

Air Travel with an Assistive Device



Here are some important things
to know before you go...

What is an assistive device?



An assistive device is any piece of equipment that assists a passenger with a disability to cope with the effects of his or her disability. Such devices are intended to assist a customer with a disability to hear, see, communicate, maneuver, or perform other functions of daily life. Assistive devices include (but are not limited to):

- ✓ **Crutches, Canes and Walkers**
- ✓ **Braces/Prosthetics**
- ✓ **Wheelchairs**
- ✓ **Hearing aids**
- ✓ **Portable Oxygen Concentrators (POCs)**
- ✓ **Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) machines**
- ✓ **Prescription medications and any medical devices** needed to administer those medications (e.g., syringes or auto-injectors)



If you are not sure if your device is an assistive device, contact your airline's disability or special assistance desk.

Helpful Facts



You may bring your assistive device onboard and stow it:

- + In an overhead compartment;
- + Under the seat in front of you; or
- + In a designated stowage area if the device fits and is in accordance with FAA or foreign safety regulations.

Your assistive device does not count towards the airline's baggage limit; however, if your bag also contains personal items, the airline can count your bag toward a baggage limit and it may be subject to a baggage fee.

When your assistive device cannot be stowed in the passenger cabin as carry-on baggage, it can be stowed as cargo at no extra cost.

Airlines must check and return your assistive device in the same condition as it was received; your device must be returned to you in a timely manner as close as possible to the door of the aircraft, unless you ask to pick it up in baggage claim.

Planning on using your Portable Oxygen Concentrator (POC) onboard?



It must meet FAA requirements or have a manufacturer's label indicating that it is safe for use onboard an aircraft.

Airlines can require you to:

- ✓ **Provide up to 48-hours advance notice** that you will use your POC onboard;
- ✓ **Provide a medical certificate** for the use of your POC onboard;
- ✓ **Bring a supply of fully charged batteries** to power your device for no less than 150% of the duration of the flight; or
- ✓ **Check in one hour before the regular** check in time for the flight.

For additional relevant policies regarding POC use onboard the aircraft, check with your airline.

Know before you go



- 💡 **Airlines can require up to 48-hours advance notice for certain assistive devices, such as the transportation of an electric wheelchair on an aircraft with less than 60 seats or the use of a POC machine onboard an aircraft.**

- 💡 **Arrive at the airport and check in for your flight as early as possible.**

- 💡 **Because airline personnel may not be familiar with your particular assistive device, consider:**
 - ➕ Providing written instructions detailing the disassembly, assembly, and stowage of your device; and

 - ➕ Taking a picture of your device before your flight to capture its condition.

Know before you go



- 💡 **Airlines must have a priority space** for at least one folding manual wheelchair on aircraft with 100 or more seats; you must request to pre-board the flight in order to have the opportunity to stow your wheelchair in the aircraft cabin.
- 💡 **If you need to use your assistive device during the flight,** you can request that the flight crew help you retrieve it from the stowage space.

Encounter an assistive device-related issue?



If you encounter a disability-related issue related to receiving an accommodation or service, you can request to speak with the airline's Complaint Resolution Official (CRO) or a supervisor.

- ✔ **A CRO is the airline's expert on disability-related issues in air travel.** Every airline must have a CRO available either by telephone or in person during operating hours.

Contact Us

DOT's Disability Hotline

1-800-778-4838

Monday – Friday 9:00am – 5:00pm

Eastern Time except federal holidays

Visit Us

www.transportation.gov/airconsumer/disability



**U.S. Department
of Transportation**

14 CFR Part 382 applies to flights operating to, from, or within the United States of America.