

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
601 South 12th Street
Arlington, VA 20598



**Transportation
Security
Administration**

NOV 23 2015

Dear Coalition Members:

On behalf of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), I want to take a moment to share some important tips to help you better prepare for security screening at our Nation's airport screening checkpoints. In light of Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General covert testing of TSA security checkpoint operations announced in the media earlier this year, and given TSA's continuing mission to protect the Nation's transportation systems, you will likely see slightly longer lines resulting from modified screening procedures.

For these reasons, I encourage you to arrive at least two hours early for domestic and three hours early for international flights, to give yourself plenty of time to get through security screening. For general information about what to expect during security screening, you may contact the TSA Contact Center at (866) 289-9673 or email at TSA-ContactCenter@tsa.dhs.gov. The TSA Contact Center has representatives available on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. ET and on weekends/holidays from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET. Automated information is available in 12 languages. Travelers who are deaf or hard of hearing may use a relay service to contact the TSA Contact Center (Federal Relay 711).

TSA also offers the TSA Cares helpline. I encourage anyone who may need additional assistance during the security screening process, travelers with disabilities or medical conditions, and travelers who have concerns about the screening process to contact TSA Cares at least 72 hours before travel. TSA Cares agents have received training to provide callers with specific information about the specialized screening needs in a variety of circumstances. In addition, you may provide a TSA Cares agent with your flight itinerary, and they will coordinate assistance to be specifically available for you with a Passenger Support Specialist (PSS) and/or customer service manager at the airport. Even if you do not provide your itinerary beforehand, you may ask for a PSS or supervisor at the checkpoint.

The PSS program was created to assist travelers at the checkpoint, and Passenger Support Specialists receive specialized training, including how to assist and communicate with individuals with disabilities as well as best practices on interactions with travelers from various cultures and communities. While TSA recommends contacting TSA Cares to set up PSS assistance in advance, our goal is to have a PSS in the vicinity of every checkpoint to provide assistance as needed and resolve traveler-related screening concerns on the ground, as quickly as possible.

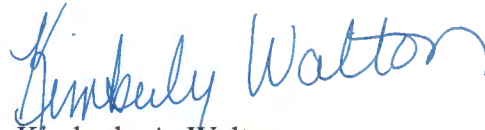
Any traveler who needs assistance or is concerned about his or her screening may ask for a Supervisory Transportation Security Officer or a PSS at any time.

Travelers or their companions may call TSA Cares toll free at (855) 787-2227. The hours of operation for the TSA Cares helpline are 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. ET from Monday to Friday and 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET on weekends/holidays. Travelers who are deaf or hard of hearing may e-mail TSA-ContactCenter@tsa.dhs.gov or may use a relay service to contact TSA Cares (Federal Relay 711)

You may also download a Notification Card from www.tsa.gov/travel/special-procedures, which allows you to discreetly notify the Transportation Security Officer of your disability, medical condition, or other circumstance that requires assistance. This card, however, does not exempt you from screening.

TSA works hard every day to ensure that you and your loved ones arrive at your destinations safely. I assure you that TSA remains committed to ensuring that all travelers are treated with respect and courtesy, and we emphasize that screening must be conducted without regard to a person's race, color, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity in order to ensure your safety.

Sincerely,



Kimberly A. Walton
Assistant Administrator
Office of Civil Rights and Liberties,
Ombudsman, and Traveler Engagement