

New U.S. rule mandates easy access to airplane bathrooms by people using wheelchairs

July 27 2023, by Steven Reinberg



Airlines will now be required to make bathrooms on their planes more accessible for the disabled, the U.S. Department of Transportation announced Wednesday.

The [new rule](#), authorized under the [Air Carrier Access Act](#), requires [airlines](#) to make lavatories on any new single-aisle aircraft large enough to allow a [passenger](#) with a disability and an attendant to maneuver within the aircraft's lavatory.

"Traveling can be stressful enough without worrying about being able to access a restroom; yet today, millions of [wheelchair users](#) are forced to choose between dehydrating themselves before boarding a plane or avoiding air travel altogether," U.S. Transportation Secretary [Pete Buttigieg](#) said in an agency [news release](#). "We are proud to announce this rule that will make airplane bathrooms larger and more accessible, ensuring travelers in wheelchairs are afforded the same access and dignity as the rest of the traveling public."

Other new DOT measures that aim to increase disabled access in transportation will:

- Modernize airport terminals, including adding [wheelchair](#) ramps and accessible restrooms.
- Fund programs to improve access in train and subway stations so people who use wheelchairs, push strollers or can't easily navigate [stairs](#) can reliably use the rail systems in their communities.
- Lay the groundwork for a future rule that would allow passengers to stay in their own wheelchairs when they fly.
- Call for better training of airline staff who assist passengers with disabilities or handle battery-powered wheelchairs or scooters.

More information: For more on airline passenger rights, see the [U.S. Department of Transportation](#).

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