

Air Travel - Know your Rights

- as a disabled passenger -



1. Basic Rights

Airlines can NOT:

- Refuse to carry you or your mobility aids and devices, even if you are unescorted and/or not holding a disability certificate.
- Insist for presence of an escort, if you are able to declare independence in feeding, communication with reasonable accommodation, toileting and personal needs.
- Insist on a medical clearance or special forms from you, unless they have a genuine reason to suspect that you may have a medical condition that requires attention.
- Impose charges for wheelchairs and other assistive aids such as ambulifts, aisle chairs, low floor accessible busses, etc, unless you are not carrying a disability certificate.
- Insist on any further enquiries regarding specific travel requirements, once the ticket has been confirmed.

However, airlines MAY levy charges for:

- Any human assistance rendered.
- Stretchers and associated equipment (blankets, pillows, sheets, privacy curtains, etc.)
- Assisting in baggage delivery and getting out of the destination airport, if requested.

2. When Booking a Flight

Remember to:

Inform the airlines, at the time of booking and/ or check-in for travel, any requirements - such as human assistance or assistive equipment (ambulift, onboard wheelchair, etc.)

3. At the Airport

Remember to:

- Carry your disability certificate, otherwise you may be charged for using the equipment (such as wheelchairs, ambulift, etc).

You CAN:

- Insist on airline to engage in interline transactions in order to commence / continue interline transportation.

4. Checking In

Remember that You:

- Have an equal choice of seat allocation, subject to safety requirements.
- Can not be restricted to any particular cabin or seating areas, except when it is done to avoid interference with emergency evacuation.

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The airline:

- Shall provide accommodation for passengers with disabilities who may require extra leg space without any extra charge.
- Upon request, may allow passengers to carry delicate assistive aids and devices as hand baggage.

5. Transfers/Embarkation/Disembarkation

Remember that you:

- Can insist on using your own wheelchair up to the aircraft.
- Can, upon landing, choose to transfer from the aisle seat directly onto your own wheelchair; and can also request your checked-in assistive devices, wheelchairs, etc to be delivered close to the aircraft door.
- If being offloaded (for any valid reasons), must receive the highest possible priority for transportation along with your escort.

6. In-Flight

You CAN:

- Request airlines to endeavor to provide a narrow onboard wheelchair to access lavatory facilities.
- If required, expect cabin crew to individually apprise you of the cabin layout and essential safety information.
- With prior intimation to the airline, carry your guide/ service dog in the aircraft cabin.

7. Luggage/Assistive Equipment

You CAN:

- Request the airlines to allow you to carry your delicate assistive aids and devices as hand baggage.
- In case of loss or damage to mobility equipment or other assistive devices, claim and be provided suitable compensation from the airlines.

The airlines MUST:

- Ensure that the checked in baggage of persons with disabilities shall bear 'Priority Tags'.

Disclaimer: The advice in this document is based on full DGCA CAR document that can be read at <http://dgca.nic.in/cars/D3M-M1.pdf>. AccessAbility neither endorse the contents nor take any responsibility regarding the accuracy or effectiveness of the information provided herein.

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