

# Considerations for Screening Passengers with Disabilities During the Coronavirus Pandemic

In response to the coronavirus pandemic, the undersigned organizations endorse the following considerations for screening passengers with disabilities to ensure safe and secure screening at our nation's airports.

## Passenger Volume

TSA is consolidating its screening operations to adjust for reduced flight and passenger volumes. Impacted security checkpoints may close as a result, so passengers may be redirected to other security screening checkpoints at the airport.

In implementing this policy, TSA must ensure communication directed towards passengers with disabilities is clearly understandable and provides directional assistance to the new checkpoint, if requested.

## Social Distancing

TSA is implementing procedures to increase social distancing and reduce direct contact between employees and the traveling public whenever possible – all without compromising security. Adjustments include metering passengers to increase distance between individuals as they enter the security checkpoint queue, placing visual reminders of appropriate spacing on checkpoint floors and staggering the use of lanes in the security checkpoint where feasible.

In implementing this policy, TSA must consider the accommodations of passengers with disabilities, including those who use wheelchairs and other assistive devices, service animals, or attendants. TSA must ensure checkpoint queue lines are accessible to all people with disabilities, including providing room for power wheelchairs or scooters to enter.

## Face Masks/Coverings

TSA is allowing passengers with disabilities to wear face coverings, but may require adjustment to confirm identity during the checkpoint screening process. If passengers are unable to adjust their mask upon request, then officers should ask if they can assist the passenger with adjustment.

TSA officers are required to wear masks, but should use clear face masks/shields when possible. This will allow clear communication with passengers who are deaf or hard of hearing.

## Security Screening

Officers should be readily available to perform “pat-downs” when passengers with disabilities, including wheelchair users, are unable to go through the electronic screening device to prevent extended waiting times in the screening area. Officers who perform these screening procedures must be required to change gloves at the beginning and end of the procedure.

American Association of People with Disabilities

Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation

Cure SMA

Epilepsy Foundation

Muscular Dystrophy Association

National Association of the Deaf

National Council on Independent Living

National Disability Rights Network

Paralyzed Veterans of America

United Spinal Association