



3. At the airport—options for new aviation disability standards



What we've heard

People with disability continue to face additional challenges after they have pre-planned and booked their trip. Airports are busy places, with lots of noise, movement and last-minute changes. People with disability have to navigate these challenges and a whole range of other issues while at the airport.

Some people are told to transfer out of their mobility device and into an airline or airport device at check-in, limiting their independence to travel through or visit airport facilities unaided. Others have issues at security checkpoints, as sometimes screening practices are uncomfortable and lacking in respect for passenger autonomy and dignity.

We want to make standards so people with disability can travel through the airport as independently and as dignified as possible. This fact sheet provides a summary of the regulatory options being considered in the aviation disability standards consultation paper.

Options for new standards

People with disability identified many areas where the airport journey experience could be improved.

Make it easier for people with disability to move around the airport independently

1. Allow people with disability to stay in their mobility device as long as possible

- Airlines would have to allow people to either:
 - stay with their mobility device up to a set time before departure, or
 - only hand over their mobility device when it becomes ‘absolutely necessary’.
- If a passenger has to hand over their mobility device before boarding, airline or airport staff are not to leave them unattended for long periods of time.

2. Provide accessible check-in facilities

- If any self-service check-in facilities are provided, for example kiosks and bag drops, airlines and airports would need to make sure they are accessible to people with disability.

3. Install points throughout the airport where people can ask for assistance

- Airports with a certain number of passengers in a year would need to have assistance points throughout the airport, where people with disability can ask for assistance. The assistance point could be a staffed desk or a call button.
- The assistance points would also have priority seating for people with disability.

4. Make wayfinding around airports consistent and accessible

- Wayfinding and signage in the airport would be determined by either:
 - standards developed between the Australian Government, the aviation industry and people with disability, or
 - disability reference groups at each airport.

5. Provide information about travel changes and disruptions in accessible formats

- Airlines and airports would need to inform people about any gate changes, other changes or disruptions in a range of accessible formats. For example, voice to text systems or notifications that are compatible with screen readers.

Ensure a dignified travel experience for people with disability at the airport

6. Improve access for arrivals at and departures from airports

- Airports would need to have a dedicated area outside the terminal with free short-term parking for people with disability.
- The location of accessible parking, drop-off and pick-up zones as well as access to public transport, taxis, and rideshare should be close to terminals.
- People with disability should be able to easily ask for assistance at a help point as close as practicable to designated accessible parking and drop-off zones.

- The number of accessible parking, drop-off and pick-up zones available at an airport should be proportionate to passenger numbers.
- 7. Provide clear information and priority for people with disability at security**
- Airports with more than one security screening machine would need to have at least one priority security screening lane that people with disability can choose to use.
 - Security screening staff would need to be comprehensively trained in disability awareness and communication.
 - Security screening staff should be able to provide clear verbal, visual and tactile instructions to guide a person with disability through the security screening process.
- 8. Involve people with disability when designing accessible facilities at airports**
- Airlines and airports would need to talk to people with disability when they are installing new accessible facilities or infrastructure, and when they are making significant changes to existing accessible airport facilities.
- 9. Protect disability aids from damage and loss, and track their movement**
- Airlines would need to take steps to ensure disability aids are not damaged.
 - Airlines would also need to give the person with disability a way to track their disability aid's location.
- 10. Provide choice for passenger transfer to airline wheelchairs and seats**
- Airlines would need to give people with disability choice about how they would like to be transferred from their own mobility aid to the airline's wheelchairs or seats.

Have your say

For more details on these options, read the consultation paper at www.infrastructure.gov.au/Aviation-Disability-Standards

You can also read our other fact sheets covering different parts of the journey:

- How we got here – an overview of the co-design process
- Whole of journey
- Planning and booking air travel
- On the aircraft

You can share your views on the options:

- Online (written submission or survey) via the Have Your Say page: www.infrastructure.gov.au/Aviation-Disability-Standards
- By email (written, video or audio): AviationAccessibility@infrastructure.gov.au
- By phone: 1800 621 372