

# Exhibit A

U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
601 South 12th Street  
Arlington, VA 20598-6028



Transportation  
Security  
Administration

June 12, 2018

Satjeet Kaur  
Executive Director, The Sikh Coalition  
50 Broad Street, Suite 504  
New York, NY 10004

Dear Satjeet Kaur:

Thank you for contacting the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) regarding your concerns about TSA security screening of Sikh travelers at our Nation's airports. We also appreciate your expressing your concerns about the April 2017 screening of Canadian Cabinet Minister Navdeep Bains. This letter serves as follow-up to our May 11, 2018, teleconference attended by members of The Sikh Coalition and my staff.

TSA must ensure that all persons and their accessible property passing through the security checkpoint undergo screening to protect against the introduction of weapons, explosives, and incendiary devices into the sterile area of an airport and onboard an aircraft. To do this work, TSA is committed to treating members of the traveling public in a fair and lawful manner. As we have discussed, travelers may undergo additional screening of their clothing, hair, and/or headwear; however, in performing our screening activities, TSA neither uses nor condones unlawful profiling. Pursuant to TSA's Civil Rights Policy, Transportation Security Officers are prohibited from basing screening decisions on a traveler's protected status. All screening decisions are based on the interests of aviation security.

We regularly engage and conduct outreach with the Sikh American community, through organizations such as Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF), United Sikhs, and The Sikh Coalition. Within the past year, TSA has participated in more than 20 SALDEF "Know Your Rights" forums around the country to engage with the Sikh community.

With job aids and other training, we have in the past and continue today to update our frontline workforce regularly on appropriate religious/cultural knowledge and etiquette for engaging with the millions of passengers served by TSA, including the Sikh community. We also developed a *Know Before You Go* publication, which provides useful information for Sikh travelers and is enclosed with this letter.

We look forward to ongoing engagement with Harsimran Kaur, and we have added Sim J. Singh and Julian Darwall to our list of contacts for The Sikh Coalition.

We hope this information is helpful and we appreciate that you took the time to contact TSA. We strongly believe that our work together will continue to provide an improved traveler experience at TSA's security checkpoints.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christine Griggs". The signature is stylized with a large initial "C" and a long, sweeping underline.

Christine Griggs  
Acting Assistant Administrator

Enclosure: Know Before You Go – Sikh Travelers



Transportation  
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# Know Before You Go

Multicultural Branch, Office of Civil Rights & Liberties, Ombudsman, and Traveler Engagement

## **FOR SIKH TRAVELERS**

The Transportation Security Administration is committed to ensuring access and serving all persons with dignity and respect.

If you are enrolled in a trusted traveler program (TSA Precheck, Global Entry, NEXUS, SENTRI), enter your known traveler number or PASS ID when making airline reservations. When you check in for a flight, look for the TSA Precheck boarding pass indicator.

We are aware and respect that Sikh travelers may wear traditional clothing and/or carry religious items. Observant travelers may be wearing a Dastar (religious head covering/turban), Kara (metal bracelet), and a Kangha (wooden comb). The Kirpan is considered sharp object and must be in checked baggage, and cannot be worn or carried through the checkpoint. Please view [TSA.gov](https://www.tsa.gov) for the list of prohibited items.

### **WHAT TO KNOW**

- **Signing-Up for TSA Pre✓®**
  - Apply online at [TSA.gov](https://www.tsa.gov).
  - You will go through a background check where your identification and citizenship will be verified, among other things. Make sure all of the information on your identification is exactly the same. Inconsistent information can delay the process.
  - Then you'll get a Known Traveler Number (KTN). You have to enter in your KTN every single time you make a reservation, otherwise you will not get the benefit of TSA Pre✓®.
  - As one of many layers of TSA security, you may, on occasion, be randomly selected to receive additional screening.

- **Making Reservations:**

- TSA requires airlines to collect a traveler's full name, date of birth, gender, and redress number (if applicable) to significantly decrease the likelihood of watch-list misidentification. TSA verifies a traveler's identification through Secure Flight.
- You are encouraged to book your reservation such that the reservation information matches the full name, date of birth, and gender on the government issued identification (ID) that you will use for travel, as well as your Known Traveler Number (KTN) if you have signed-up for [TSA Pre✓<sup>®</sup>](#). For additional information about identification documents, visit the Identification page on [TSA.gov](#) [here](#).
- On arrival to the security checkpoint, you must present your government-issued ID that has the same name as the one on your boarding pass to the TSA Officer who will verify that the names on the ID and boarding pass match, and that the photo on the ID matches you.

- **TSA Cares:**

- TSA Cares is a toll-free helpline, 1-855-787-2227 or Federal Relay #711, available for travelers to ask questions about screening or to request help at the checkpoint. You may call from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. ET Monday through Friday, and 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. weekends and holidays.
- If you would like to arrange assistance at the checkpoint, TSA recommends that you call at least 72 hours ahead of travel so that TSA Cares has the opportunity to coordinate checkpoint support. Checkpoint support may include coordination with a Passenger Support Specialist (PSS). Each airport has different resources; therefore, the level of assistance you receive at the checkpoint will vary. Some airports have an individual who will call you to gather additional information and arrange a meeting time and place. Other locations notify the checkpoint manager of your itinerary, but no pre-contact is made.
- If you arrive at the checkpoint and have any concerns before, during, or after the screening process, you should immediately request to speak with a Supervisory Transportation Security Officer (STSO) or a PSS for assistance.

- **Planning Your Trip:**

- Arrive early to allow time for security screening.
- Communicate your specific needs (*e.g.*, turban, accommodations, delicate/fragile items, sensitive items or body areas) to the TSA Officer before screening begins to have a smooth airport screening experience.
- The 3-1-1 liquids rule for carry-ons allows each traveler to have liquids, gels, aerosols, creams and pastes in quantities of 3.4 ounces (100ml) or less per container; in 1 quart sized, clear, plastic, zip-top bag; and in one bag.
- This rule does not apply to medically-necessary liquids for travelers with disabilities and medical conditions. However, you will need to declare medically-necessary liquids for inspection at the checkpoint, and officers may need to conduct additional screening of these items.

- **Walk-Through Metal Detectors (WTMD):**

- You may be chosen to be screened by a Walk Through Metal Detector (WTMD), most commonly in the TSA Pre✓<sup>®</sup> lane.
- You cannot request WTMD screening instead of receiving screening via the Advanced Imaging Technology (AIT) or a pat-down.
- Learn more about Walk Through Metal Detectors at [TSA.gov](https://www.tsa.gov).

- **Advanced Imaging Technology (AIT):**

- You are eligible to be screened via Advanced Imaging Technology (AIT) if you are able to stand, walk through the machine, and stand holding your hands above your head for five to seven seconds without support. If there is an alarm, you may need to stand for additional time to resolve the alarm.
- If you do not want to be screened by AIT, or are ineligible, you may request a pat-down. A reminder - you may not request screening using the Walk Through Metal Detector.
- The AIT has software that protects individual privacy, eliminating traveler-specific images by auto-detecting potential threats, which are shown on a generic outline of a person on a screen located after you exit the machine. You can see this as well. The generic outline is identical for all travelers. If there is an alarm indicated on the generic outline, TSA Officers are trained to clear the alarm, not the individual. Additional screening is conducted to determine whether a prohibited item is present.
- You may always request a private screening at any time if a pat-down is needed to resolve an alarm.
- TSA is committed to ensuring effective and efficient security screening, while treating all travelers with dignity and respect.
- Learn more about [Advanced Imaging Technology](https://www.tsa.gov) at [TSA.gov](https://www.tsa.gov).

- **Pat-Downs:**

- You may opt-out of the screening technology and receive a pat-down.
- You will undergo a pat-down if any screening technology alarms, or if you are randomly chosen for pat-down screening.
- When conducted, the pat-down will be performed by a TSA Officer of the same gender as you present.
- You can request a private screening at any time and may be accompanied by a companion of your choosing.
- You can request a chair if you need to sit down.
- You may request that the TSA Officer change his or her gloves, prior to conducting the pat-down.

- A pat-down may include inspection of the head, neck, arms, torso, legs, and feet. This includes head coverings such as your turban, hair, and sensitive body areas such as breasts, groin, and the buttocks. You may be required to adjust clothing during the pat-down.
  - The TSA Officer will advise you of the procedure to help you anticipate any actions before you feel them.
  - Pat-downs require sufficient pressure to ensure detection.
    - Travelers wearing turbans may be subject to additional security screening, which may include a traveler self-conducted pat-down or officer-conducted pat-down. A swab test for traces of explosives may also take place. Any alarm will require additional screening by a TSA Officer.
    - You may request:
      - Private screening; and
      - That the TSA Officer change gloves prior to conducting the pat-down, and/or change ETD swabs prior to testing.
    - The private screening area should have a mirror available, if it is necessary that your turban be removed.
  - TSA Officers use the back of the hands for pat-downs over sensitive areas of the body. In limited cases, additional screening involving a sensitive area pat-down with the front of the hand may be needed to determine that a threat does not exist.
- Learn more about [pat-downs](#) at [TSA.gov](#).

### **Explosive Trace Detection (ETD) Screening:**

- TSA Officers may swab your personal property or hands, and then use ETD technology to test for explosive particles. This is not a drug test.
- Travelers may request a new swab prior to their hands being sampled.

### **WHAT TO REMEMBER:**

- **Packing:** Separate medically-necessary liquids and equipment from other belongings so they can be quickly identified and accessed for screening.
- **Known Traveler Number (KTN):** Enter your known traveler number when you book your flight to get TSA Pre✓® (PreCheck) benefits.
- **Companion:** You can be accompanied by a companion of your choosing to provide assistance during the screening process. However, the companion must be re-screened after providing assistance that involves physical contact.
- **Body Piercing:** Certain metal body piercings may cause the machines to alarm, which will result in additional screening. If additional screening is required, passengers may be asked to remove their body piercing.
- **Gift Wrapping:** You should refrain from wrapping gifts until arriving at your final destination. If a TSA Officer needs to inspect a wrapped gift, it may have to be unwrapped.

## TSA Pre✓® (PreCheck)

### If you have TSA Pre✓® (PreCheck) on your boarding pass:

- Proceed to the TSA Pre✓® (PreCheck) line;
- Present your boarding pass and government-issued ID to the TSA travel document checker;
- The TSA travel document checker will verify your identification and scan your boarding pass barcode and confirm that you are eligible for this lane.

### During the screening process:

- Generally, TSA Pre✓® lines are shorter and have shorter wait times. Find out when TSA Pre✓® lanes are available at your airport at [TSA Pre✓® Checkpoint Schedule](#).
- If eligible, you may be screened using Advanced Imaging Technology or Walk Through Metal Detector. If not, you may be screened using a pat-down.

### You are required to remove:

- Medically Necessary LGA over 3.4 ounces (from accessible property)

### You are not required to remove:

- Shoes
- Jackets
- 3-1-1 compliant bag
- Electronics the size of a cell phone and larger;
- CPAP/BPAP

It is **recommended** that you remove items from your pockets to expedite the screening process and minimize the need for additional screening.

## Standard Screening

### If you do not have TSA Pre✓® (PreCheck) on your boarding pass:

- Proceed to the standard screening line;
- Present your boarding pass and government-issued ID to the TSA travel document checker;
- The TSA travel document checker will verify your identity and scan your boarding pass barcode.

### During the screening process:

- Generally, travelers experience **longer lines** depending on the day, date, and time of travel.
- If eligible, you may be screened using Advanced Imaging Technology or Walk Through Metal Detector. If not, you may be screened using a pat-down.

### You are required to remove:

- Shoes;
- Jackets/Coats; and
- 3-1-1 compliant bag of liquids, gels, and aerosols.

### You are required to separate:

- Medically-necessary liquids;
- Electronics the size of a cell phone and larger;
- CPAP/BPAP

It is **recommended** that you remove items from your pockets to expedite the screening process and minimize the need for additional screening.

# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS AT THE AIRPORT

If you believe your civil rights have been violated, we encourage you to report TSA screening discrimination directly to the TSA and the Sikh Coalition via our mobile app, FlyRights. Download the app at: <http://fly-rights.org/>

You can also file complaints with the TSA online at: <https://www.tsa.gov/contact-center/form/complaints>

## BEFORE TRAVELING

- You may sign up for TSA Precheck at [TSA.gov](http://TSA.gov) to expedite the security checkpoint process. A background check will be performed, asking you questions about citizenship, and requesting additional information. If successful, you will be provided with a Known Traveler Number (KTN) for use every time you make a reservation.
- Make sure the details on the airline reservation match the information on your traveler's identification (ID) that will be used during travel.
- The TSA is aware that Sikh travelers may wear traditional clothing and/or carry religious items, such as a dastar, kara, and kangha.
- The kirpan must be checked into baggage and cannot be worn or carried through checkpoints.
- Remember to place salais, dastar pins, or other grooming tools in your carry on or checked luggage as they may set off metal detectors or other screening technology.

## AT THE AIRPORT

- Arrive 2 hours early for domestic flights & 3 hours early for international flights for security screening and communicate any specific needs to the TSA Officer prior to screening to ensure a smooth screening experience, including your turban, accommodations, delicate/fragile items, sensitive items, or body areas.
- You have a right to be accompanied by a travel companion of your choice during the screening process. The companion must be re-screened after providing assistance involving physical contact.
- The 3-1-1 liquids rule for carry-ons allows each traveler to have liquids, gels, aerosols, creams and pastes in quantities of 3.4 ounces (100ml) or less per container; in 1 quart sized, clear, plastic, zip-top bag; and in one bag. (This rule does not apply to medically-necessary liquids for travelers with disabilities and medical conditions. However, you will need to declare medically-necessary liquids for inspection at the checkpoint, and officers may need to conduct additional screening of these items.)



# SCREENING

# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS AT THE AIRPORT

1. It is best to thoroughly wash your hands with soap prior to entering TSA checkpoints to avoid any oils or contaminants on your hands. ( Please note some soaps may cause false positives due to oils or scents.)
2. You may be chosen for screening through either a Walk-Through Metal Detector (WTMD) or an Advanced Imaging Technology (AIT) machine. Advanced Imaging Technology, a full body scanner, screens passengers for metallic and/or non-metallic threats, such as guns or explosives, that may be concealed under a person's clothing. Any threats the technology scans will appear on a generic outline of a person on a screen, which is intended to preserve privacy.
3. You have a right to refuse the AIT machine and request a pat-down. You may not request screening through WTMD instead of AIT.
4. You may be required to adjust your clothing during the pat-down. The officer will advise you of procedures to help you anticipate actions that will be taken.
5. Travelers wearing turbans may be subject to additional security screening, including traveler self-conducted pat-downs or officer-conducted pat-downs, and swab tests for traces of explosives. You may request that the officer change their gloves and swabs prior to testing.
6. If either of the screening technologies alarms during the process, you will undergo a pat-down, which will be conducted by an officer of the same gender, as that which you present or declare. Pursuant to TSA's eligibility criteria, you may request a self pat-down of your turban, and the officer will do a swab test for traces of explosives on your hands, once the self pat-down is completed. You may also be chosen for a pat-down randomly. Should you decide that a TSA officer conduct the pat-down, you may request that they change gloves and swabs prior to doing so.
7. If you undergo a pat-down, you have a right to a private screening with a companion of your choice. Private screening areas must have a mirror available if removing your turban is necessary. You may request a chair if you need to sit.
8. If TSA requests that your turban be removed for an additional screening, it should only occur after all other screenings have been completed and resulted in positive indications. If you are asked to remove your turban, you have a right to a private screening with a companion of your choice. Private screening areas must have a mirror available if removing your turban is necessary. You may request a chair if you need to sit.
9. Sensitive areas such as breasts, groin, and buttocks are included in the pat-downs and pat-downs require sufficient pressure to ensure detection. TSA Officers use the back of their hands for pat-downs over sensitive areas of the body. In limited cases, additional screening involving a sensitive area pat-down with the front of the hand may be needed to determine that a threat does not exist.
10. If you arrive at a checkpoint & have any concerns before, during, or after the screening process, immediately ask to speak with a Supervisory Transportation Security Officer (STSO) or a Passenger Support Specialist (PSS).

**REQUEST DIRECT ASSISTANCE FROM TSA CARES:** Toll-free helpline: 1-855-787-2227, available for all questions about screening or help at checkpoints, from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. ET., Monday through Friday, & 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekends & holidays. If you would like to arrange assistance at checkpoints, TSA recommends calling at least 72 hours ahead of travel so TSA has the opportunity to coordinate support.

The Sikh Coalition does not endorse these TSA policies, and this document should not be construed as legal advice. It is merely providing information to Sikh travelers on TSA policies during the screening process.

