

TSA Fact Sheet:

What to Expect for Individuals with Disabilities and Medical Conditions



National Council on Certified Dementia and Practitioners (NCCDP)

A coalition member of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

Background

All TSA personnel who work at airport checkpoints receive training on screening travelers with disabilities and medical conditions and their assistive technology and devices, which emphasizes treating travelers with dignity, respect, and sensitivity. All travelers are required to undergo screening, but TSA's screening procedures have been developed to ensure that travelers and their associated devices can be screened regardless of their disability or medical condition. The traveler's abilities, communication with the screening officer, and the screening technology available at the checkpoint will assist in determining the most effective security screening for travelers with disabilities and medical conditions.

TSA Disability and Medical Condition Coalition

In order to better understand the needs and concerns of travelers with disabilities, TSA works with a coalition of organizations representing travelers with disabilities and medical conditions on a regular basis to provide information and gather feedback. If you would like more information about the TSA Disability and Medical Condition Coalition

or about TSA's security screening options, please contact Susan Buckland via email at Susan.Buckland@tsa.dhs.gov.

TSA Cares

TSA Cares is a helpline for travelers with disabilities and medical conditions who want to prepare for the screening process prior to flying. Travelers or their companions may call TSA Cares toll free at 1-855-787-2227 (Federal Relay 711) or email TSA-ContactCenter@tsa.dhs.gov. The hours of operation for the TSA Cares helpline are 8 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. ET, Monday to Friday, and 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET on weekends and holidays. TSA strongly recommends travelers call TSA Cares 72 hours before travel.

When a traveler with a disability or medical condition calls TSA Cares, a specially trained representative provides information about screening that is relevant to the traveler's specific disability or medical condition. Information provided over the phone is also provided in writing via email, upon request of the caller.

If the traveler is uncomfortable with the screening process, TSA Cares will forward the traveler's information to the airport for additional support and assistance.

Currently, all disability-related aids, devices and associated supplies are allowed through security checkpoints once they have successfully undergone screening. You may find more information at TSA.gov.

TSA recommends that travelers call no less than 72 hours ahead of travel so that TSA Cares has the opportunity to coordinate checkpoint support with TSA personnel located at the airport when necessary. Travelers may also request the assistance of a Passenger Support Specialist (PSS) through TSA Cares. Additionally, travelers may ask for the assistance of a Supervisory TSA Officer or Passenger Support Specialist while at the checkpoint, or without having contacted TSA Cares in advance.

Traveler Support Specialists

Travelers may request the assistance of a Passenger Support Specialist through TSA Cares, or at the airport. Passenger Support Specialists assist travelers, address traveler-related screening concerns immediately, provide on-the-spot assistance to enhance the traveler experience, and maintain efficiency in carrying out TSA's mission.

- Passenger Support Specialists receive specialized disability training, which includes how to effectively communicate with, and assist, travelers with disabilities and medical conditions.
- Each airport has different resources; therefore, the level of assistance received at the checkpoint can vary. Some airports have an individual who will call the traveler to gather additional information and arrange a meeting time and place. Other locations notify the checkpoint manager of the traveler's itinerary, but no prior contact with the traveler may be made.
- If a traveler arrives at the checkpoint and has any concerns before, during, or after the screening process, he or she should immediately request to speak with a Supervisory TSA Officer or a Passenger Support Specialist for assistance.
- Learn more about Passenger Support Specialists at [TSA.gov](https://www.tsa.gov).

What to Expect: Alzheimer's, Dementia, Aphasia, Brain Injury

You or your traveling companion may consult with the TSA Officer about the best way to relieve any concerns during the screening process. You may provide the officer with the TSA Disability Notification Card or other documentation to describe your disability or medical condition.

You are not required to remove your shoes if you have a disability or medical condition. However, your shoes must undergo additional screening, including a visual/physical inspection as well as explosives trace detection testing of your footwear. You can request to be seated during this portion of the screening.

Inform the TSA Officer if you or your traveling companion has Alzheimer's disease, dementia, aphasia, or a brain injury and require assistance with the screening process. You may provide a TSA Disability Notification Card or other medical documentation to inform the TSA Officer.

Screening

TSA Officers can screen travelers with Alzheimer's disease, dementia, aphasia or traumatic brain injuries without separating them from their traveling companions. You and/or your companion can inform the TSA Officer about the best way to approach and conduct the screening, especially if it is necessary to touch the traveler during the screening. If your companion provides assistance during screening, he/she will need to be rescreened. You or your traveling companion may ask to be screened in a private screening area.

Each month, a *What to Expect* publication is sent to the TSA Disability and Medical Conditions Coalition. The publication provides general information about *What to Expect* in security screening as a traveler with a disability or medical condition. We encourage you/your organization to distribute the publications throughout your networks.

TSA's Disability Notification Card

A traveler with a disability or medical condition has a legal right under federal law to disclose his/her disability or medical condition, or to request an accommodation to the security screening process.

Disclosure of a disability or medical condition, or a request for an accommodation may be made verbally or in writing. There is no requirement that medical documentation, such as prescriptions or a physician’s letter, accompany the disclosure or request.

Although the traveler is not required to use it, the TSA Disability Notification Card is a proactive communication tool designed by the agency to allow travelers with disabilities to discreetly notify TSA Officers of an accommodation request, or of a permanent or temporary disability or medical condition that may affect how they are screened. The wallet-sized card is available for [download](#) at TSA.gov.

Front and Back Images of the TSA Notification Card



TSA Precheck (TSA Pre✓®)

TSA Precheck is a screening program that enhances security by enabling TSA to focus on travelers the agency knows less about and those who are considered high-risk, while providing expedited screening for travelers who volunteer information about themselves prior to flying. Travelers with disabilities and medical conditions who are interested in TSA Precheck may visit and apply at an enrollment center to provide biographic information that includes name, date of birth and address.

- All travelers can apply to be considered for TSA Precheck at a TSA Precheck enrollment center, or through the Customs and Border Protection Trusted Traveler Program. Additionally, U.S. citizens who are members of airline frequent flyer programs, and who meet TSA-mandated criteria, may be invited to join by a participating airline. For information about TSA Precheck click [here](#).
- TSA Precheck benefits include a faster and easier travel experience by no longer having to remove shoes, laptop, liquids, belts, and light jackets. You can find out when TSA Precheck lanes are available at your airport via the [TSA Pre✓® Checkpoint Schedule](#).
- If a traveler who qualifies for TSA Precheck has devices related to his or her disability or medical condition, or requires medically-necessary liquids in excess of 3-1-1 Liquids Rule Exemption, additional screening may be required. Similarly, all alarms must be resolved.

Every applicant will undergo an in-depth background check and must provide valid identity and citizenship/immigration documentation. Applicants will also be fingerprinted at the enrollment center. TSA has procedures to accommodate travelers with disabilities who are full or partial amputees, or who may be unable to provide ten-finger fingerprints. The applicant may request other accommodations, such as captioning or sign language interpretation, through his or her local enrollment center. Auxiliary aids

and services are provided at no charge to the applicant. For answers to commonly asked questions about TSA Precheck, visit the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) section on TSA.gov.

Applicants also have the option to pre-enroll online at [TSA.gov](#) to provide basic information and make an appointment before visiting an enrollment center. The cost is \$85 for an application processing fee and is non-refundable. TSA Precheck eligibility is valid for five (5) years.

TSA on YouTube

TSA develops YouTube videos with information on what to expect during security screening. TSA recently posted YouTube videos, [TSA Cares: Traveling with Medication](#) and [TSA Cares: Tips for Individuals Traveling with Cancer](#). To search for additional TSA YouTube videos, visit [TSA.gov](#), scroll to the bottom of the homepage and click on the YouTube logo.

Travelers with Disabilities and Medical Conditions on TSA.gov

Travelers can find information about what to expect during the security screening process on TSA.gov by clicking on the International Symbol of Accessibility (ISA) on the TSA.gov homepage.



TSA posts information that is developed specifically for travelers with disabilities and medical conditions. Travelers can select a specific disability or medical condition [here](#) and learn how to prepare for security screening.

Reporting Security Screening Concerns

- **At the checkpoint:** If a traveler is concerned about how he or she was screened, he/she should request the immediate assistance of the Supervisory TSA Officer or a Passenger Support Specialist while at the checkpoint.

If the supervisor cannot resolve the traveler's concerns, the traveler can contact the TSA Contact Center (TCC) via email at TSA-ContactCenter@dhs.gov, or may call 1-866-289-9673 (Federal Relay 711), particularly if he or she is concerned about rudeness or a lack of professionalism on the part of TSA personnel.

- **Discrimination complaints regarding TSA's security screening process:** If a traveler believes that he or she was discriminated against by TSA on the basis of his or her disability or medical condition, he or she can file a complaint with TSA's Disability Branch. The Disability Branch has the responsibility for reviewing and resolving civil rights complaints from travelers with disabilities. Travelers with disabilities can visit the [Civil Rights](#) page to file a complaint, or submit a complaint via email to TSA-CRL@tsa.dhs.gov.
- **Disability-related concerns or other concerns:** Travelers can also report disability-related problems or concerns via email to the TCC at TSA-ContactCenter@dhs.gov or by calling 1-866-289-9673 (Federal Relay 711).
- **Claims for damages:** If a traveler would like to pursue a claim against TSA for personal or property damage, you must complete an SF-90, Claim for Damage, Injury, or Death form, and submit it to the Claims Management Office within 2 years of the date of the incident. It may be submitted electronically via TSA.gov [here](#), or via postal mail to the address below:

TSA Claims Management Branch
601 South 12th St., TSA-9
Arlington, VA 20598-6009

The SF-90 form and additional relevant information may be found [here](#).

- **Boarding aircraft:** Concerns with boarding, and the moving of travelers with disabilities and their wheelchairs to and from the plane, however, is the

responsibility of the airline, not TSA. Similarly, the decision as to whether to allow someone to enter the sterile area to provide personal assistance to someone with a disability is also within the purview of the airline.

- **Complaints about airline services:** If a traveler wants to file a complaint about airline services other than safety or security issues, it should be directed to the Department of Transportation's Aviation Consumer Protection Division. This office provides complaint forms for consumers to download and print on its website [here](#). The Aviation Consumer Protection Division accepts complaints on its website via the aforementioned link via postal mail to:

Aviation Consumer Protection Division, C-75
Suite # W96-432 (West Building)
U.S. Department of Transportation
Office of the General Counsel
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, DC 20590

You may also call the Aviation Consumer Protection Division 24 hours a day at 202-366-2220 (Federal Relay 711) to record your complaint. Calls are returned Monday through Friday, generally between 7:30 am and 5:00 pm EST.