one end of the car and private seating at the opposite end for 14 business class passengers. Food and beverages – including alcoholic drinks – are [available for purchase](#) in the café and can be enjoyed at the tables or at each passenger’s seat.

All the railcars have power outlets, reading lights and tray tables at each seat, with free cellular-based [AmtrakConnect® Wi-Fi](#) that combines mobile data from multiple carriers along the tracks. Overhead space is provided for baggage and each railcar has a rack to stow larger luggage at one end.

Amtrak continues to have the friendliest [carry-on baggage policy](#) in the travel industry, allowing up to four bags and 150 pounds per passenger. Also, coach passengers [can bring along a dog or cat](#) weighing 20 pounds or less, housed in a soft-sided carrier, for \$25 each way.

One-way adult ticket prices for coach service to and from Chicago range from \$25 to \$48 from Indianapolis, \$25 to \$47 from Crawfordsville, \$23 to \$45 from Lafayette, \$17 to \$30 from Rensselaer and \$12 to \$22 from Dyer. Children 2-12 years old are [half-fare](#) and discounts are also available for [students](#), [seniors](#), [military](#) and [others](#).

Business class is in a curtained area with abundant space arranged with two seats on one side of the aisle and one seat on the other side, with leather seating surfaces, foot-rests and leg-rests. Included is a 25 percent points bonus for [Amtrak Guest Rewards](#) members, and complimentary coffee, tea and use of the [Amtrak Metropolitan Lounge in Chicago](#), which offers priority boarding. The additional charge each way for business class is \$21 from Indianapolis and Crawfordsville, \$20 from Lafayette and \$14 from Rensselaer and Dyer.

## “BOGO” fares, other promotions and a special railcar for March

To mark the transition, Amtrak and INDOT are offering a “buy-one, get-one” fare for the month of March, so two adult passengers can ride for the price of one. See the [Deals](#) tab on [Amtrak.com](#) for applicable requirements for fare code V216, for purchase starting Tuesday, Feb. 28.

State employees can receive a 20 percent discount using the code V323.

While Amtrak passengers in business class always have access to the Metropolitan Lounge at Chicago Union Station, coach customers normally pay for an upgrade for the Legacy Club, a separate waiting area at the station that has complementary snacks and beverages, charging stations and boarding ahead of other coach passengers. For the month of March, Amtrak Hoosier State coach customers will enjoy complementary Legacy Club access, a \$20 value.

Also, for the month of March, the Hoosier State train includes the only dome car in Amtrak service, a [Great](#)



[Dome](#). Built in 1955 by the Budd Company for the Great Northern Railway, it carries the name “Ocean View.” Repainted in honor of Amtrak’s 40th anniversary, it wears stripes comprised of equal width red, white and blue, symbolic of Amtrak being America’s Railroad®. It features an upper level with windows on all sides to provide passengers panoramic views of spring in Indianapolis and Chicago, as well as the Hoosier scenery in between. There is no extra cost as seats in the car are unreserved and available on a first-come, first-served basis. Passengers are encouraged to rotate in and out of the Great Dome to allow all to enjoy this unique experience.

## About the Hoosier State train

The Amtrak Hoosier State runs north on Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday mornings as Train 851 and runs south on Sunday, Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings as Train 850. The other days each week these communities are served by the Amtrak Cardinal (Trains 50 & 51), which operates between New York City and Chicago. Indiana partners with its on-line communities for Hoosier State funding and guidance, and is among 18 states that contract with Amtrak to provide short-distance, intercity passenger rail services. To promote reliability, the locomotive and railcars used for the Hoosier State are part of a pool used for other Amtrak services in the Midwest.

*From Indiana Department of Transportation “The Hoosier State.”*

## Take advantage of Anthem EAP

How much do you know about the Anthem Employee Assistance Program (EAP) program? The Anthem EAP program is a free service for all state employees and those in their household and can be a beneficial tool to improve your overall well-being. These tools and resources are available 24/7 and are completely confidential.

The goal of EAP is to help you cope with challenges happening in your life – whether they concern financial issues, emotional well-being, addiction and recovery, or other life events, anthem EAP services are available to you. Anthem EAP offers several resources on a multitude of topics that can be beneficial to your mental health.

When you call (800-233-7723), you are paired with a clinical social worker, professional counselor, psychologist or marriage and family therapist who best fits your needs and concerns.

### EAP services include:

- **Counseling services:** Anthem EAP includes free, 24/7 phone counseling services for topics including relationship problems, stress management, coping, substance abuse, depression or anxiety, work issues, loss or grief. Employees also have access to three free face-to-face counseling sessions, per issue, per year. Crisis services are also



available.

- **Child and elder care:** On the topic of child care, EAP offers resources surrounding parenting, adoption and caring for children with special needs. Elder care resources include housing options, caregiving issues and adjusting to retirement.
- **Financial consultation:** Anthem EAP addresses budgeting, college funding and student loans, credit and debt issues, divorce, insurance, retirement, financial planning, small business, mortgages and taxes.
- **Legal and mediation services:** Services include personal business, criminal matters, IRS and personal or family legal services.

Informational resources are also available online, covering topics such as parenting and child care, marriage and relationship concerns, health and wellness, finance/legal, adult care, workplace issues, mental health, education, consumer education, moving and pet care.

During your first phone call with Anthem EAP, the representative offers ways to connect with a licensed therapist who is right for you, including options through [LiveHealth Online](#) - a smartphone-based provider. Employees can use their three free face-to-face counseling sessions (per issue, per year) with LiveHealth Online. Through LiveHealth Online, your appointment can take place anywhere – through a computer, smartphone or tablet. Each visit lasts approximately 45 minutes.

Learn more about Anthem EAP at [anthemeap.com](#). To access the full list of resources, click the login button in the top left corner and, when prompted, use “State of Indiana” as the company code.

## Register for the Elements March seminar



“There’s a first time for everything, including a home.”

Homeownership should be a personal decision based on one’s life and financial situation as it is one of the biggest decisions and purchases most of us will ever make.

In this seminar, Elements Financial provides the information important to know during the home buying process as well as the information needed to make an informed decision on finding the best way to make this purchase.

Though this seminar is specifically designed with the first time homebuyer in mind, it also offers a lot of great information for existing homeowners as well.

Before you upsize, downsize, refinance or purchase, be sure you attend this seminar to be prepared for all of the ins and outs of this exciting process.

The session is set for noon March 8 in IGC-South Conference Room 16. Register through the [SPD calendar](#).

Elements Financial is offering Lunch and Learn sessions online. Visit the [Elements Financial Education Center](#) to learn more about online sessions. Earn 35 Go365 points per month by attending Elements Financial seminars in person or online.

## Help Indiana reach 80 by '18 during National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, and the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) is urging people to get screened.

Colorectal cancer is any cancer that starts in the colon or rectum. It is the third most commonly diagnosed cancer and cause of cancer-related death among both males and females in Indiana. The American Cancer Society estimates that Hoosiers will be diagnosed with 3,080 new cases of colorectal cancer in 2017, and an estimated 1,110 will die as a result of the disease.

Screening tests help find precancerous polyps (abnormal growths) so they can be removed before they have a chance to turn into cancer. This prevents colorectal cancer. Screening can find this cancer early, when treatment is most effective.

The Hoosier State currently ranks 41st in the nation for colorectal cancer screenings. According to the Indiana Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, only 65 percent of adults age 50 or older in Indiana reported ever having a colonoscopy or sigmoidoscopy in 2014. To help Hoosiers stay healthy, the ISDH is promoting the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable's *80% by 2018* initiative to increase colorectal cancer screening rates to 80 percent by 2018.

Screening doesn't have to be uncomfortable or expensive. Several screening options are available, including simple take-home tests, and preventive screenings are included in many insurance policies, often paid in full. For state employees with state-provided medical benefits, most preventive care services are completely covered,

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including cancer screenings, with no deductible at in-network providers.

While incidence rates for young and middle-age adults are rising, according to a [new study](#) recently published in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*, the two greatest risk factors for developing colorectal cancer remain sex and age, with more than half of Indiana's cases being diagnosed among men from 2010-2014, and 90 percent of cases in residents aged 50 and older.

Smoking can also cause colorectal cancer and decrease the effectiveness of treatment, according to the U.S. Surgeon General's report, [The Health Consequences of Smoking – 50 Years of Progress](#). Additional risk factors include race, personal or family history of colorectal cancer or polyps, a personal history of chronic inflammatory bowel disease, certain inherited genetic conditions, and being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. In addition, modifiable risk factors — such as being overweight or obese, not getting enough exercise, eating a diet high in red or processed meat, and drinking alcohol — have also been found to increase risk.

In addition to getting screened, Hoosiers can reduce their colorectal cancer risk by:

- Avoiding tobacco products – Visit [www.QuitNowIndiana.com](http://www.QuitNowIndiana.com) or call 1-800-QUITNOW for help quitting smoking.
- Maintaining a healthy weight throughout life
- Adopting a physically active lifestyle
- Limiting consumption of alcohol
- Consuming a healthy diet that emphasizes plant sources, supports a healthy weight, includes at least

two and one half cups of a variety of vegetables and fruit each day, includes whole grains in preference to processed grains, and has minimal processed and red meats.

For more information on colorectal cancer, visit Indiana Cancer Consortium's website at [IndianaCancer.org](http://IndianaCancer.org).

Thank you to the [Indiana State Department of Health](#) for this submission.

## Get ready for the new Run the State 5K event series!



The Run the State 5K series is back! This time around, we are featuring more state parks and more events.

In addition to the 5K's, you can participate in a hike series. Like last year, each Run the State event counts as an "Athletic Event" and is eligible for Go365 points. Stay tuned for date and location information in the March Upgrade newsletter.



# New Sites Added To Historic Tri-state Tourism Trail Paying Homage To Abraham Lincoln

The Indiana Office of Tourism Development (IOTD) in conjunction with the tourism offices in Kentucky and Illinois, honored the birthday of President Abraham Lincoln on February 12 by re-launching a new and improved tri-state tourism trail. The Lincoln Heritage Trail highlights places of significance to the Lincoln story in Indiana, Illinois and Kentucky.

“What is now Lincoln City, Indiana, was the boyhood home of Abraham Lincoln where he spent his formative years from the age of seven to 21,” said Mark Newman, IOTD’s executive director. “The Lincoln Heritage Trail charts Lincoln’s life from birth to youth to adulthood chronicling his time and influences in Kentucky, Indiana and Illinois before becoming our 16th president.”

## Indiana sites now included on the trail: [Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial](#)

- Visit the cabin site memorial featuring a bronze casting of logs and fireplace, which symbolizes a cabin the Lincolns began building.
- Visit the Memorial Visitor Center, which features five sculptured panels, marking significant periods in Lincoln’s life.
- Walk in Lincoln’s footsteps on the Trail of Twelve Stones, beginning at the Lincoln Living Historical Farm and ending near Pioneer Cemetery, where Lincoln’s mother is buried.

## [Lincoln State Park](#)

- Walk 10 miles of hiking trails, view two scenic lakes and visit an interpretive center to help you experience early life of settlers in southern Indiana.

## [William Jones historic home](#)

- Take a guided tour of this restored

1834 Federal-design home of the merchant employer of Lincoln.

## [Indiana State Museum](#)

Indiana State Museum features several artifacts from Abraham Lincoln’s early years in Indiana. Lincoln’s father, Tom, was a master carpenter and Abraham spent much of his youth working with the lumber using simple hand tools. Abe had a maul used to drive iron wedges into logs to create split rails for fencing. When the maul head broke, he repurposed it into a mallet he used to drive pegs into furniture and other fixtures. In addition to the mallet, the museum features two cabinets crafted by Lincoln’s father, Tom, along with a ledger from the store in Kentucky where he purchased supplies. The frontier cabin has displays with the biographical story of the Lincoln family in Indiana.

The Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection at the Indiana State Museum features several artifacts including: President Lincoln at Home lithographic print by Currier & Ives, 1865; The Martyr Victorious lithograph by John Sartain, 1866; Council of War plaster sculpture by John Rogers circa 1868; and Liberty color lithograph by E.C. Bridgman, circa 1870, which are currently on exhibit in the museum’s core galleries.

For more information on the Lincoln Heritage Trail go to [www.lincolnadventures.com](http://www.lincolnadventures.com). On the website, visitors will find more information about the tri-state trail, including sample itineraries and links to each state’s tourism offices.

In 2015, IOTD played a significant role in naming the northbound bridge over the Ohio River, connecting Louisville, Kentucky and Jeffersonville, Indiana. Former Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann assisted IOTD and a joint resolution was

passed in the Indiana General Assembly to have the bridge named Abraham Lincoln Bridge.

## About Indiana Office of Tourism Development:

Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch oversees the Indiana Office of Tourism Development. Mark Newman serves as the agency’s executive director. IOTD is dedicated to enhancing the economic vitality of Indiana through leadership and resource support to the Indiana travel industry. The tourism and hospitality industry is directly responsible for 155,200 jobs, generates over \$1.4 billion in tax receipts and contributes \$11.5 billion in revenue to Indiana businesses. For more information: [www.VisitIndiana.com](http://www.VisitIndiana.com).

*From Indiana Office of Tourism Development*

## PeopleSoft ELM is getting an upgrade

The PeopleSoft Enterprise Learning Management (ELM) application is being upgraded in March, with a go-live date of March 20, 2017.

During the upgrade, learners cannot access ELM, as it will be down for the cutover period. The cutover timeline is currently Wednesday, March 15 through Monday, March 20.

The State Personnel HRMS team is adding a message to the sign in page to inform all learners they cannot access ELM during the cutover period. Be on the lookout for a new upgrade coming soon to a screen near you!

## Indiana State Parks offers discounted camping this spring

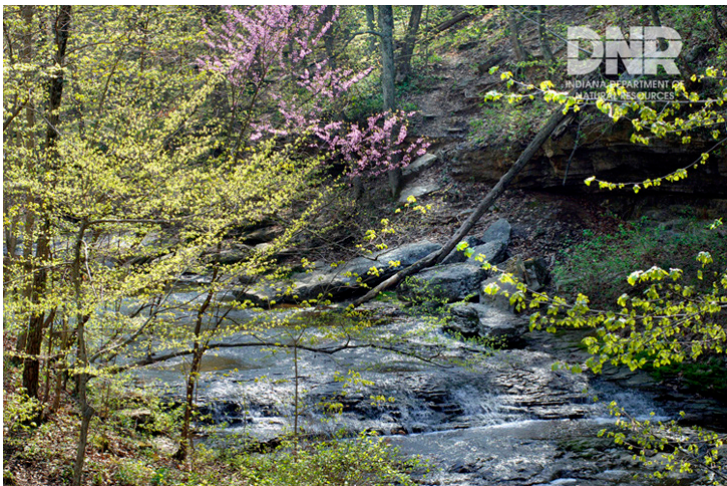
An offer from Indiana State Parks makes weeknight camping more affordable this spring.

Those who book a new campsite reservation for one or more consecutive weeknights (Sundays through Wednesdays) between April 16 and May 24 receive 25 percent off of their reserved weeknights at the time of booking. The discount is available only for campsites.

The discount applies to all State Parks campgrounds and DNR Division of Forestry campgrounds at Deam Lake, Greene-Sullivan State Forest and Starve-Hollow State Recreation Area.

Discounted reservations can be booked starting Feb. 17 at [camp.IN.gov](http://camp.IN.gov) or by calling (866) 622-6746. The discount may also be applied to walk-in registrations beginning April 16. Use the promo code "SPRING17."

The offer does not apply to reservations made before Feb. 17, nor to reservations made in combination with any other discount or offer. The discount applies only to Sundays through Wednesdays of your stay, and does not apply to Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays.



Artwork by  
Jerry Williams

**PINEWOOD DERBY® RETURNS TO THE INDIANA STATE MUSEUM**

**CELEBRATING 70 YEARS OF SPEED**

**MARCH 28 THROUGH APRIL 2, 2017**

In collaboration with  
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 **INDIANA STATE MUSEUM AND HISTORIC SITES**

[indianamuseum.org](http://indianamuseum.org)





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## State of Indiana

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| Grand Mound, WA                                | Pocono Mountains, PA      | Wisconsin Dells, WI                      |
| Grapevine, TX                                  | Sandusky, OH              |  |
| Georgia/La Grange, GA<br>(Opening Spring 2018) |                           |  |



**Valid through December 30, 2017.**

Includes water park admission the day you arrive through the day you depart.

**Must present valid membership ID or documentation at check-in.**



Offer valid at the properties and dates listed above. Valid on a per night basis and must be mentioned at time of reservation based on 2017 standard rates. Limited number of rooms available for each date. May not be valid during holiday and blackout periods or combined with any other discount or promotional offers. Multiple night minimum stay may apply. Offer based on 4 guests per room and must have one individual 21 years of age or older staying in each room. Offer may be terminated at any time without notice. Offer is not transferable and is not redeemable for cash. Must present valid work ID or documentation at check-in. Limit of 2 rooms per valid ID. Additional charges may apply for themed and premium suites, weekends, and/or holidays.