

Q&A

(Guest) 11:08 AM

can u take electric wheelchairs in plans yet?

Eric Lipp 11:27 AM

Maybe 10-20 years away. Batteries in an accident could pose very big obstacle.

(Guest) 11:08 AM

Back in July, I experienced a very unpleasant situation with departure and arrival at Hobby. I was actually left in the onboarding area seating in the wheelchair. upon returning I was left in the middle of the floor as the wheelchair attended walked off and kept me. Thus, was with Southwest. What is supposed to be the process as it had been over 8 years since I had not taken a flight. Prior arrangements had been made.

Eric Lipp 11:29 AM

Wheelchair service at airports has been the #1 complaint, over 80% since DOT started tracking. We work on a lot, but DOT has yet to help with the poor service. The airlines are responsible for the service in the US but in Europe it's the airports responsibility. In the US you may have 4-8 different companies in one airport! It's the subject no one wants to talk about because it's a cost center for airlines.

(Guest) 11:09 AM

Why are the larger airlines not involved? That may be in a slide coming up!

Eric Lipp 11:30 AM

We are trying to get them on board, but they are so big it makes them slow!!!! we are in talks with two big ones.

(Guest) 11:09 AM

Will this presentation be available at a later date for our reference?

Rebecca Lopez 11:09 AM

Yes, the recording will be posted to our website.

(Guest) 11:11 AM

should I dare to take my nice electric chair in a plane?

Eric Lipp 11:30 AM

I always recommend you take your back up chair to travel or take both.

(Guest) 11:15 AM

Is there an airline that offers a flight simulation for individuals who have never flown before?

Eric Lipp 11:32 AM

Yes, you can do it with Delta at MSP or just call MSP. Alaska, Delta and United have programs but they are done locally. SEA, MSP and PDX for sure do them regularly. Your local airport would also be helpful in the process so you can check with them to see if they offer it with a partner airline.

(Guest) 11:17 AM

What is the TSA Cares number?

Eric Lipp 11:33 AM

(855) 787-2227 try to plan 72 hours in advance

(Guest) 11:19 AM

I was pretty sure that was the case, I did my doctoral capstone on the subject and could find no info on the subject.

Eric Lipp 11:33 AM

We had a couple kids do their capstones on this recently. Drake and Creighton

(Guest) 11:20 AM

could you pls repeat the acronym.? PSS

Eric Lipp 11:33 AM

PSS Passenger Service Specialist

(Guest) 11:24 AM

If we are so far away from tying down inside an airplane, can't we at least lobby them to tie down our chairs in the belly?

Eric Lipp 11:34 AM

EXACTLY that's what Open Doors Org, PVA, United Spinal are working now.

(Guest) 11:24 AM

Do yall know of any organizations or plans to create a training program for the handling of these devices?

Eric Lipp 11:34 AM

We have one and we do trainings for FREE every month! From Dubai to London to all over US

(Guest) 11:24 AM

Who is responsible for basic knowledge of wheelchair for loaders? I've traveled with my son a few times and every time something has been broken. Even had staff ask if his manual chair weighed 300 pounds as if it was his power chair.

Eric Lipp 11:36 AM

Loaders/rampers have trainers who only touch on transporting these because it's so complex and every chair is different it impossible to cover them all, we only know they are not made to fly per the manufacturer. Staff try hard to get everyone on the plane because they see it as only breaking 1.8 % should not make them deny the large chairs but people need to know the risks.

(Guest) 11:25 AM

My question, do they secure the casket? If yes, it should able to secure the wheelchair?

Eric Lipp 11:37 AM

Only on certain aircraft are tie downs available. Alaska Airlines is currently testing strapping all chairs, but FAA has to approve of the straps first. But chairs have to be able to be on every flight not just ones that carry caskets.

(Guest) 11:26 AM

Are the pet crates tied down or are they experiencing the shifts and bumps like the chairs?

Eric Lipp 11:39 AM

Some crates are tied down but people will not want the chairs with the animals but its not a horrible idea. Many carriers do not carry pets underneath the aircraft and therefore have no tie downs. Some planes do have tie downs and those need to be used. But more importantly all manual chairs need to be put in the cabin closet!! Everyone should ask to have their chair stowed inside the closet, manual chair that fits has priority.

(Guest) 11:26 AM

should we get insurance for our chairs?

Eric Lipp 11:39 AM

There is no insurance available as far as I know.

(Guest) 11:26 AM

with those recommendations did you guys get with Therapists and Chair Reps for those TSA regulations?

Eric Lipp 11:40 AM

Kinda, the manufacturers are not willing to change because they will not get reimbursed from insurance companies. The real problem is with the Manuf. Those who have powerchairs know that they are told not to use them outside...only for medical appts.

(Guest) 11:26 AM

The www has to be left off, in order to get to website. The correct website link is <https://thetag.org> Just tried it out

Eric Lipp 11:40 AM

Thanks

(Guest) 11:26 AM

an a foldable electric chair be taken on a plane

Eric Lipp 11:41 AM

Only manual powered devices are allowed inside the aircraft; Battery powered are required to go underneath but if the batteries are LiOn those batteries need to be removed and taken into cabin and chairs go underneath without batteries

(Guest) 11:28 AM

Should Manual wheelchairs have the brake on before leaving at the gate?

Eric Lipp 11:42 AM

No not necessarily but if you have butterfly brakes, the handler may not know how those work and we train to never never lift manual chairs by the wheels

(Guest) 11:29 AM

Mr. Lipp, where can we send recommendations to improve TSA checkpoints?

Eric Lipp 11:42 AM

ericlipp@opendoorsnfp.org

(Guest) 11:30 AM

If a person needs to sit in their power wheelchair until they board the plane, how can they facilitate best methods for safe storage in cargo (removal of joystick, cushion, etc. and bubble wrapping for bumps in cargo)?

Eric Lipp 11:44 AM

Learn how to transport your chair with the best odds to not break. Get to the airport early and start talking to carrier at check in at the front lobby, try not to wait until you get to the gate because people panic and have anxiety when a large power chair shows up 1 hour before flight. Although you are allowed to do that, it could come back to get you.

(Guest) 11:32 AM

can this organization help with solo disabled flyers?

Eric Lipp 11:44 AM

Of course, ericlipp@opendoorsnfp.org

(Guest) 11:35 AM

During our last trip home, we took the manual chair instead of the power. At each layover, something was messed up or I've watched from the window, 3-4 try to figure out how to release the brake. It got to

a point that the stewardess asked me to go help before they break something. At each stop we were told to file a claim.

Eric Lipp 11:45 AM

YES, file the claim, maybe print instructions on how to use the break because even when I train the handlers they do not see that many chairs per month so they may forget. I wish they all asked the passenger for help!! Better for you to direct than assume they know what they are doing. The regs say the need to do stuff but that does not match what you need to do.

(Guest) 11:35 AM

If city buses and bus stops have been required to meet ADA requirements by lowering to an accessibly height, retractable platforms, provide open areas for wheelchairs, and no steps up into the seating area, why can't airlines be held to the same standards for accessibility?

Eric Lipp 11:47 AM

The Air Carrier Access Act passed before the ADA in 1986 and airlines were sheltered. Under ACAA we have no individual right to action meaning we cannot sue a carrier for discrimination but can only complain, imagine what other minorities would do!!

(Guest) 11:35 AM

It might be worth mentioning that we should not purchase a premium seat for extra \$\$ if we plan to call the disability dept to assign a seat (i.e., bulkhead) after making the reservation. We will get the premium seat for no additional charge!

We travel with a service dog and wheelchair, so we always call to get the bulkhead.

Eric Lipp 11:47 AM

Great point and you have the right to the bulkhead with your dog!

(Guest) 11:36 AM

any tips for making plane travel more comfortable for disabled folks especially for long flights.

Eric Lipp 11:48 AM

Bring your own seat cushion and be sure to notify the flight attendants when you board that you will want the onboard aisle chair to go to the restroom.

(Guest) 11:36 AM

How would one access the handling training/distribute it I would love to present to the Texas Occupational Therapy Association

Eric Lipp 11:48 AM

ericlipp@opendoorsnfp.org

(Guest) 11:38 AM

Will the recoding be available afterward?

Rebecca Lopez 11:41 AM

<https://gov.texas.gov/organization/disabilities/training-webinars> Yes, it will be posted at this link. Feel free to check out our past webinars, too!

(Guest) 11:39 AM

Speaking of service animals and training..... Is anyone lobbying the airlines to allow service animals in training on a flight? (Not sure what the criteria should be, but of course there should be some!)

I train my son's service dogs and it would be helpful to bring the one in training with the older dog, before she does her first solo.

Service dogs in training can be in the airport per ADA, but not on the plane. That first flight is always a nail biter!

Eric Lipp 11:49 AM

All carriers will allow Service Animals in training, but you have to plan that ahead like a week ahead by calling the airlines. No one at the airport has the authority to allow service animals in training!!!

(Guest) 11:40 AM

How often are the pet relief areas cleaned and equipped with pickup bags, soap at the sink, if there is one, etc.?

Eric Lipp 11:50 AM

The smell is horrible and I agree! Please someone recommend to me a product I can get to the airports. ALL relief areas in all airports smell horrible!! I have seen Service Animals turn them down!!

(Guest) 11:42 AM

is there info like this for the Austin airport and other airports?

Eric Lipp 11:50 AM

Check the airports website they are all supposed to have links to access information.

(Guest) 11:42 AM

BRAVO!!! on the companion care rooms! LOVE IT!!!

Eric Lipp 11:50 AM

More and more to come, we have all the airports with changing tables listed on our website!

(Guest) 11:44 AM

is it okay to prepare a power chair for travel and get pushed in a manual chair? I mean significant preparation - akin to crating it up.

Eric Lipp 11:52 AM

You can do that or I recommend you stay in your own chair until you have to get in the aisle chair/scary chair. If you can do the transfer easy then wait. If not find some sort of device to mitigate sitting in that manual type of chair

(Guest) 11:44 AM

This webinar is giving me hope. I am so grateful for all the work this group is doing. And all that Houston Airports are doing for the disability community. I am very appreciative of all this information.

Eric Lipp 11:52 AM

THANKS!!

(Guest) 11:47 AM

I've been told it would be pointless for me to get TSA precheck. I'm a wheelchair user is this true?

Eric Lipp 11:53 AM

Well it speeds things up BUT we still get a pat down so it's not totally worth it unless you travel often. It is quicker but not equal to others and I am working on that. Along with not yelling out "Male assist at the gate."

(Guest) 11:50 AM

does service animals also include ESA animals?

Eric Lipp 11:53 AM

NO ESA not allowed onboard

(Guest) 11:53 AM

Does the IAH Tour or simulator only cover areas within the airport itself (Baggage Claim, TSA, gate) or does it also simulate waiting in the plane itself on the flight?

Eric Lipp 11:54 AM

Only MSP has simulator and Kansas City

(Guest) 11:54 AM

How can I connect with a CRO officer?

Eric Lipp 11:54 AM

ask any airline employee.