Flying with Disabilities: An Updated Guide to Air Travel

presented by
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For more information: www.gov.texas.gov/disabilities • gcpd@gov.texas.gov • 512-463-5749
About GCPD

The Governor’s Committee on People with Disabilities (GCPD) has a mission to further opportunities for persons with disabilities to enjoy full and equal access to lives of independence, productivity, and self-determination.

GCPD recommends changes in disability policies and programs in the areas of accessibility, communication, criminal justice, education, emergency preparedness, employment, health, housing, transportation, and veterans. The committee also supports a network of committees on people with disabilities, issues awards to promote greater awareness, and promotes compliance with disability related laws.
Answering Questions

• Type in Q&A if you have questions for the presenters
• Specific Challenges at Airports
• Who to Contact with Specific Questions
  – Governor or Local Committee for People with Disabilities
  – Open Doors Organization
  – ADA Coordinator at Airport
  – Department of Transportation
Applicable Laws to Air Travel

• Americans with Disabilities Act, Titles II and III
  – Airport
  – Services inside airport

• Air Carrier Access Act
  – Airlines
Airline Passengers with Disabilities Bill of Rights

U.S. Department of Transportation published Bill of Rights in 2022

1. The Right to Be Treated with Dignity and Respect.
2. The Right to Receive Information About Services and Aircraft Capabilities and Limitations.
4. The Right to Accessible Airport Facilities.
5. The Right to Assistance at Airports.
6. The Right to Assistance on the Aircraft.
7. The Right to Travel with an Assistive Device or Service Animal.
8. The Right to Receive Seating Accommodations.
9. The Right to Accessible Aircraft Features.

https://www.transportation.gov/airconsumer/disabilitybillofrights#:~:text=The%20Bill%20of%20Rights%20consists%20of%3A&text=The%20Right%20to%20Accessible%20Airport,Assistive%20Device%20or%20Service%20Animal.
SERVICE ANIMAL FORMS PORTAL

Submit Your Department of Transportation Service Animal Form

After submitting your DOT Form, you will receive a Service Animal ID number that can be used to access your DOT form, travel history, and inform your airline of upcoming travel.

Already Submitted Your DOT Service Animal Form? How can we help?

Travelers who have already submitted a DOT form do not need to submit another form.

Notify Airline of Upcoming Travel with Your Service Animal

Edit / Print / View Existing DOT Forms  View / Print Travel History

Retrieve Service Animal ID
Under “Things To Do” there is an “Accessibility” choice.
Impact of Travelers with Disabilities

General Travel

In the past two years:
✓ 27 million travelers with disabilities have taken
✓ A total of 81 million trips and
✓ Spent $58.7 billion (up from $34.6 billion in 2015)

These population and spend projections are based on the US Census American Community Survey (ACS) which estimates 15.4% of the US adult population has a disability. Throughout this report, median values have been utilized for all calculations.
Top US Destinations over the past 5 Years are Las Vegas, NYC, and Orlando.

US Destinations Traveled to in the Past 5 Years
(among those who took 1+ trips in the past two years)

**West: 45%**
**Top 5 locations**
- Las Vegas: 21%
- Los Angeles: 14%
- San Francisco: 11%
- Seattle: 10%
- Phoenix/Scottsdale: 9%

**Midwest: 20%**
- Chicago: 15%
- Kansas City: 5%
- Minneapolis/St. Paul: 4%

**South: 57%**
**Top 5 locations**
- Orlando: 20%
- Atlanta: 16%
- Washington D.C.: 15%
- Miami: 13%
- Dallas/Fort Worth: 12%

**East: 32%**
**Top 4 locations**
- New York City: 21%
- Boston: 11%
- Philadelphia: 8%
- Portland: 3%

29% other
6% none

**Q217** To which of the following cities in the United States have you traveled in the past five years (2015 – 2019)? Please select all that apply.

**BASE: TOOK 1 OR MORE TRIPS IN THE PAST TWO YEARS (n=810)**
Using Devices and Technology When Planning Travel

When traveling, the Internet is a common place that most adults with disabilities turn in order to plan and support their travel needs. Over two-thirds count on websites and apps while they are traveling.

Over the past two years, more than three-quarters of travelers with disabilities (76%) have used the Internet to support their travel needs, primarily by finding:

- **33%** Accessibility information about restaurants
- **32%** Accessibility information about destinations to visit
- **48%** Finding accessible hotels
- **32%** Accessibility information about airlines
- **65%** Hotel apps (33%)
- **40%** Use an assistive device at home or when traveling
- **65%** Help with mobility
- **23%** Assist with Hearing Loss or Deafness
Resources Utilized When Planning a Trip

When planning a trip and evaluating accessibility, people with disabilities depend on their own personal connections (like direct previous experience or friends and family) more than anything else. That said, many also rely on outside companies (travel, attraction or tour companies) and third party websites to make their decisions.

Companies commonly used for trip booking by travelers with disabilities in the past two years:

1 in 2
(57%)
Travel Companies
(website, apps, or calls)

1 in 3
(37%)
Third Party Travel Sites
(websites, apps)

1 in 4
(25%)
Attractions/Tour Companies
(website, apps, or calls)

Best sources of information about which companies, services and products are most accessible for people with disabilities when planning a trip:

53%
Previous experience

45%
Friends & Family

34%
Websites/Apps for Third Party Cites

32%
Travel Companies
People with Disabilities Most Commonly Look to Participate in Dining, Family Time, Shopping, or Tourist Attractions When Planning a Trip

**Activities Look to Participate in When Planning a Trip**

- **Eating at a Restaurant**: 70%
- **Visiting/Family Event**: 52%
- **Local Shopping**: 45%
- **Tourist Attractions**: 43%
- **Museum or Art Gallery**: 33%
- **State or National Park**: 33%
- **Beach Activities**: 31%
- **Town or City Sightseeing**: 22%
- **Concert/Festival/Theater**: 22%
- **Theme Park/Water Park**: 21%
- **Countryside Sightseeing**: 19%
- **Outdoor Recreation**: 18%
- **Boat Tours/Watersports**: 13%
- **Living Sporting Event**: 12%
- **5% other**
- **10% none**

**BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1,100)**

Q701 When planning a trip or vacation, which of the following activities do you look to participate in? Please select all that apply.
Nearly Half of People with Disabilities Plan to Travel Within 6 Months of Travel Restrictions Being Lifted Post-COVID-19

**How Long After COVID-19 Crisis has Ended Plan to Travel**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I do not plan to travel at all</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A year or longer</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-11 months</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6 months</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3 months</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-30 days</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediately</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACCESS THE MAGIC OF FLIGHT
AT HOUSTON AIRPORTS

Aviation Risk & Regulatory Compliance

Presented by:
Anthony W. Brown
ADA Coordinator
Houston Airports provide a variety of resources at our facilities to assist individuals with disabilities. Here are a few key resources you should be aware of:

- Hidden Disabilities Sunflower
- Visual Interpreting and Wayfinding
- Airport Familiarization Tours
- Accessible Facilities
More Accessibility

Programs and Resources

Accessible seating

Closed captioning and audio descriptions

Braille signage

Website accessibility (Recite Me)

Clear walking path

Airport projects registered under TDLR TAS
What is the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower?

The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower is a simple way for individuals to voluntarily disclose that they have a disability or condition which might not be immediately noticeable. It enables trained customer service personnel to identify these individuals and offer assistance when needed. Houston Airports is proud to be part of this global initiative, contributing to the awareness of hidden disabilities.

Globally 1 in 6 of us live with a disability. That is approximately 1.3 billion people.
Aira is a live, human-to-human professional assistance service, an accommodation or productivity tool, that enhances independence by delivering on-demand, skilled and reliable visual interpreting for just about any task. The AIRA wayfinding service is available for free to anyone traveling through all Houston Airports, using the app anyone can get on demand visual interpreting and wayfinding.
Houston Airports is proud to offer world-class facilities that accommodate individuals traveling with service animals. Our Service Animal Relief Areas (SARA) can be found in every terminal at both Houston George Bush and Houston Hobby.

We partner with organizations such as Canine Companions to ensure that our facilities are service animal-friendly and to help service animals in the training program become familiarized with airports.
WHAT IS IT?
A familiarization tour is for anyone that wants to practice their travel experience before they actually travel. This can be especially beneficial to individuals who need special assistance. When you request a tour, please let us know if you require any accommodations.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?
This initiative by Houston Airports promotes inclusivity and accessibility, allowing individuals, including those with disabilities, to practice their travel experience in advance. It ensures a smoother journey and brings us closer to the goal of bringing the magic of flight to everyone.

HOW DO I REQUEST A TOUR?
Requesting a tour is easy, just reach out to the ADA Coordinator via email at HAS_Accessibility@houstontx.gov. We would be delighted to assist you in scheduling a tour.

Learn More about Accessibility at Houston Airports
www.fly2houston.com/iah/accessible-travel
Interior of Mother’s Nursing Room in Terminal A IAH
Interior of Companion Care Changing Room at Hobby
Newly Installed
Mobile Sensory Station
Passengers can also make ADA complaints directly to the DOT. If airline ADA complaints are made to HAS they will be forwarded to the designated CRO.

**Houston Airport System ADA Coordinator**
- Airport facilities
- Airport Parking
- Concessions
- Airport Vendors
- HAS staff
- Communications

**Airline Complaint Resolution Official**
- Check-in/gate agents
- Ticketing
- Wheelchair service
- Check-in Kiosks
- In-Flight experience

**Access the Magic of Flight**
We Invite You to Visit Us to Access the Magic of Flight

Happy Holidays from Houston Airports

For all accessibility or ADA related questions, suggestions, and complaints please contact us:

ADA Coordinator: Anthony W. Brown
HAS_Accessibility@houstontx.gov
(281)233-1859
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Learn More about Accessibility at Houston Airports
www.fly2houston.com/iah/accessible-travel