



Airports are administered by the cooperation of numerous federal, state, city and private personnel and, as an airline passenger, you are entitled to courteous, respectful and non-stigmatizing treatment.

When planning your trip, be sure to check all Department of Homeland Security (DHS) - Transportation Security Administration (TSA) regulations and rules at [www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov).

The TSA is responsible for the security of all of the nation's transportation systems.

## Muslim-Friendly Travel Advice

### Departure:

- Confirm your flight information in advance, and arrive 2-3 hours early for international and 1-2 hours early for domestic flights.
- If you are unable to print your boarding pass at an electronic kiosk and are asked to see a desk agent resulting in a delay, you may ask the desk agent for the reason in delay and speak to a supervisor for further information.
- **While preparing to leave the U.S., the following guidelines can make TSA checkpoints quicker and easier:**
  - All passengers are required to remove shoes.
  - Wearing un-laced, easy to slip on shoes make the process easier.
  - Pack extra plastic sealable bags in which you can place your cell phone, wallet, keys, camera and other items you carry. You can also place your jewelry and other accessories in a bag on your carry-on. The bags will keep all items together and ensure that you walk through the metal detectors hassle-free.
  - Follow the TSA 3-1-1 guidelines for all liquid items in your carry-on luggage.
  - Wear clothing that is comfortable, easy to remove and layer when necessary. TSA requires all jackets and sweaters to be removed.
  - For women who observe the hijab – the hijab should not be bulky (worn as close to one's head as possible to avoid bulky appearance) and be simple to manage - one piece if possible. Avoid using straight pins and metallic butterfly clips or any other metallic pieces.

CBP officers are authorized to select individuals for secondary screening because of “individualized behavior” patterns, because a person arrived from a high risk country, or due to a random referral through one of the many lists managed by government agencies.

**CAIR LA encourages community members to report any positive or negative experiences to our office.**

You may also file a specific complaint with the DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties by calling (800) 644-8360 or (202) 401-1474 or via email at [civil.liberties@dhs.gov](mailto:civil.liberties@dhs.gov). For more information, visit [www.dhs.gov/crcl](http://www.dhs.gov/crcl)

Date
Airport Name
Your Name
Contact #
Fight Number
Airlines
Officer/Security Person's Name
Agency
Officer/Security Parson ID#
Supervisor Name
Witness Name
Witness #
Statement of Facts



# Know Your Rights: Travel

**This guide is meant for American Muslims travelling internationally. We encourage you to know your responsibilities and protect your rights and report potentially discriminatory incidents you experience during your travel.**

## Secondary Searches

**There might be situations where individuals are identified for further searches - also known as secondary screening or searches.**

- Please remember that you are required to comply with the TSA officer's instructions. TSA screeners have the authority to conduct a secondary screening of you or your bags.
- If "ssss" is not written on your boarding pass and the metal detector did not sound off, ask for the reason you have been selected for further screening.
- A secondary screening of you must be done by a person of the same gender, if you so request, and you may ask that it be conducted in a private room.
- If bulky clothing - the headscarf, for instance - is identified for secondary screening, you may advise the screening officer that she may only pat down your head. You may alternatively opt to pat down your headscarf yourself and have your hands chemically swiped, or to take it off in a private room.
- Many airports now utilize whole body imaging scanners. Full body scanners reveal the complete body figure and form, irrespective of the clothes one wears. The images are visible by a TSA officer in another room regardless of the gender of the person. You have the right to request an alternative secondary search procedure based on your religious beliefs - such as a pat down or wand instead.
- While flying, the pilot has the right to refuse to fly a passenger if he or she believes the passenger is a threat to the safety of the flight or other passengers. The pilot's decision must be reasonable and based on observations of your behavior, not your skin color, name, religion or other stereotypes.

## Arrival

In order to enter or re-enter the United States, travelers must go through two processes at U.S. ports of entry: immigration and customs. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is a department within the DHS responsible for both aspects at the point of entry.

CBP officers are required to verify the identification of travelers, their entry into the United States, and that travelers have not been engaged in illicit activity that poses a threat to national security.

It is critical to present valid documentation - valid passport, proper immigration paperwork- if you are seeking admission into the country.

CBP is also granted the authority to search all persons, baggage and merchandise arriving into the United States. This includes the search of files on laptops, cell phones and other electronic devices. Follow all CBP regulations on reporting luggage and currency as well as be informed of prohibited items rules. You may check the CBP website for detailed information: ([www.cbp.gov/](http://www.cbp.gov/)).

CBP officers are authorized to select individuals for secondary screening because of "individualized behavior" patterns, because a person arrived from a high risk country, or due to a random referral through one of the many lists managed by government agencies.

### It is Important to Remember the Following:

- Recall that racial and ethnic profiling violates the Department of Justice and Department of Homeland Security's stated policies, as well as Constitutional equal protection guarantees.
- If you are a U.S. citizen, you have an unqualified right to re-enter the United States. If you are a green card or visa holder, you may be refused entry if you are deemed inadmissible due to violating the terms of immigration status. Non-citizens will also be asked for fingerprinting and possible DNA swabbing.

- Regardless of the reason for your secondary examination, it is important to remain polite and calm during the inspection process. Remember to request the officers to identify themselves and the agency they are with and, if possible, to explain the process. If you have a connecting flight, inform the officer. However, it is a good idea to schedule a few hours between your flight arriving into the U.S. and your connecting flight. This way, you will not feel time-pressured into answering any questions that you might deem inappropriate and unwilling or uncomfortable answering.
- You are required to answer any questions that establish your identity and the legitimacy of your recent travels. You are not required to answer any questions that are inappropriately based on your religious beliefs, political views, employment and salary, or questions completely irrelevant to your identification, citizenship/immigration status, or recent travels, or you feel uncomfortable answering. You may politely but firmly inform officers that you are uncomfortable with their line of questioning.

