

Emirates set to become the world's first Autism Certified AirlineΩ

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dubai: Emirates has launched a journey to officially become the world's first Autism Certified Airline™, inviting customers with autism and sensory sensitivities to experience Emirates' seamless services and personalised hospitality. The inaugural designation is set to be formally awarded by the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES) in the coming months, when more than 30,000 Emirates cabin crew and ground staff will have completed the initial training.

Emirates also plans to roll out new standards and services that will improve the on ground and inflight travel experience for both customers on the autism spectrum and their families and companions, to be announced later in the year.

For many members of the global autism community, international air

travel is a highly challenging experience, or something to be avoided completely, due to the high level of sensory stimuli that can be involved. A survey on AutismTravel.com revealed that 78% of families are hesitant to travel or visit new locations, and that 94% of respondents would take more vacations if they had access to places where staff are autism-trained and certified.

Emirates and IBCCES partnered to create a new blueprint for serving passengers with accessibility requirements, encompassing the entire journey - from ground services to in-flight services. The thorough certification process includes ensuring at least 80% of customer-facing staff complete the dedicated training, alongside a commitment to ongoing training and improvements.

Throughout 2025 and beyond, Emirates will be introducing 'sensory guides' - digital aids that empower travellers to make informed decisions about the various environments encountered, and plan what suits their needs and preferences. Another development expected in 2025 will be the introduction of neurodiverse sensory products, for customers on Emirates flights - sensory fidget toys or aids.

In April 2024, Emirates achieved a Certified Autism Center™ Designation for all four of its Dubai Check In facilities including its dedicated hub in Terminal 3 at Dubai International Airport (DXB). In December 2023, Dubai Airport was celebrated as the first international airport to receive the Certified Autism Centre™ Designation.

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