

Toll Free Hotline for air travelers with disabilities

The Toll Free Hotline for air travelers with disabilities has been in operation since August 2002 and is available for callers from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. Eastern Time, seven days a week. It is currently not being fully utilized. The Hotline serves two main purposes: (1) education and (2) assistance in resolving disability-related air travel problems.

Call the Toll Free Hotline 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. EST
1-800-778-4838 (Voice)
1-800-455-9880 (TTY)

- Many air travelers with disabilities are not aware of their rights and the Hotline, in part, exists as an educational service to inform air travelers with disabilities about their rights under the Air Carrier Access Act and the Department's implementing regulations 14 CFR Part 382 (Part 382). Hotline operators are well versed in the ACAA and Part 382 and can provide callers with on the spot general information about the rights of air travelers with disabilities. The Hotline operators also respond to requests for printed consumer information about air travelers' rights.
- The Hotline can also assist air travelers with disabilities in resolving real time or upcoming issues with air carriers. The purpose of "real-time" assistance is to facilitate airline compliance with DOT's rules by suggesting to the passenger and the airline involved alternative customer-service solutions to the problem. The airline remains responsible for deciding what action will be taken to resolve the issue in accordance with the ACAA and Part 382. Generally, if a caller has a real time problem or an upcoming issue with an air carrier, a Hotline Duty Officer will contact that air carrier and attempt to resolve the issue. For example, there have been a number of incidents in which Hotline Duty Officers have contacted air carriers and convinced them to accept service animals and motorized wheelchairs on board flights, to stow folding wheelchairs in the cabin, and to provide requested wheelchair assistance.

Air travelers who want information about the rights of persons with disabilities in air travel or who experience disability-related air travel service problems may call the Hotline to obtain assistance.

Air travelers who want DOT to investigate a complaint about a disability-related issue still must submit their complaint in writing via e-mail at airconsumer@ost.dot.gov or postal mail to:

Aviation Consumer Protection Division
U.S. Department of Transportation
400 7th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

To request flyers promoting the Hotline to distribute to your membership, contact (202) 366-1617 (voice) or (202) 366-0511 (TTY).