

# Accessible Travel

Traveling with a family member with special health care needs requires additional planning and preparation to minimize stress and challenges. It is important to remember that travel requires a degree of flexibility. Practicing transitions and previewing procedures may ease travel burdens.

## Air Travel

Some airports offer a “trial run” prior to the date of travel for families of individuals with special health care needs. This practice opportunity may include entering the airport, getting boarding passes, passing through security and boarding a plane. Contact your local airport to see if this service is offered.

Additionally, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) offers TSA Cares, a toll-free helpline designed to provide information about security procedures for travelers with disabilities. *Travelers are advised to call TSA Cares at 1-855-787-2227 at least 72 hours prior to departure* so TSA Cares can provide information and support, such as a Passenger Support Specialist or a TSA Customer Service Manager at the airport. More information about TSA Cares and procedures is available here:

<http://www.tsa.gov/traveler-information/travelers-disabilities-and-medical-conditions>.

For more information or concerns about air travel accessibility, visit Aviation Consumer Protection at <http://www.transportation.gov/airconsumer>.

Additional traveling tips are available via the links below:

- Mobility International USA tip sheet:

<http://www.miusa.org/resource/tipsheet/airtraveltips>

- The Department of Transportation has a rule defining the rights of passengers and the obligations of airlines under the Air Carrier Access Act:

<https://www.transportation.gov/airconsumer/passengers-disabilities>

- Airports, Airplanes & Autism:

<https://www.autismontheseas.com/images/Articles/ARTICLE - Air Travel CARD.pdf>

## Hotel Accommodations

In addition to making air travel arrangements, it is important to carefully select hotel and lodging establishments to ensure a comfortable stay. ADA regulations require accessible reservation procedures to ensure:

- Individuals with disabilities are able to make reservations during the same hours and in the same manners as those without.
- Accessible and inaccessible features of the hotel and guest rooms are identified and described in enough detail to allow an individual with special needs to assess whether a hotel meets his/her needs.
- Accessible guest rooms are held for use by individuals with disabilities until all other guest rooms of that type have been rented.

To learn more about these and other programs supporting families of children with special health care needs, contact Family Voices Indiana.  
**844-323-4636**  
**fvindiana.org**

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- Accessible guest rooms or specific types of guest rooms are able to be reserved upon request and that those reserved rooms are blocked and removed from all reservation systems.

- Specific accessible guest rooms, once reserved, are held for the reserving customers.

For more information and resources regarding accessible lodging, visit:

- ADA National Network: <https://adata.org/factsheet/accessible-lodging>
- Mobility Advisor: <http://www.mobility-advisor.com/wheel-chair-accessible-hotel.html>

### **Other Travel Information**

Before finalizing any travel plans, it is best to contact all vendors and attractions to ensure an enjoyable and accessible experience. Many amusement parks and attractions offer additional services and park guides to individuals with special health care needs. Be clear when detailing necessary accommodations and ask questions about accessibility and services offered.

Individuals wishing to visit National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands may be eligible for an Access Pass, a free lifetime pass for any US citizen or permanent resident who is medically determined to have a permanent disability that severely limits one or more life activities. There is a \$10 handling fee. For more information about Access Passes, visit: <https://store.usgs.gov/access-pass>.

### **Additional Resources**

National Aging and Disability Transportation Center promotes the availability and accessibility of transportation options for older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers. Visit <http://www.nadtc.org/> for more information.

Disability.gov offers a wealth of transportation resources highlighting information regarding all types of transit: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/>

The Independent Living Institute offers an extensive list of website links on a variety of accessible travel and leisure topics, including domestic and international destinations: <https://www.independentliving.org/about.html>