

This information adds to the [Air Carrier Access Act Fact Sheet](#)

The TSA conducts screenings at airport checkpoints to ensure the safety of all travelers, including those with disabilities or chronic health conditions. All travelers should expect to be screened. The TSA provides the following recommendations for those with disabilities or chronic health conditions:

- Use a “TSA notification card” (see image below) to show screeners as evidence of your disability or chronic health condition
 - You can find a copy to print on the TSA’s website at <https://www.tsa.gov/travel/special-procedures>

TSA Notification Card: Individuals with Disabilities and Medical Conditions

I have the following health condition, disability or medical device that may affect my screening:

I understand that alternate procedures providing an equivalent level of security screening are available and can be done in private. I also understand that presenting this card does not exempt me from screening.

Information • Assistance Requests • Compliments • Complaints

TSA Cares

1-855-787-2227 (Federal Relay 711)

Weekdays: 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. ET

TSA-ContactCenter@tsa.dhs.gov

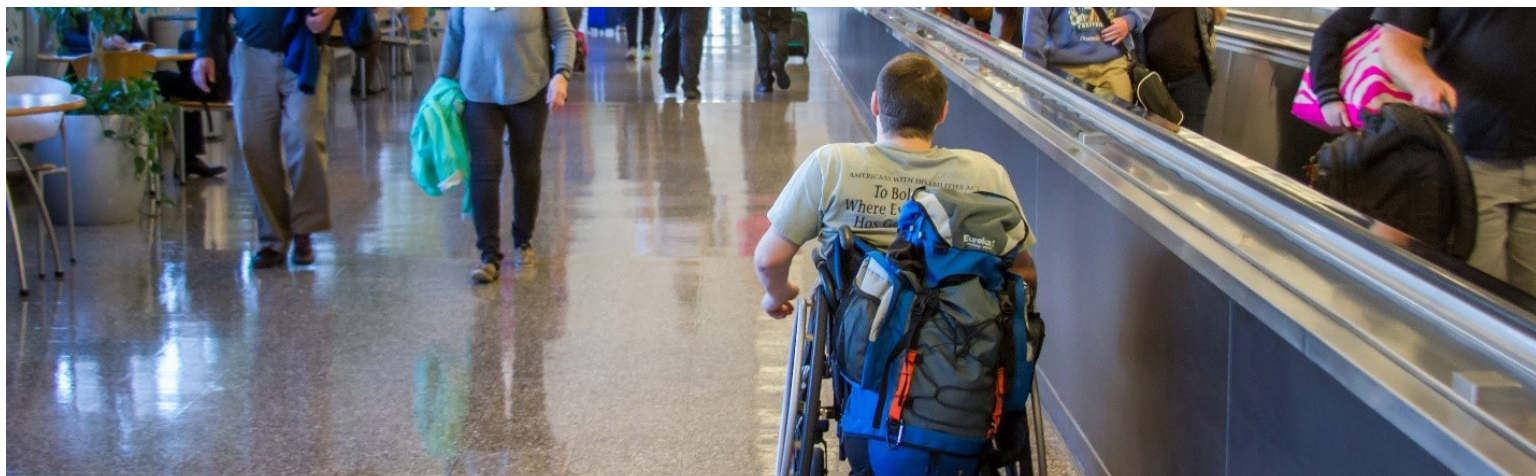
Weekends/Holidays: 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET

Hablamos Español

Automated information offered in 12 languages

Call 72 hours prior to traveling to request the assistance of a Passenger Support Specialist (PSS) at the checkpoint. If a PSS is not available, you may ask for a Supervisory TSA Officer at the checkpoint.

- All travelers must undergo a screening by pat-down*, metal detector, or advanced imaging (an x-ray machine); also, the traveler’s mobility aids, equipment, medical devices, and hands may be swabbed (wiped with a cloth) to check for evidence of explosives. Imaging cannot be done on wheelchairs so users must undergo a pat-down.
- Travelers with disabilities may decline to remove their shoes, but their shoes will need to be swabbed.
- Travelers may request to be screened in private; this will be done in a nearby screened area.



*Pat-down screenings involve inspection of the head, neck, arms, torso, legs, feet, and such sensitive areas as the buttocks, groin, and breasts. Officers will explain the procedure as they are conducting the pat-down so that you can anticipate their actions. Officers will use the back of their hands for sensitive areas; however, in limited cases they may need to use the front of their hands to determine if a threat exists. Pat-down procedures will be completed by an officer of the same gender, and travelers can request a private screening with a companion of your choice at any time throughout the process.

Recommendations from Travelers

Fellow travelers offer the following advice to help travelers with disabilities navigate their way through TSA:

- Remember that you will be required to be screened and therefore should expect to go through the above procedures when you arrive at your departure gate at the airport.
- Pat-downs should be done by an officer of the same gender and you may have to wait for a same-gendered officer to be available. Although you should be asked if you would like a private screening for the pat-down, officers may not always remember to ask you. Remember you have the right to ask for a private screening at any time. Two officers should be present at a private screening.
- If you run into a problem, [you can always ask for a Complaint Resolution Officer](#), although this could result in a delay and cause you to miss your flight.
- Use [TSA Pre✓®](#) or [Global Entry](#). These programs take time to register for and require a fee of approximately \$100 for five years of eligibility; however, once obtained they expedite security screenings as shoes, laptops, liquids, belts and light jackets do not have to be removed.
 - Although these programs are helpful, TSA Pre✓® is not available at all airports all the time.
 - TSA Pre✓® and Global Entry are good for five years before you will need to pay and re-register.
- Remember to put your power wheelchair in neutral during a screening and when checking-in your wheelchair so that a TSA agent does not accidentally put it in drive and damage it.



Research and Training Center on
Independent Living



The contents of this publication were developed under a grant from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR grant number 90RT5043). NIDILRR is a center within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). These contents do not necessarily represent the policy of NIDILRR, ACL, or HHS, and you should not assume endorsement by the federal government.

Additional Resources

Here are additional resources for travelers with disabilities regarding navigating air travel:

- [Air Carrier Access Act](#)
- [TSA Pre-Check](#)
- [Global Entry](#)

Additionally, the TSA provides the following resources:

- TSA Cares provides answers to travelers' questions about screening policies and procedures and security expectations prior to traveling. Call 1-855-787-2227; staffed from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. weekdays and 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekends and holidays
- TSA Contact Center provides automated information in several languages, assistance on ID requirements, or help going through security. Call 1-866-289-9673; staffed 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. weekdays and 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekends and holidays, with an automated service available 24 hours a day
- Passenger Support Specialist connects with TSA officers trained to help those with a disability or chronic health condition regarding special accommodations and/or going through the screening process. Call 855-787-2227 at least 72 hours before flights to request a Passenger Support Specialist.
- TSA Website: <https://www.tsa.gov/travel/special-procedures>
- Twitter: @AskTSA; staffed 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. on weekdays and 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. on the weekends and holidays

For More Information

Research and Training Center on Independent Living
The University of Kansas
1000 Sunnyside Ave, 4089 Dole
Lawrence, KS 66045-7561
(785) 864-4095
rtcil@ku.edu
rtcil.org/picl