



The Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities

# Accessibility and Disability Policy Webinar Series

December 19, 2023

## Flying with Disabilities: An Updated Guide to Air Travel

presented by

Eric Lipp & Pat Pound, Open Doors Organization

Anthony Brown, Houston Airport System

Matthew Dickens, Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities

For more information: [www.gov.texas.gov/disabilities](http://www.gov.texas.gov/disabilities) • [gcpd@gov.texas.gov](mailto:gcpd@gov.texas.gov) • 512-463-5749

# About GCPD

The Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities (GCPD) has a mission to further opportunities for persons with disabilities to enjoy full and equal access to lives of independence, productivity, and self-determination.

GCPD recommends changes in disability policies and programs in the areas of accessibility, communication, criminal justice, education, emergency preparedness, employment, health, housing, transportation, and veterans. The committee also supports a network of committees on people with disabilities, issues awards to promote greater awareness, and promotes compliance with disability related laws.

# Answering Questions

- Type in Q&A if you have questions for the presenters
- Specific Challenges at Airports
- Who to Contact with Specific Questions
  - Governor or Local Committee for People with Disabilities
  - Open Doors Organization
  - ADA Coordinator at Airport
  - Department of Transportation

# Applicable Laws to Air Travel

- Americans with Disabilities Act, Titles II and III
  - Airport
  - Services inside airport
- Air Carrier Access Act
  - Airlines

# Airline Passengers with Disabilities Bill of Rights

## U.S. Department of Transportation published Bill of Rights in 2022

1. The Right to Be Treated with Dignity and Respect.
2. The Right to Receive Information About Services and Aircraft Capabilities and Limitations.
3. The Right to Receive Information in an Accessible Format.
4. The Right to Accessible Airport Facilities.
5. The Right to Assistance at Airports.
6. The Right to Assistance on the Aircraft.
7. The Right to Travel with an Assistive Device or Service Animal.
8. The Right to Receive Seating Accommodations.
9. The Right to Accessible Aircraft Features.
10. The Right to Resolution of a Disability-Related Issue.

<https://www.transportation.gov/airconsumer/disabilitybillofrights#:~:text=The%20Bill%20of%20Rights%20consists%20of%3A&text=The%20Right%20to%20Accessible%20Airport,Assistive%20Device%20or%20Service%20Animal>



*Open Doors  
Organization*

Eric Lipp, Executive Director

[ericlipp@opendoorsnfp.org](mailto:ericlipp@opendoorsnfp.org)

[www.opendoorsnfp.org](http://www.opendoorsnfp.org)

# SERVICE ANIMAL FORMS PORTAL



**Submit Your Department of Transportation Service Animal Form**

After submitting your DOT Form, you will receive a Service Animal ID number that can be used to access your DOT form, travel history, and inform your airline of upcoming travel.

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Already Submitted Your DOT Service Animal Form? How can we help?

Travelers who have already submitted a DOT form **do not** need to submit another form.

**Notify Airline of Upcoming Travel with Your Service Animal**

[Edit / Print / View Existing DOT Forms](#)

[View / Print Travel History](#)

[Retrieve Service Animal ID](#)

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information and Resources for Travelers

Read More →

ACCESSIBILITY

(0) ITEMS IN TRIP PLANNER

SEARCH



PLACES  
TO GO

THINGS  
TO DO

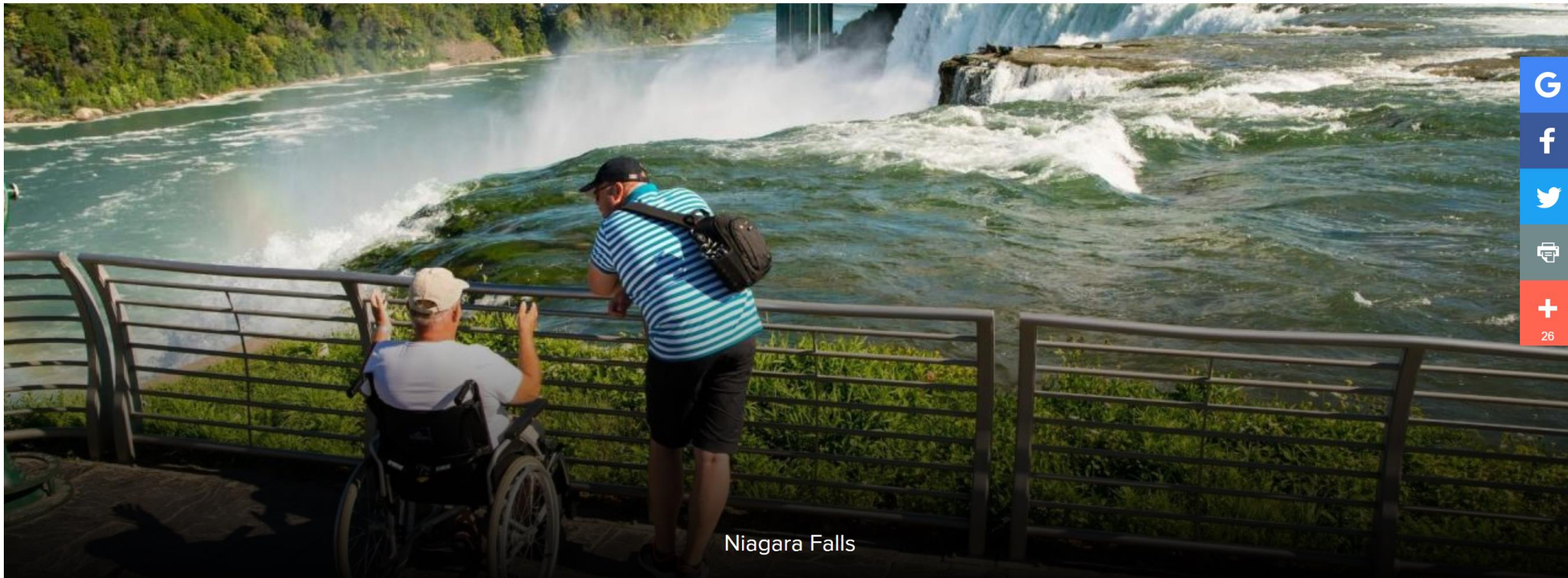


PLACES  
TO STAY

EVENTS

BLOG

PLAN  
YOUR TRIP



Under “Things To Do” there is an “Accessibility” choice.



## General Travel

In the past two years:

- ✓ **27 million travelers** with disabilities have taken
- ✓ A total of **81 million trips** and
- ✓ Spent **\$58.7 billion** (*up from \$34.6 billion in 2015*)

These population and spend projections are based on the US Census American Community Survey (ACS) which estimates 15.4% of the US adult population has a disability

Throughout this report, median values have been utilized for all calculations.



Open Doors  
Organization



The Harris Poll  
Harris Insights & Analytics LLC, A Stagwell Company

# Top US Travel Destinations in the Past 5 Years

Top US Destinations over the past 5 Years are Las Vegas, NYC, and Orlando.

US Destinations Traveled to in the Past 5 Years  
(among those who took 1+ trips in the past two years)

<b>West: 45%</b> <i>Top 5 locations</i>	
Las Vegas	21%
Los Angeles	14%
San Francisco	11%
Seattle	10%
Phoenix/Scottsdale	9%

<b>Midwest: 20%</b>	
Chicago	15%
Kansas City	5%
Minneapolis/St. Paul	4%

<b>South: 57%</b> <i>Top 5 locations</i>	
Orlando	20%
Atlanta	16%
Washington D.C.	15%
Miami	13%
Dallas/Fort Worth	12%

<b>East: 32%</b> <i>Top 4 locations</i>	
New York City	21%
Boston	11%
Philadelphia	8%
Portland	3%

29% other  
6% none

BASE: TOOK 1 OR MORE TRIPS IN THE PAST TWO YEARS (n=810)

Q217 To which of the following cities in the United States have you traveled in the past five years (2015 – 2019)? Please select all that apply.



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# Using Devices and Technology When Planning Travel

*When traveling, the Internet is a common place that most adults with disabilities turn in order to plan and support their travel needs. Over two-thirds count on websites and apps while they are traveling.*

Over the past two years, more than three-quarters of travelers with disabilities (76%) have used the Internet to support their travel needs, primarily by finding:

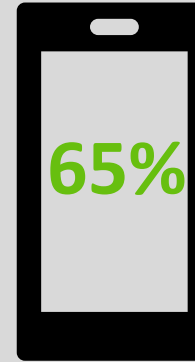
**33%**  
Accessibility information about restaurants

**32%**  
Accessibility information about destinations to visit

**48%**  
Finding accessible hotels



**32%**  
Accessibility information about airlines



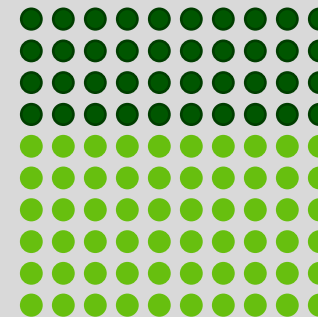
Travelers with disabilities use functions or apps when traveling, most commonly:



Hotel apps (33%)



Airline apps (27%)



**40%**  
Use an assistive device at home or when traveling



most commonly:

**65%**  
Help with mobility



**23%**  
Assist with Hearing Loss or Deafness



Open Doors Organization



The Harris Poll  
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## Resources Utilized When Planning a Trip

*When planning a trip and evaluating accessibility, people with disabilities depend on their own personal connections (like direct previous experience or friends and family) more than anything else. That said, many also rely on outside companies (travel, attraction or tour companies) and third party websites to make their decisions.*

Companies commonly used for trip booking by travelers with disabilities in the past two years:



Best sources of information about which companies, services and products are most accessible for people with disabilities when planning a trip:



**53%**

Previous  
experience



**45%**

Friends &  
Family



**34%**

Websites/Apps  
for Third Party  
Sites



**32%**

Travel  
Companies



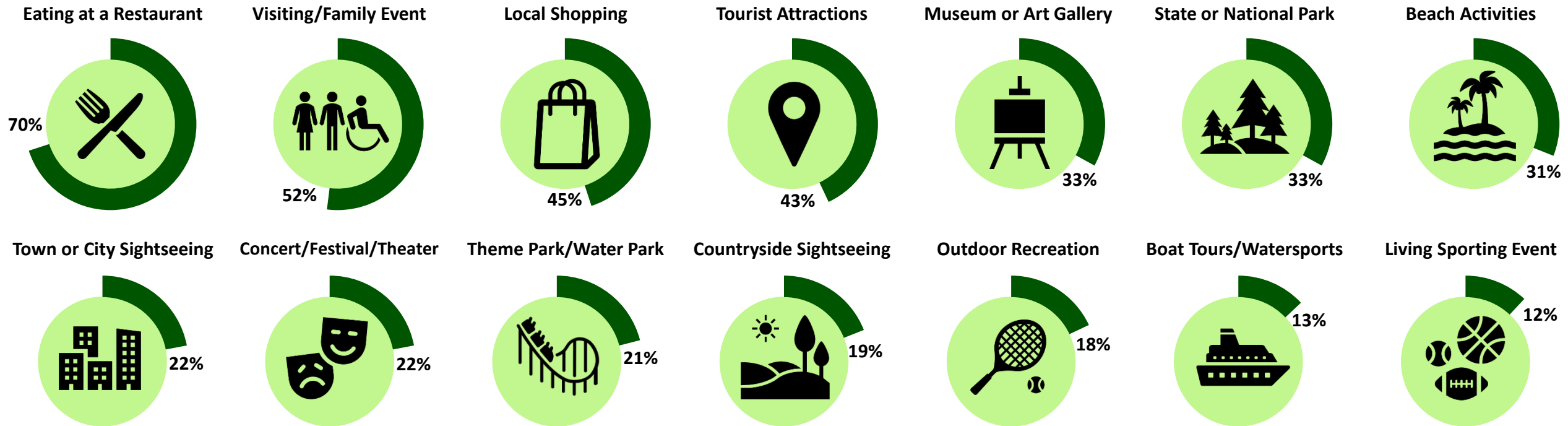
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# People with Disabilities Most Commonly Look to Participate in Dining, Family Time, Shopping, or Tourist Attractions When Planning a Trip

## Activities Look to Participate in When Planning a Trip



5% other  
10% none

**BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1,100)**

Q701 When planning a trip or vacation, which of the following activities do you look to participate in? Please select all that apply.



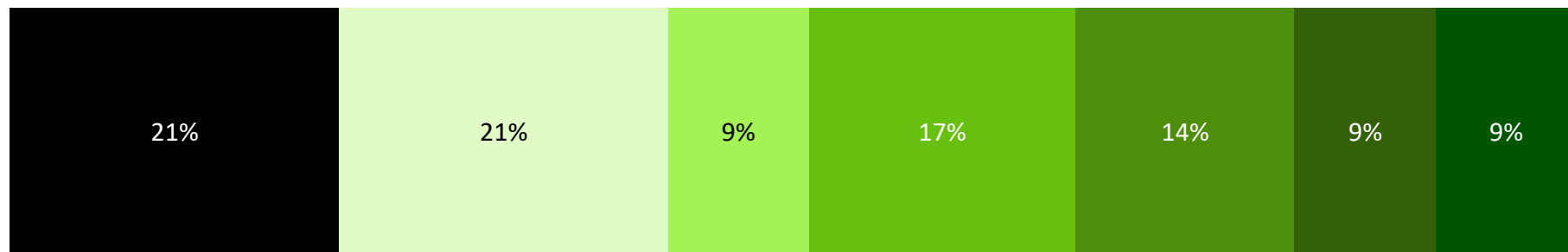
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# Nearly Half of People with Disabilities Plan to Travel Within 6 Months of Travel Restrictions Being Lifted Post-COVID-19

## How Long After COVID-19 Crisis has Ended Plan to Travel



■ I do not plan to travel at all   ■ A year or longer   ■ 7-11 months   ■ 4-6 months   ■ 2-3 months   ■ 1-30 days   ■ Immediately

**BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1,100)**

**Q802** We now would like to ask you a few questions about your future travel plans. How long after the COVID-19 crisis has ended and all restrictions are lifted do you plan to travel?

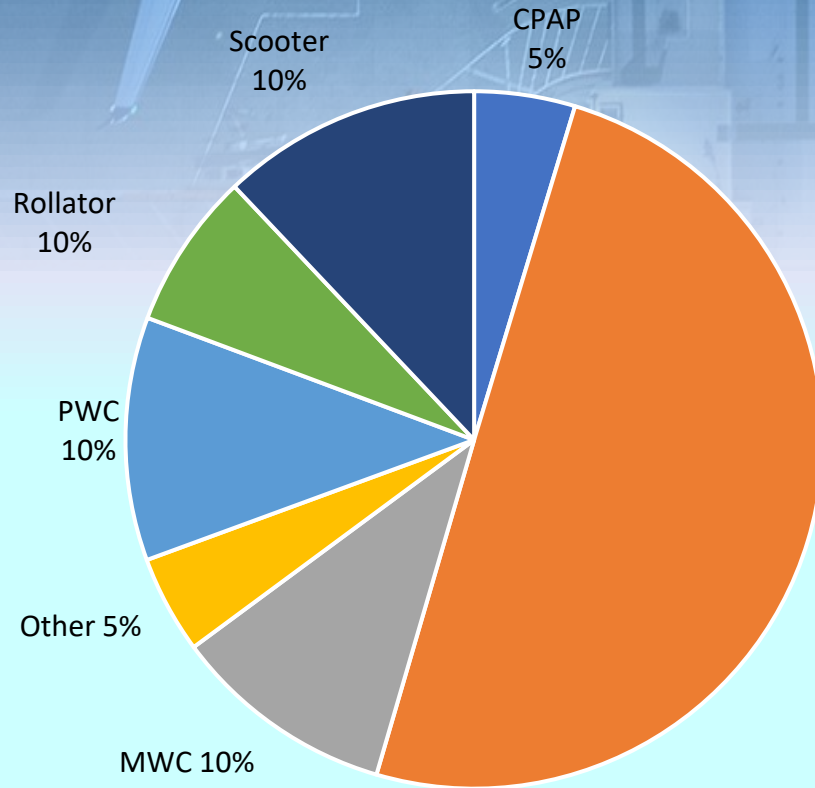


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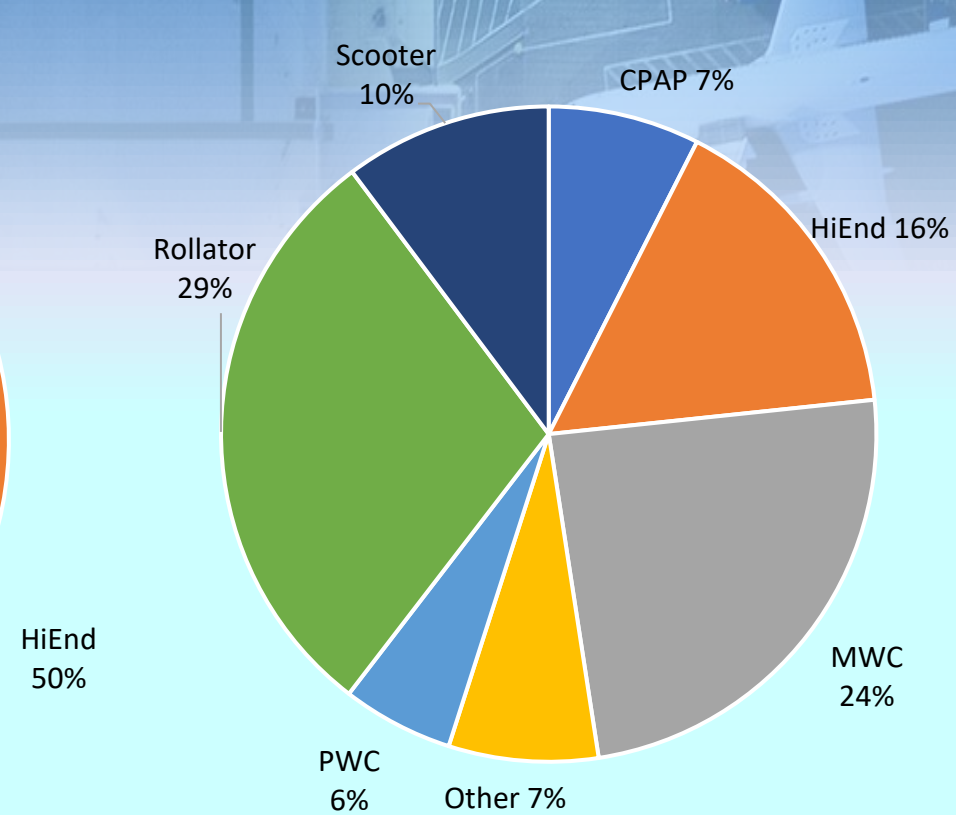


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# Average Claims by Type and Cost



**% of Money**



**% of Total Claims**



[www.thetag.org](http://www.thetag.org)





# ACCESS THE MAGIC OF FLIGHT AT HOUSTON AIRPORTS



Aviation Risk & Regulatory Compliance

Presented by:  
Anthony W. Brown  
ADA Coordinator

# Houston Airports

## Accessibility Programs and Resources

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Houston Airports provide a variety of resources at our facilities to assist individuals with disabilities  
Here are a few key resources you should be aware of



Hidden Disabilities  
Sunflower



Visual Interpreting and  
Wayfinding



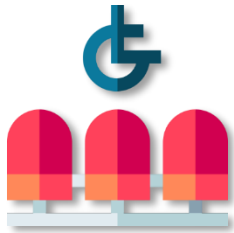
Airport Familiarization Tours



Accessible Facilities

# More Accessibility Programs and Resources

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Accessible seating



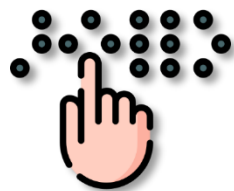
Website accessibility  
(Recite Me)



Closed captioning and audio  
descriptions



Clear walking path



Braille signage



Airport projects registered  
under TDLR TAS

# What is the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower?

The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower is a simple way for individuals to **voluntarily disclose that they have a disability or condition which might not be immediately noticeable**. It enables trained customer service personnel to **identify these individuals and offer assistance when needed**. Houston Airports is proud to be part of this global initiative, contributing to the awareness of hidden disabilities.

Globally **1 in 6** of us live with a disability. That is approximately **1.3 billion** people.



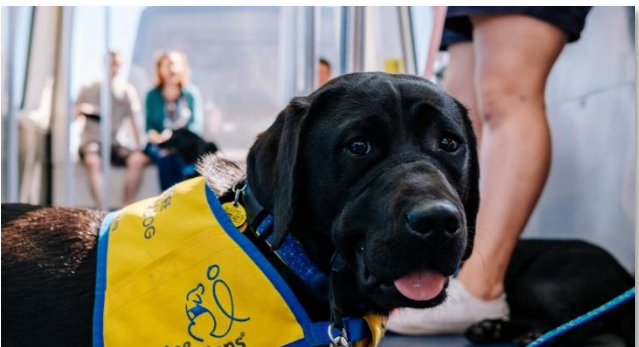
# AIRA Wayfinding

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Aira is a live, human-to-human professional assistance service, an accommodation or productivity tool, that enhances independence by delivering on-demand, skilled and reliable visual interpreting for just about any task. The AIRA wayfinding service is available for free to anyone traveling through all Houston Airports, using the app anyone can get on demand visual interpreting and wayfinding.



**ACCESS THE MAGIC OF FLIGHT**



# Service Animals

Houston Airports is proud to offer world-class facilities that accommodate individuals traveling with service animals. Our Service Animal Relief Areas (SARA) can be found in every terminal at both Houston George Bush and Houston Hobby.

We partner with organizations such as Canine Companions to ensure that our facilities are service animal-friendly and to help service animals in the training program become familiarized with airports.

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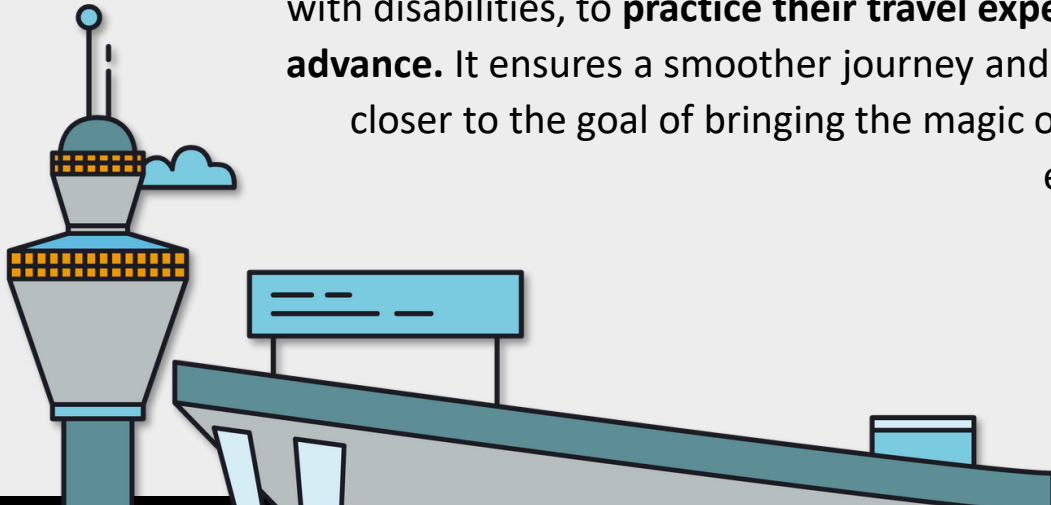
## WHAT IS IT?

A familiarization tour is for anyone that wants to practice their travel experience before they actually travel. This can be especially beneficial to individuals who need special assistance. When you request a tour, please let us know if you require any accommodations.



## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

This initiative by Houston Airports promotes **inclusivity and accessibility**, allowing individuals, including those with disabilities, to **practice their travel experience in advance**. It ensures a smoother journey and brings us closer to the goal of bringing the magic of flight to everyone.



# Airport Familiarization Tours

## HOW DO I REQUEST A TOUR?

Requesting a tour is easy, just reach out to the ADA Coordinator via email at **HAS\_Accessibility@houstontx.gov**. We would be delighted to assist you in scheduling a tour.



Learn More about Accessibility at Houston Airports

[www.fly2houston.com/iah/accessible-travel](http://www.fly2houston.com/iah/accessible-travel)

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# Nursing Rooms

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Lactation Pod



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## COMPANION CARE CHANGING ROOM

Please contact  
713-845-6555  
for access



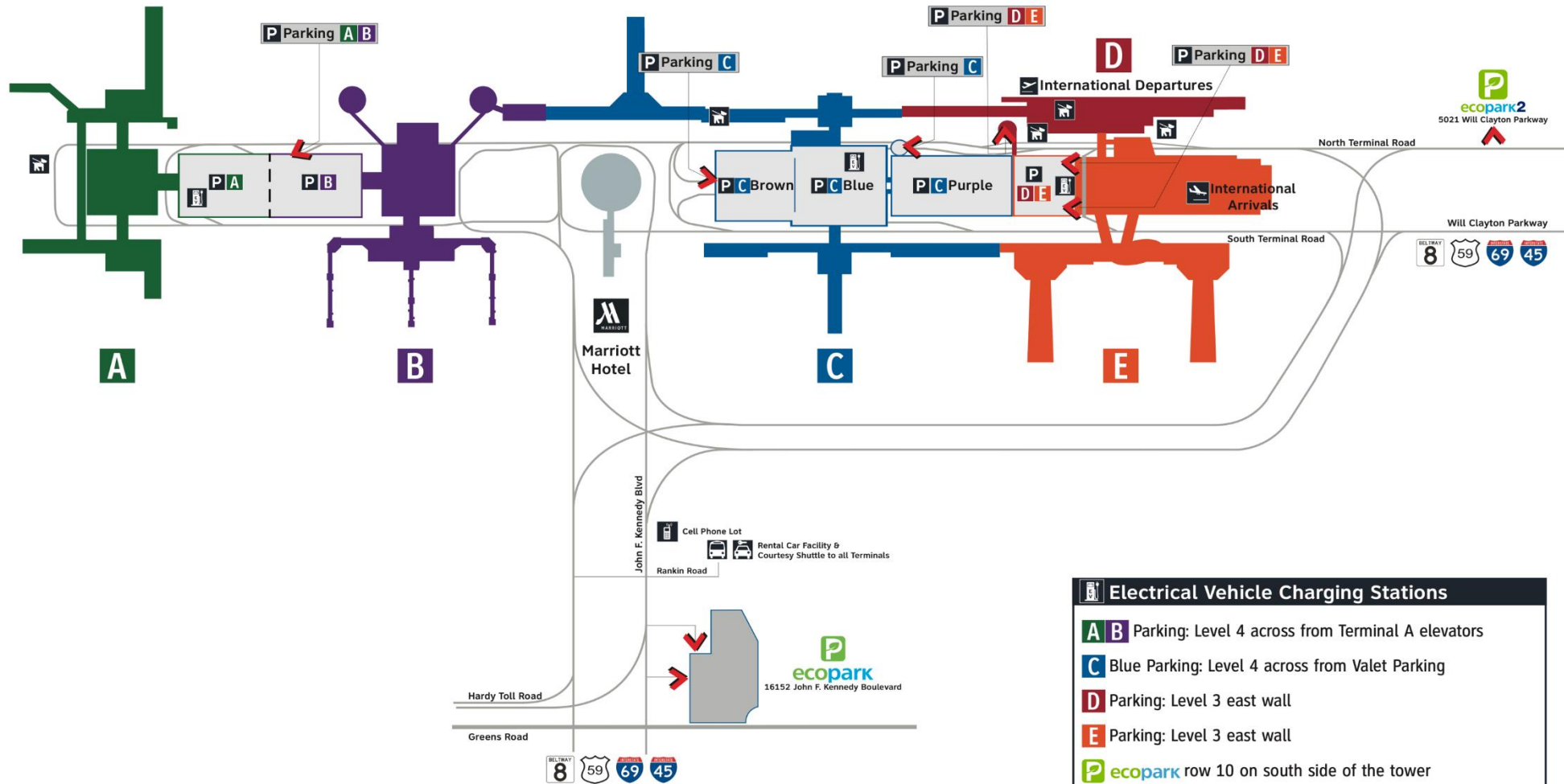
Interior of Companion Care Changing Room at Hobby

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# Newly Installed Mobile Sensory Station



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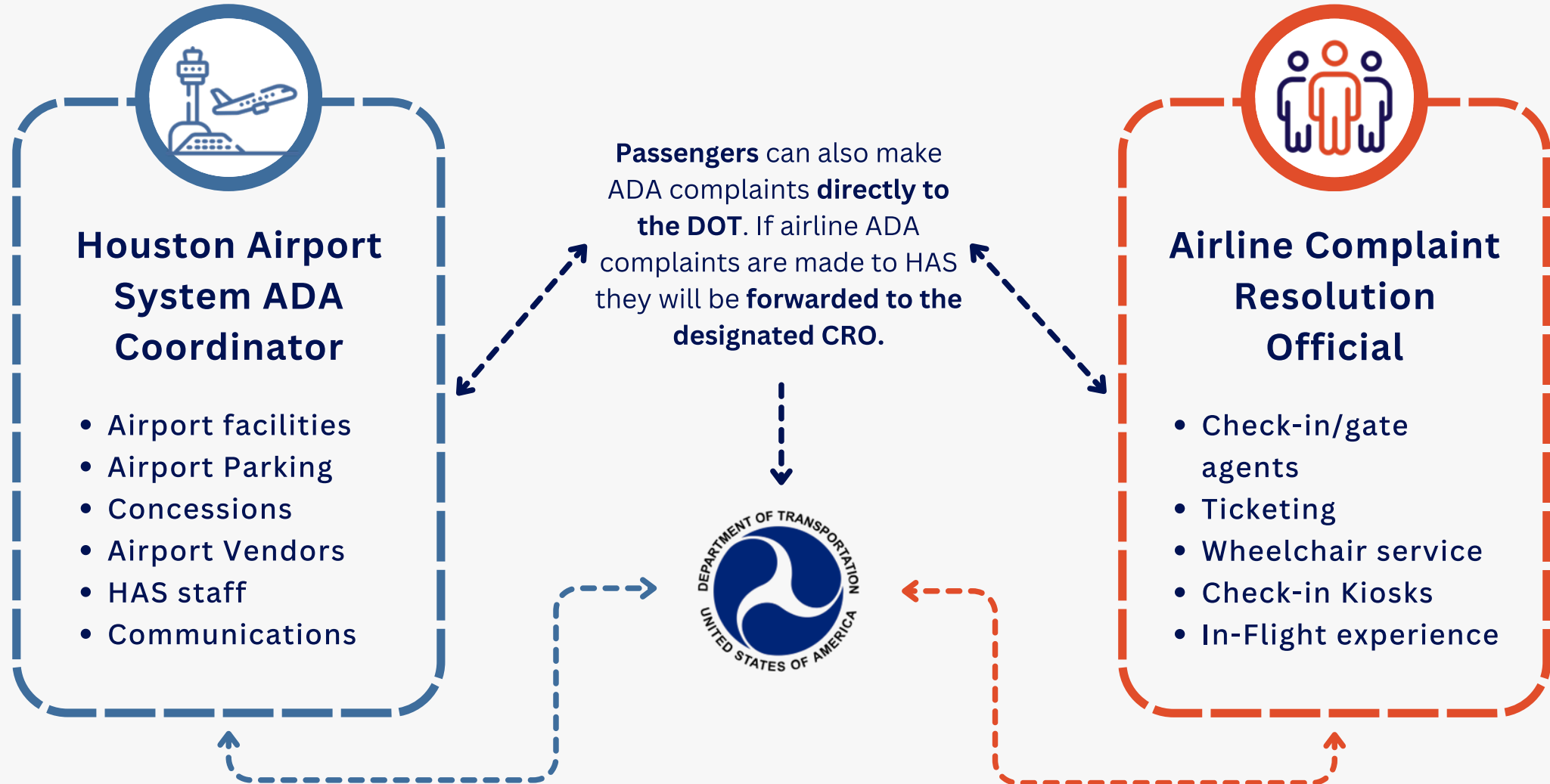
**Electrical Vehicle Charging Stations**

- A B** Parking: Level 4 across from Terminal A elevators
- C** Blue Parking: Level 4 across from Valet Parking
- D** Parking: Level 3 east wall
- E** Parking: Level 3 east wall
- P** ecopark row 10 on south side of the tower
- P** ecopark2 centrally located near ecopark2 office building

Parking Entrance

**IAH Parking**  
+1-281-233-1730

# ADA Complaint Handling



# We Invite You to Visit Us to Access the Magic of Flight

## *Happy Holidays from Houston Airports*

For all accessibility or ADA related questions, suggestions,  
and complaints please contact us:

ADA Coordinator: Anthony W. Brown  
HAS\_Accessibility@houstontx.gov  
(281)233-1859  
16930 John F. Kennedy Blvd  
Houston, TX 77032

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Learn More about Accessibility at  
Houston Airports  
[www.fly2houston.com/iah/accessible-travel](http://www.fly2houston.com/iah/accessible-travel)