

Traveling with Special Needs and TSA

Dear M&L Special Needs Families,

While traveling to Florida for a Disney vacation, a family's 7 year old son with autism was detained at a security check point due his tracking bracelet (Loudoun County Sherriff's department tracking system) triggering an alarm. The individual was separated from his family and had to be assessed by a TSA manager. This process took at least 15 minutes, the whole time the individual was separated from his family. Needless to say, this was a very traumatic experience for both the individual and the family. On a good note, they were able to make it to Disney and have a great time.

On the way home, the individual began to get upset while in line waiting to go through security. This time, the family was approached by a TSA Cares officer. The officer was able to take the entire family aside and do a separate check with the understanding of their special circumstances. While going through there screening, the mom explained the incident that occurred at the DC airport.

The officer then informed her of the TSA CARES program. This program was set up to provide families and individuals with special needs assistance with the screening process. If a family that has individuals with special needs is going to travel they should call 855-787-2227 up to 72 hours prior to flight. A

TSA Cares officer will then meet them at screening area and assist with modifying the screening process as needed. As frustrating and traumatic as this whole experience was for the family they were glad to identify this resource. The family is trying to get this information (TSA CARES) out to as many families as possible so that another family will not have to go through this. Here is the website -

<http://www.tsa.gov/traveler-information/travelers-disabilities-and-medical-conditions>

TSA CARES Program:

1-855-787-2227

<http://www.tsa.gov/traveler-information/travelers-disabilities-and-medical-conditions>

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Serving people with complex medical needs and disabilities and their families since 1983.

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