



## Access to Air Travel

All airports and airlines in the European Union are required to provide assistance to passengers with a disability or reduced mobility. A passenger may have reduced mobility because of their age, an illness or a temporary injury, for example a broken arm or leg.

### Key Information

- You are entitled to assistance at all stages of your journey, right from the point of booking your ticket.
- The special assistance must be provided free of charge.
- You should request assistance at least 48 hours before you travel to ensure all assistance needed, including any relevant equipment, is available.
- An airline can only refuse a booking if the size of the plane or its doors prevents a person from boarding, or for safety reasons, for example, if a passenger who intends to travel alone is unable to fasten or unfasten their seatbelt unaided.

### Types of assistance include:

- Help points in arrival areas, including terminal entrances, car parks, bus and rail stops so passengers can call for assistance;
- Help with checking-in;
- Passengers can request for security screening to be carried out in a private area out of view of other passengers.
- Help using flight information screens;
- Help getting around the airport;
- Help boarding the plane, on-board the plane, disembarking; and
- At your destination airport –help to retrieve your baggage, through immigration and custom procedures and to a designated point such as the airport car park, airport train or bus station or a connecting flight.





The Consumer Council

### How can I request assistance?

If you require assistance when travelling you should inform the company you make your booking with.

If you arrange your own flight connection by booking tickets with two different airlines, make sure you contact both airlines.

If you do not request special assistance in advance, the airline and airport are still required to do their best to help you but specialist equipment may not be available.

### Mobility Equipment

In addition to medical equipment you can carry up to two pieces of mobility equipment free of charge.

There is a limit of approximately £1,000 compensation for damaged mobility equipment. Therefore, make sure your travel insurance can cover the cost of any damage.

### Travelling with an assistance dog

Your assistance dog can travel in the cabin with you free of charge.

Make sure you have the necessary paperwork to identify your dog as a trained assistance dog. Before you travel check with the airline about the specific documents required for this.

If you are travelling outside the UK you should contact the Department for Agriculture and Rural Development by email [tradeadminpost@dardni.gov.uk](mailto:tradeadminpost@dardni.gov.uk) or telephone 028 7744 2141 for information on what steps you must take before travelling.





### What if things go wrong?

If you are dissatisfied with the service provided you should contact the airline or airport terminal.

If you remain dissatisfied with the response or if you do not feel comfortable raising the complaint with the service provider yourself, you can contact the Consumer Council in the first instance. We have the power to investigate the matter on your behalf.

### Further advice and information

More detailed information can be found in the Consumer Council's Access to Air Travel guide, which can be accessed via the Consumer Council website along with easy read and audio formats.

<http://www.consumerCouncil.org.uk/transport/access-to-air-and-sea/>

You can contact the Consumer Council for more information or to make a complaint on 0800 121 6022 or [contact@consumerCouncil.org.uk](mailto:contact@consumerCouncil.org.uk)

