

A RESOURCE ON AIR TRAVEL FOR TRANSGENDER PEOPLE

YOUR RIGHTS

You have the right to:

- Travel in any gender you wish, whether or not it matches the gender marker on your identification. However, at the airport, you must present an ID with the same gender marker as the one that you provided to your airline when you made the reservation.
- Refuse the Whole Body Imaging but then you **will** be required to undergo an enhanced pat-down (see below for more information);
- Be screened in private;
- Take a traveling companion with you if you are taken for private or additional screening;
- Be patted down by a TSA agent who is the same gender as the gender you are presenting (if you are presenting as female, you will be patted down by a woman; if you are presenting as male, you will be patted down by a man);
- Request a supervisor to assist with your situation;
- Bind or wear breast forms, packers, wigs or hair pieces, or other prosthetic items (although these may trigger additional screening);
- Travel without any documentation from your doctor; however, the TSA suggests that transgender travelers carry a letter from their doctor.

TRAVEL TIPS

Here are some suggestions to help your travel go smoothly:

- Stay calm, and do what you feel is the best and safest option you are presented with.
- Be polite and clear with officers; never threaten them.
- If you have a choice (for example, if there are multiple lines open) select the metal detector instead of the whole body imaging machine.
- Think through what you will wear—baggy clothing, binders, breast forms, packers, and even underwire bras (all of which you are allowed to wear) can lead to additional screening (if you wear these items, consider requesting a pat-down from the beginning to save time).
- Be careful to follow the check point instructions so that you don't accidentally trigger additional screening (for example, setting off the metal detector because you've left your keys in your pocket).
- Decide in advance if you'd prefer the Whole Body Imaging or enhanced pat-downs; you should choose what feels safest and most comfortable to you. Here are the differences:

Whole Body Imaging

- Allows an agent in another room to see an image of your body without clothing; if your body is different than they expect, you may be subject to additional screening, such as a pat-down;
- The machine will detect prosthetics (such as breast forms or packers) and binders; you may decide not to wear these if you select the Whole Body Imaging machine, as they will likely trigger additional screening in the form of a pat-down or you may need to go to a private area for additional questions.

Enhanced Pat downs

- The new pat-downs include an agent aggressively touching your body through your clothes, which may include up your leg to your groin, between your buttocks, and under your breasts;
- Will detect binders; they may or may not detect prosthetics (such as breast forms and packers) depending on how realistic they look and feel.
- Agents may look or feel under a binder or prosthetic or ask you to remove it so that they can inspect it.