

November 23, 2010

What to Expect If You Are Blind or Visually Impaired and Use a Service Dog

If you are blind or visually impaired and use a service dog, both you and your dog will have to go through screening.

What Choices, If Any, Do You Have in the Screening Process?

You will not be eligible for screening using Advanced Imaging Technology (AIT).

You can choose to undergo Walk Through Metal Detector (WTMD) screening, or request a pat-down. A pat-down may be conducted in a private screening area by an officer of the same gender.

IF YOU AND YOUR DOG GO THROUGH THE WTMD TOGETHER AND ALARM, BOTH OF YOU WILL HAVE TO UNDERGO ADDITIONAL SCREENING.

1. To resolve the passenger alarm, the Transportation Security Officer (TSO) will conduct a pat-down to verify that no prohibited items are present.
2. Since your dog's harness most likely contains metal, the TSO will need to physically inspect your dog and its belongings (collar, harness, leash, backpack, vest, etc.) in order to resolve the alarm. Although the dog's harness will not be removed, it and other items that s/he may be carrying such as a backpack are subject to screening.

IF YOU AND YOUR DOG WALK THROUGH THE WTMD INDIVIDUALLY AND ONE OR BOTH OF YOU ALARM

Additional screening will be conducted as described above on whoever causes the alarm.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO FACILITATE THE SCREENING PROCESS

1. Inform the Security Officer that the animal accompanying you is a service animal and not a pet, and carry appropriate identification to verify this fact.
2. Inform the Security Officer how you and your dog will walk through the WTMD (walking together or with the service dog walking in front or behind you).
3. Keep control of your service animal while the TSO conducts the screening.

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WHAT ELSE SHOULD YOU EXPECT

The TSO should:

- Offer to assist you in placing your accessible property on the x-ray belt.
- Provide you with verbal instructions regarding the screening process.
- Allow you to stay with your dog throughout the entire screening process.
- Allow you to go to the front of the screening line if you choose to do so.
- Allow you to go to the front of the line to be re-screened when you have to leave the checkpoint to take your animal to a service animal relief area.

WHAT ARE SOME OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW

If you leave the sterile area to relieve your dog, you will have to undergo the entire screening process again. When you return to the security checkpoint, however, you are entitled to move to the front of the screening line to expedite the process.

Medication for service animals is permitted through security checkpoints once it has undergone x-ray or visual inspection screening. All liquids, gels, or aerosols will have to undergo Liquid Container Screening.