

TSA announces measures to implement gender-neutral screening at its checkpoints

<https://www.tsa.gov/news/press/releases/2022/03/31/tsa-announces-measures-implement-gender-neutral-screening-its>

National Press Release

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WASHINGTON – The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) announced new standards for screening transgender, nonbinary, and gender-nonconforming airline passengers at TSA checkpoints to improve the screening experience for all passengers.

“On this internationally recognized day for the transgender community, TSA is proud to announce significant initiatives as a direct result of close partnership with community stakeholders,” said TSA Administrator David Pekoske. “Over the coming months, TSA will move swiftly to implement more secure and efficient screening processes that are gender neutral, as well as technological updates that will enhance security and make TSA PreCheck® enrollment more inclusive. These combined efforts will greatly enhance airport security and screening procedures for all.”

Implementing enhanced screening technology: TSA identified an opportunity to improve the Advanced Imaging Technology (AIT) units in airport checkpoints and is working with the manufacturer on an algorithm update that increases accuracy and efficiency. By replacing the current, gender-based AIT system, this new, more accurate technology will also advance civil rights and improve the customer experience of travelers who previously have been required to undergo additional screening due to alarms in sensitive areas. TSA received \$18.6 million in funding within the FY22 Omnibus Appropriations to complete the development, testing, and deployment of algorithm updates to AIT units nationwide. Upon completion of successful testing, TSA will begin deploying the update to airports later this year.

Reducing the number of pat-down screenings: TSA will update its Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Transportation Security Officers (TSOs) to permit less invasive screening procedures for certain passengers who trigger the AIT scanner in a sensitive area. This change will reduce pat downs for TSOs and the traveling public without compromising security and will be in effect until the new gender-neutral AIT screening technology is deployed later this year.

Streamlining identity validation: In February 2022, TSA updated its checkpoint SOP to remove gender considerations when validating a traveler’s identification at airport security checkpoints. When travelers appear at the travel document checker podium for identity verification, gender information is irrelevant in determining that a traveler may proceed into the screening area.

Making TSA PreCheck more inclusive: TSA is updating its TSA PreCheck program to include an “X” gender marker option on its application. Once the necessary software update is completed, applicants will have the option to select “X” as an alternative gender category.

Beginning in early April 2022, TSA will allow TSA PreCheck enrollees to select their gender based on self-attestation, regardless of the gender on the person's identification documents. Current TSA PreCheck members may change the gender associated with their account by calling (855) 347-8371 weekdays, between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. ET and requesting help from a customer service representative. Changing a gender association in TSA PreCheck will have no effect on a member's expedited screening when arriving at the TSA checkpoint.

Improving communication with the traveling public: TSA has updated its [Transgender, Nonbinary, and Gender Nonconforming Passengers](#) web page to provide information to the traveling public on all gender-related updates, including changes to AIT screening protocols, identity-verification practices, and the TSA PreCheck program, as well as links to relevant sites for more comprehensive customer support. TSA will also be updating its TSA Cares web page to ensure travelers requiring special assistance receive the latest guidance in line with security procedures as well as information regarding how to request assistance on the date of travel.

Expanding airline partnerships to enhance the overall travel experience: As of March 31, 2022, two major domestic air carriers offer "X" and "U" (undisclosed) gender markers in their travel reservation systems. A third airline will offer the same later this year. Most of the remaining domestic air carriers apply gender changes upon request through their customer contact centers. TSA continues to work closely with air carriers across the nation to promote the use and acceptance of the "X" gender marker.

TSA launched the Inclusion Action Committee as an executive priority in August 2020 to review the agency's internal and external policies, practices, and procedures, and to make recommendations for improvement. This task force has been instrumental in helping expedite various efforts throughout TSA that directly benefit minority and LGBTQIA+ communities.

As efforts listed here become operational, TSA will continue to remain in close coordination with key community stakeholders and will continue to announce updates.

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