

FACT SHEET: WEB SITE AND KIOSK ACCESSIBILITY

Overview and Applicability

Today, most people check airlines' fares and book their airline reservations online. Many passengers also use airport kiosks when arriving at the airport to finalize their travel preparations, whether scanning a passport to check in, printing a boarding pass, cancelling/rebooking a ticket, or printing baggage tags. However, individuals with disabilities often cannot use airlines' websites or kiosks. To help, the Department of Transportation has published a new rule requiring airline websites and automated kiosks at U.S. airports to be accessible to passengers with disabilities.

The website accessibility requirements apply to U.S. and foreign air carriers that operate at least one aircraft having a seating capacity of more than 60 passengers, and own or control a primary Web site that markets air transportation to consumers in the United States. This new rule also requires ticket agents that are not small businesses to disclose and offer Web-based discount fares to customers who are unable to use their websites due to a disability. The rule also requires a percentage of kiosks in U.S. airports with 10,000 or more annual enplanements to be accessible.

What does this rule mean to passengers with disabilities?

- No later than two years after the effective date of the rule, airlines must make their web pages providing core travel information and services accessible to persons with disabilities. No later than three years from the effective date of the rule, airlines must make all other airline web pages accessible to persons with disabilities.
- No later than two years after the effective date of the rule, airlines must make online accommodation request form to request services including, but not limited to, wheelchair assistance at the airport available to persons with disabilities.
- No later than six months after the effective date of the rule, ticket agents must disclose and offer to persons with disabilities Web-based discount fares if they are unable to use their Web site due to a disability.
- No later than three years after the effective date of the rule, any new automated kiosk that airports or airlines install at a U.S. airport with 10,000 or more annual enplanements must be accessible to persons with disabilities until a total of at least 25 percent of each type of the kiosk provided at each location in the airport is accessible.
- Until the effective date of the rule, airlines must continue to provide individuals with disabilities equivalent service if they are unable to use an airline's inaccessible websites or inaccessible kiosk due to a disability.

What does this rule mean to airlines?

Website Accessibility

- Within two years from the effective date of the rule, airlines must ensure that the web pages providing core travel information and services meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA standard, a comprehensive internationally recognized website accessibility standard. Within three years from the effective date of the rule, airlines must ensure that all other Web pages meet this standard.
- Airlines must test their websites to ensure their accessibility and usability.

- Airlines must provide equivalent service to customers unable to use their accessible website.
- No later than two years from the effective date of the rule, airlines must have an online accommodation request form available for passengers with disabilities to request services including, but not limited to, wheelchair assistance, seating accommodations, escort assistance for a visually impaired passenger, and on-board stowage of an assistive device.

Kiosk Accessibility

- Within three years from the effective date of the rule, airlines must ensure that all automated kiosks installed that they own, lease, or control at U.S. airports with 10,000 or more annual enplanements meet detailed accessibility design standards until a total of at least 25 percent of each type of the kiosk provided at each location in the airport meet these standards. At least 25 percent of kiosks in each location at an airport must be accessible ten years after the effective date.
- Airlines must ensure that accessible kiosks that they own, lease or control are visually and tactilely identifiable and maintained in working condition.
- Airlines must give priority access to accessible kiosks to passengers with disabilities.
- Airlines must provide equivalent service to passengers who cannot use accessible kiosks that airlines own, lease or control due to disability.

What does this rule mean to ticket agents?

- Unless a ticket agent is a small business, starting six months after the effective date of the rule, ticket agents must disclose and offer Web-based discount fares to customers unable to use the ticket agent's Web site due to a disability.

What does this rule mean to U.S. airports?

- Within three years from the effective date of the rule, U.S. airports with 10,000 or more annual enplanements must ensure that all automated kiosks installed at U.S. airports that the airports jointly own, lease, or control with carriers meet detailed accessibility design standards until a total of at least 25 percent of the kiosks in each location at the airport meet these standards. At least 25 percent of kiosks in each location at an airport must be accessible ten years after effective date.
- U.S. airports with 10,000 or more annual enplanements must ensure that accessible kiosks are visually and tactilely identifiable and maintained in working condition.

The rule on accessible websites and kiosks is available on the Internet at www.regulations.gov, docket DOT-OST-2011-0177. If you have questions regarding this fact sheet, you can contact Blane A. Workie, Deputy Assistant General Counsel, Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings, Department of Transportation, at 1200 New Jersey Ave SE, Washington, DC 20590. You can also reach her at 202-366-9342 (phone), 202-366-7152 (fax), or blane.workie@dot.gov (email).