COURAGE PAVILION

PERSEVERANCE PAVILION

COOPERATION PAVILION

FIRST FLOOR

10. Open Your Mind: Understanding Implicit Bias Learning Lab
Discover how to recognize the biases we all have through exercises and dialogue.

11. Museum Store

12. Guest Services and Main Lobby

SECOND FLOOR

6. The Slave Pen
An original structure found on a farm in Kentucky and reconstructed at the Freedom Center. The building was used to temporarily store slaves earmarked to be sold in the South.

7. Escape! Gallery
An interactive, family-friendly introduction to Underground Railroad stories of courage, cooperation and perseverance.

8. Film: Brothers of the Borderland
Immerse yourself in a thrilling flight to freedom and meet abolitionists John Parker and Rev. John Rankin.

9. Harriet Tubman Theater
Screening the short films Suites for Freedom and Mandela: Prepared to Die

THIRD FLOOR

1. From Slavery To Freedom
Trace our nation’s story from the beginnings of slavery in the Americas through Reconstruction after the Civil War.

2. Film: The Struggle Continues
Learn about the struggle for freedom around the world, yesterday and today.

3. Invisible: Slavery Today
An interactive examination of slavery in the modern world... and how you can take action.

4. Special Exhibition

5. Freedom’s Eternal Flame Terrace
A contemplative space featuring a flame that will continue to burn until all people are free.

FOURTH FLOOR

John Parker Library & FamilySearch Center
Discover your family roots by visiting this free resource located on the fourth floor.
Welcome to the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center! While there is much to explore in any order you choose, this self-guided tour maps out how to see the highlights of the museum during your visit. We invite you to follow this suggested sequence and immerse yourself in the powerful stories of courage, cooperation, perseverance and freedom.

THIRD FLOOR

5 Freedom's Eternal Flame Terrace
On the terrace you will see views of the Ohio river, which divided the North (Ohio - free state) from the South (Kentucky - slave state). During the time period of legal slavery, the Ohio river was not as wide or deep as it is today. In some areas of the river, horses and people could wade across the river. Freedom Seekers (runaways) nicknamed the Ohio river “the River Jordan” which they crossed north to freedom.

1 From Slavery To Freedom
This is our largest gallery that portrays four centuries of slavery in the Americas from 1400 to 1900. The painting you’ll see hanging in the gallery entrance depicts the horrors of the slave trade in the Americas. This exhibit describes how and why Portugal, Spain, the Netherlands, France and Great Britain were responsible for the largest forced West African migration to the Americas. This exhibit describes how and why the United States was advanced by slavery and shares stories of courageous people who believed the institution of slavery was wrong up until the American Civil War.

2 Film: The Struggle Continues
This film examines the 20th century desire to fight for freedom around the world in many forms and how that struggle continues today. Once you’ve watched the film, return to the entrance and read about the six conditions or circumstances (we call them UNFREEDOMs) that continue to prevent people from achieving freedom and basic human R.I.G.H.T.S (Racism, Illiteracy, Genocide, Hunger, Tyranny and Slavery). To your right is our FREEDOM wall. The word freedom written in their languages from around the world.

3 Invisible: Slavery Today
This is the world’s first permanent museum exhibit concerning the subjects of modern-day slavery and human trafficking. Invisible offers a comprehensive examination of slavery in the 21st century through the five most common forms of exploitation: Forced Labor, Child Labor, Sex Trafficking, Bonded and Domestic Servitude. The exhibit explores the common causes of modern slavery, the economic forces that have contributed to its growth and the responses of government, the justice system and the general public.

SECOND FLOOR

A The RagGonNon
The grand hall is dominated by the incredible textile work of artist Aminah Brenda Lynn Robinson. Aminah named it a ‘rag gon non’ because the story weaves and rags in and out of history from the past to the present, hopefully touching and inspiring the lives of young people and future generations. Griots (story tellers) preserve their community history by passing it orally from generation to generation. The RagGonNon is Aminah’s story, crafted by her own hands for 35 years. She begins with Journey 1 (the left panel), which conveys the importance of her African family origins/enslaved ancestors, her life in Ohio and her internship in New York. Journey 11 (the right panel) depicts stories from her Uncle Alvin, West Africa and her birthplace — Pointdexter Village in Columbus, Ohio. If you look closely, you’ll see 35 music boxes sewn into the piece, socks that each hold a story and healing herbs, and a number of other objects incorporated to create this magnificent textile artwork.

B The Tom Feelings Mural
Images created by Tom Feelings depict the Mason County Slave Pen in the center of the mural. The Mural depicts Africans being captured, their arrival into the Americas, a slave auction, family separation and slave labor in the forests of Tennessee and cotton fields of Mississippi.

C The Slave Pen
This is an authentic slave pen that was built in the early 1800s. It was recovered from a farm in Mason County, Kentucky less than 60 miles south east from the Freedom Center. The structure was used as a holding pen by a Kentucky slave trader, Capt. John W. Anderson, to temporarily store enslaved people that he had purchased. Those people would later be sold at auction in Natchez, Mississippi for a significant profit. Slave pens such as this would’ve been common throughout the south. Slave pens played an integral role in the internal slave trade in the United States from 1808 until the end of the Civil War in 1865.

D Film: Midnight Decision
Watch the short film about Caleb, his family and a brave Underground Railroad conductor.

E Escape! Gallery
Discover the stories of the brave men and women (many enslaved) of the Underground Railroad. Concentrating on the period between 1830 and 1865, this exhibit describes the brave and clever actions of those who resisted slavery and the ways they demonstrated Courage, Cooperation and Perseverance.

F Film: Brothers of the Borderland
This film showcases the courage and cooperation of abolitionists John Parker and Rev. John Rankin. They both lived in Ripley, Ohio just fifty miles from Cincinnati. Oprah Winfrey will give you a brief orientation of these two brave men in the first room. Then a door will open and you will enter our environmental theater to watch the film “Brother of the Borderland”.

* Loud noises may not be appropriate for children ages 7 and under.