

Where is the best public restroom in Iowa?

Cooper Worth
Des Moines Register
USA TODAY NETWORK

Anyone who has committed to a long road trip knows that the most important aspects of car travel are the music, the snacks and where you'll be stopping for a bathroom break.

If you're traveling through Iowa, consider these three rest areas that made the top 150 public restrooms list in the U.S., according to American River Wellness Recovery, an addiction recovery program organization focused on helping Department of Transportation employees, including truckers, return to work.

How did American River Wellness determine the best public restrooms in the U.S?

American River Wellness analyzed

responses from over 3,000 truck drivers, who answered open-ended questions about their public restroom encounters on the road. Based on their feedback, the organization ranked the best public restrooms in each state.

Where are the best public restrooms in Iowa, according to American River Wellness?

Here are the three rest areas in Iowa that made American River Wellness' top 150 list.

- 1. **Loess Hills Scenic Byway Rest Area, Interstate 29:** Near Missouri Valley (No. 102 nationally).
- 2. **Tiffin Rest Area, Interstate 80:** Near Coralville (No. 121).
- 3. **Wilton Rest Area, Interstate 80:** East of Iowa City (No. 122).

What did American River Wellness say about Loess Hills Scenic

Byway Rest Area?

"This isn't just a rest area, it's a tribute to Iowa's unique Loess Hills," American River Wellness wrote in a news release. "Alongside super-clean restrooms, you'll find interpretive displays, scenic overlooks and even walking trails. It's like a mini museum for geology nerds and road-weary drivers."

What are the top 5 best public restrooms in the U.S.?

Here are the top five public restrooms in the U.S., according to American River Wellness:

- 1. **Kula Forest Reserve Picnic Area:** Maui, Hawaii
- 2. **Florida Welcome Center:** Jacksonville, Florida
- 3. **Kentucky Welcome Center:** Bowling Green, Kentucky
- 4. **Waimea Canyon Lookout:** Wai-

mea, Hawaii

5. **Burlington Rest Area:** Between Greensboro and Durham, North Carolina

"Perched on the climb toward Haleakalá's summit, this rustic rest stop offers a slice of serenity," American River Wellness wrote of its No. 1 pick. "Set under eucalyptus trees, it features clean compost toilets, peaceful picnic areas and the kind of quiet that makes you linger a little longer before continuing the winding drive."

How many rest areas are in Iowa?

There are 38 rest areas in the state, according to the Iowa DOT.

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Campaign aids refugees, immigrants with vaccines

F. Amanda Tugade
Des Moines Register
USA TODAY NETWORK

Iowa refugees and immigrants now have a way to access more information on measles vaccinations.

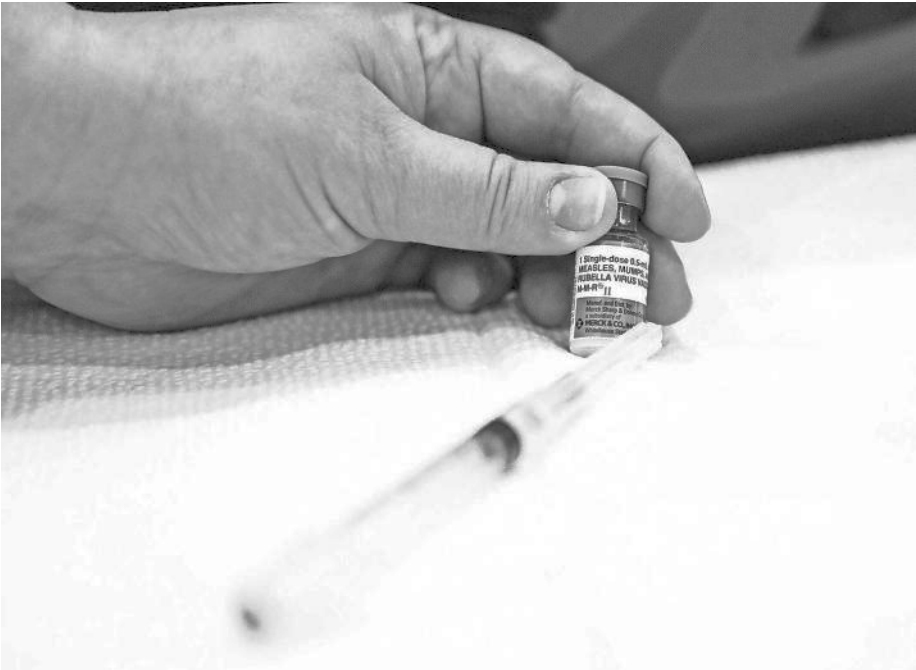
Refugee & Immigrant Voices in Action (RIVA), an Iowa nonprofit in Des Moines that empowers refugees, immigrants and organizations they lead, launched a website May 6 that houses resources on the contagious disease, how vaccinations work and where to get vaccinated. Its latest effort is part of a larger campaign to raise awareness of measles cases, which are steadily rising across the U.S.

As of May 1, 935 measles cases have been reported in 30 states, including Illinois, Kansas, Minnesota and Missouri, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Ninety-six percent of those infected were unvaccinated or had an unknown vaccination status.

So far, there have been 12 outbreaks in 2025, and 93% of the confirmed cases — 869 of 935 — are associated with those outbreaks, the CDC also reported.

Iowa has yet to see measles cases. But given the highly contagious nature of the disease and the state's current vaccination rate, health experts say Iowa faces a very real risk of a potential outbreak.

RIVA co-founder and Executive Director Henny Ohr said she is concerned



A nurse holds a vile of the Measles, Mumps & Rubella (MMR) vaccine at the Robert L. Yeager health complex in Pomona on March 27, 2019.

JOHN MEORE/THE JOURNAL NEWS

for migrant workers coming to Iowa over the summer for agricultural jobs and wants to ensure they are informed of the disease that has already claimed three lives.

"It's very close quarters," Ohr said of migrants' working and living conditions. "Even right now, when we talk to people, there's misinformation about what to do."

Here's what to know about RIVA's campaign:

What languages are available?

RIVA's measles awareness campaign, Voices for Health, is part of the nonprofit's ongoing work to address health disparities and mirrors a similar initiative during the COVID-19 pandemic. The

newest campaign seeks to provide information in braille and other languages to reach more refugees and immigrants, especially for newer arrivals, Ohr said.

A helpline is available in English and Spanish, and hopefully more languages as RIVA continues to grow its partnerships with community organizations, Ohr said. For information in English, call 515-512-1881. For Spanish, call 515-216-0009.

Ohr said she's also looking to add the following languages to the website: French, Swahili, Burmese, Pashto, Persian, Nepali and Arabic.

Another critical aspect of the campaign are community health navigators. These individuals are key as they build trust with communities and share critical health information, resources and more.

Ohr said she plans to hire more navigators, who also will tackle other health initiatives such as access to diabetes screenings and blood pressure checks.

"We're trying to push this out right away," she said about Voices of Health. "... This is going to be a really, really fast, impactful campaign that we hope will continue in terms of providing resources and information."

To learn more about RIVA's measles campaign, visit voicesforhealthriva.org. For more information on RIVA, visit www.rivaiowa.org.

Email F. Amanda Tugade at ftugade@dmreg.com or follow her on X @writefelissa.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Paris court convicts actor Depardieu of sexual assault

A Paris court on May 13 found actor Gerard Depardieu guilty of sexually assaulting two women on a film set and handed him an 18-month suspended sentence, with the judge saying he appeared not to have grasped the "traumatic" impact of his behavior.

In the highest-profile #MeToo case to come before judges in France, Depar-

dieu repeatedly denied any wrongdoing. His lawyer said he would appeal the court's decision.

Depardieu, 76, was a towering figure in French cinema, starring in more than 200 films over five decades, including Green Card, The Last Metro and Cyrano de Bergerac.

His trial marked a moment of reckoning for the #MeToo protest movement over sexual violence, which has failed to gain the same traction in France as in

the United States, although there are signs that social attitudes are changing.

One of the two plaintiffs, Amelie K, a set decorator now aged 54, told the court the actor had groped her all over her body as he trapped her between his legs and made explicit sexual comments on set in 2021. "I was terrified, he was laughing," she recounted.

Depardieu had argued before the court that he did not consider placing a hand on a person's buttocks sexual as-

sault and that some women were too easily shocked.

Handing down his sentence, the presiding judge, Thierry Donard, said of Depardieu: "He does not seem to have grasped either the concept of consent or the deleterious and traumatic consequences of his behavior toward the women he assaulted."

He ordered Depardieu, who was not in court for the verdict, to be put on a list of sex offenders.

Sentenced

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and an iPad. Each contained "and/or were utilized to access accounts that were being used to collect child pornography." These apps included Telegram's messaging app and the photo and video-centric social media platform Snapchat.

Steinberg admitted as part of his plea deal that throughout 2021, he "solicit

(ed) the production of child pornography from numerous minors."

UIPD and the Joint Forensic Analysis Cyber Team investigated the case.

Steinberg earned a master's, admitted to UI Ph.D. program while under investigation

Several court documents note that Steinberg graduated from the University of Iowa with a Master's of Science in Biostatistics in 2023, about 18 months after a search warrant was executed on

his Iowa City apartment. He enrolled in the biostatistics Ph.D. program in 2024. According to court documents, he worked as a part-time graduate research assistant from 2021-2022 at the University of Iowa.

The University of Iowa did not immediately respond to a request for comment or to confirm that Steinberg was a teaching assistant in 2024.

An internet search of Steinberg's name returns a result on the UI College of Public Health's website, though the link is broken. Steinberg's name does

not appear in the UI student directory.

He earned his undergraduate degree from American University in Washington, D.C. in 2021. Court documents accuse Steinberg of "also solicit(ing) the production" of child sexual abuse material while enrolled as an undergraduate at American and at his family's home in Pennsylvania.

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Budget

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such errors.

"We acknowledge that this is a significant oversight, and the team intends to do everything in our power to avoid a repeat in the future," Heiar wrote.

North Liberty working with legislators in 'long shot' attempt to correct error

City staff and Mayor Chris Hoffman reached out to the Iowa League of Cities

and their representatives in the statehouse in an attempt to remedy the issue, Heiar wrote.

The League of Cities drafted language for local Sen. Zach Wahls, D-Coralville, and Rep. Amy Neilsen, D-North Liberty, to advocate for in the legislature. Wahls did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The proposal would allow North Liberty to hold a new budget hearing and adopt an amended budget in May.

Heiar did admit that relief may be a "long shot," though he said the representatives have been "helpful."

In the past, the Iowa Department of Management "had some discretion to

offer grace" to a city that failed to properly publish a public notice, Heiar wrote. But new budget laws prevent "direction" or "grace," and exceptions can only be made for errors by newspapers, natural disasters, council illnesses or state-related technological misfortune.

Another public hearing set for May 27

North Liberty has set another public hearing on the budget for May 27, under state law.

The public comment period will move forward regardless of any interim legislative relief, since residents weren't

notified prior to the April meeting.

North Liberty, without legislative intervention, is committed to amending its paperwork to accurately reflect the tax rate that residents will pay in Fiscal Year 2026. If the city doesn't get relief, it'll establish the same property tax rates as FY 2025, according to the memo.

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