



Northwest Airlines Accommodations

(taken directly from the Northwest Airline's website)

Customers with Disabilities

Northwest Airlines is dedicated to providing convenient and comfortable service for all our passengers. We believe our services and aircraft should be accessible to all individuals.

The following information is provided to assist people with disabilities in planning a trip with us.

If your travel includes a carrier other than Northwest or Northwest Airlink, check directly with that carrier for your travel needs as different policies and procedures may apply. Northwest Airlink includes flights operated by Mesaba Aviation and Pinnacle Airlines.

Some Northwest designated flights are operated by our partner airlines. Services presently provided by Northwest Airlines may not be available on these designated flights. Please check with your travel agent or Northwest directly so we can verify our partner accessibility and try to accommodate your needs.

Planning

Pre-planning and Advance Notice

We recommend that all our customers make their reservations as early as possible. Although we do not require information concerning the extent of your disability, the more information we have about you and any special requirements you have, the better prepared we are to meet your needs when you arrive at the airport.

We do require forty-eight (48) hours advance notice and one (1) hour advance check-in on the day of departure if you:

- are traveling on a stretcher
- need oxygen during flight
- require the use of an onboard wheelchair for lavatory purposes
- are transporting an infant in an incubator
- require respirator hook-up to an aircraft's electrical power, where available
- require the packaging of a wheelchair battery for shipment as checked luggage, when necessary
- are traveling with a group of ten (10) or more people with disabilities.



Seat Assignments

With the exception of emergency exit rows, you may choose anywhere you want to sit onboard the aircraft. We recommend that you select your desired seating when you make your reservation. Seats can be reserved up to ninety (90) days prior to departure.

Disability Seating Accommodations

Northwest offers specific seating accommodations for our customers with disabilities. You may choose to sit in a bulkhead seat or a movable aisle armrest seat that may better accommodate you and your disability.

Northwest has set aside several seats on all Northwest operated aircraft solely for certain customers with disabilities to provide specific seating accommodations. Some of our Airlink flights also have seats set aside as well.

Certain customers with a disability may reserve one of these seats; these customers include someone:

- Who uses an aisle chair to access the aircraft and cannot readily transfer over a fixed aisle armrest
- Traveling with a disability and a person assisting that individual with functions during the flight
- Traveling with a service animal
- With a fused or immobilized leg

To reserve one of these designated Disability Seats, please contact your travel agent or Northwest/KLM reservations at 1-800-225-2525 at least twenty-four (24) hours before departure.

Medical Certificates

Under certain conditions, Northwest may require you to present a medical certificate from your doctor. These conditions include:

- travel on a stretcher
- travel in an incubator
- need for oxygen
- having a communicable disease or infection
- having a medical condition that gives reasonable doubt that you can complete the flight safely without extraordinary medical assistance during flight

When a medical certificate is requested by Northwest for any of the above reasons, it must be issued by a certified medical doctor within 10 days of flight.

When oxygen service is requested, the doctor must also state the need for oxygen and the rate of flow per minute required.



If you have a communicable disease or infection, the medical certificate must also state any conditions or precautions that Northwest must take to prevent transmission of the disease or infections. The certificate must also state that the disease or infection would not be communicable to other persons on the flight.

Every effort is made to accommodate your travel needs while taking into consideration the health and safety of other customers.

Attendants

Northwest does not provide escorts or personal attendants. Therefore, you must be accompanied by a personal attendant to see to your needs if you are traveling in a stretcher. Children in incubators also need to have a personal attendant to assist them during flight.

Medical Equipment Power

Medical devices are required to be self powered for use onboard. Passengers with devices that cannot be sustained without aircraft power are welcome to contact Northwest reservations. Note: Most NW aircraft electrical systems are incompatible with medical devices.

Advance notification is required, including information specifying the manufacturer and model number of the device so that we can be sure that it does not interfere with aircraft navigation or communication systems. Dry or gel cell batteries are acceptable for operation of life support systems/equipment on the aircraft. Wet cell batteries are not permitted in the cabin of the aircraft for safety reasons.

Northwest Equipment Services

Northwest Wheelchair Service

Airport Wheelchairs

Northwest has wheelchairs available for use at each of its airport locations. Most stations start their day with several wheelchairs available at curbside, ticket counter and gate locations and replenish these throughout the day.

If no wheelchairs are in view upon arrival, make a verbal request to the skycap or customer service personnel who will secure one as soon as possible.

Aislechairs

Northwest also has available a specially designed wheelchair for our non-ambulatory customers to use in reaching their seat when boarding and deplaning our aircraft. We call these special wheelchairs "aislechairs" because they fit the aisles of our aircraft.



Most stations have aislechairs available in each jetway or gate area where the transfer from a customer's personal wheelchair can be made.

Onboard Wheelchairs

Every Northwest aircraft has an onboard wheelchair. These wheelchairs are specially designed to fit the aisle of our aircraft and may be used by our customers to move to and from the lavatory.

Our flight attendants are trained on the use of this wheelchair and will assist you with its use. However they are not required to lift or carry you.

This onboard wheelchair is not used outside the aircraft and will always remain onboard since our fleet cannot take off without this equipment.

Alternative Boarding Devices

Some of our stations do not have boarding bridges, instead stairways are provided for boarding. If you are unable to ascend or descend steps, please let us know and we will provide an alternative boarding device.

The stations include: Palm Springs (PSP), and San Jose (SJC), California; Steamboat Springs (HDN) and Vail (EGE), Colorado; Grand Cayman (GCM), Cayman Islands, and Montego Bay (MBJ), Jamaica. In addition, some of our seasonal stations may not have boarding bridges.

Northwest Electric Cart Service

Electric carts are available at our Minneapolis/St. Paul hub as well as other airports. Note that electric carts are not available at all locations, including Detroit and Memphis hubs.

These carts are available for use by our semi-ambulatory customers when walking longer distances is a problem. These carts will pick-up and drop-off customers throughout the terminal.

Please note that electric cart service can not be requested in advance. Electric carts in Minneapolis/St. Paul run on a "bus-stop" system. Carts are designated which concourses they serve: C, D, F and G. There are cart stops at each gate. Carts run every 4-7 minutes.

Accessibility and Assistance

Assistance at the Airport

Northwest's customer service and contract service personnel are available to assist customers with disabilities in boarding and deplaning using our own equipment.

We provide transfer service on and off the aircraft using boarding chairs called aislechairs which are uniquely designed for narrow aircraft aisles.



If you are making a connection, we will provide assistance between flights using our aislechairs, regular wheelchairs and electric carts. If needed, we will make available your own wheelchair from the aircraft cargo compartment for your use during your layover. Please keep in mind that any required assembly and disassembly and limited time between flights often make this option impractical. Consider leaving your own personal wheelchair checked and take advantage of our wheelchair and/or electric cart service.

At your destination airport, we can provide deplaning assistance and make available your personal wheelchair at the gate or at the baggage claim, whichever you prefer. If you choose to have your wheelchair delivered at the luggage claim, we will provide wheelchair service to that area.

If you are picking up a customer requiring assistance, please approach the front counter for a gate pass so you can meet your party at the gate.

Airport Accessibility

Airport Facilities

Northwest leases ticket and gate counter space from local airport authorities. We work closely with these authorities to ensure that our services are available to everyone.

Improved Ticket Counter and Gate Podiums

As Northwest installs or renovates ticket counter space, we are committed to assuring increased accessibility for people with disabilities. Gate areas are also included.

Flight Information Displays

At most Northwest airport locations, we have television monitors that display flight information for all our customers.

Gate Information Displays

At our gate areas, we have LED (Light Emitting Diode) displays that indicate specific flight information. Gate agents also provide verbal flight information including boarding announcements and any flight irregularity.

Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD)

TDDs are available at most locations and are appropriately marked. Our customer service personnel will be happy to assist you in locating them.

Security Screening

Airport security screening is required for all customers. A hand search can be performed for people with disabilities and private screenings are available upon request.

Assistance Inflight



Our flight attendants are highly qualified to see to the safety and comfort of all our customers during the flight. They have also been trained to provide limited additional service to people with disabilities.

Northwest flight attendants can assist you in attaining and using an onboard wheelchair and stowing or retrieving carry-on items. They can also help you take oral medication, identify food items on your meal tray, and help open packages.

Flights attendants are not permitted to assist with eating or personal hygiene. They cannot lift or carry you, and they cannot provide medical services such as giving injections. If your medical condition requires others to provide this type of care, consider traveling with a ticketed companion who can see to these needs during the flight.

Northwest Aircraft Accessibility

Northwest prides itself on making its aircraft accessible for our customers with disabilities. Accessible features of our fleet include movable aisle armrests, wheelchair stowage locations, on-board wheelchairs and accessible lavatories.

Movable Aisle Armrests

Northwest provides movable aisle armrest seats so customers who use an aislechair to board the aircraft can more easily transfer from an aisle into their seat.

On most of our aircraft, all rows in the coach cabin have movable aisle armrest seats with the exception of the bulkhead and exit rows. On other aircraft types, we have a limited number of movable aisle armrest seats. On select aircraft, our first class seats may feature movable aisle armrest seats.

Priority Wheelchair Stowage Location

Northwest provides a designated location on each aircraft for priority stowage for at least one (1) folding personal wheelchair. Customers wishing to use this priority stowage location must take advantage of our pre-boarding process. Wheelchairs stowed in this location have priority over other carry-on items except those of through passengers.

In addition to this designated location, wheelchairs may be stowed in closets, overhead bins and underneath the seat.

Please note that stowage locations may not accommodate all sizes of wheelchairs.

Onboard Wheelchair

Every Northwest aircraft has an on-board wheelchair. These wheelchairs are specially designed to fit the aisle of our aircraft and may be used by our customers to move to and from the lavatory.



Our flight attendants are trained on the use of this wheelchair and will assist you with its use. However they are not required to lift or carry you.

This onboard wheelchair is not used outside the aircraft and will always remain on board since our fleet cannot take off without this equipment.

Accessible Lavatories

Northwest's wide-body (dual aisle) aircraft, including all Boeing 747-200 and select Boeing 747-400 (ship numbers 6310-6316) aircraft, feature an on-board wheelchair accessible lavatory.

Airlink Aircraft Accessibility

Our Airlink fleet consists of :

Compass (CP) operated:

- Embraer 175 (E75)

Mesaba (XJ) operated:

- Canadair Regional Jet (CRJ-200 and CRJ-900)
- Saab 340

Pinnacle Airlines (9E) operated:

- Canadair Regional Jet (CRJ-200)

Movable Aisle Armrests

The following Airlink aircrafts have movable aisle armrests:

- Canadair Regional Jet (CRJ-200 and CRJ-900)
- Embraer 175 (E75)
- Saab 340

Wheelchair Stowage Locations

None of the aircrafts have a designated location for priority wheelchair stowage.

On-Board Wheelchair Availability

The Embraer 175 and Canadair Regional Jet CRJ-900 have a wheelchair available on-board.



Accessible Lavatories

None of our Airlink aircrafts have a fully wheelchair accessible lavatory. All aircraft have assist handles or bars.

Complaint Resolution Official (CRO)

If you encounter problems when traveling on Northwest, feel free to ask our Northwest customer service personnel for a Complaint Resolution Official (CRO).

Our CROs have been specially trained in sensitivity and awareness, as well as applicable Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Department of Transportation (DOT), Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations and legislation. They will be glad to respond to your concerns. Our CROs are available during operating hours at all airport locations.

Special Needs

Service Animals

Northwest Airlines welcomes service animals, such as dogs and monkeys, trained to assist customers with mobility, visual and hearing disabilities in the cabin. There are no fees for the transportation of service animals, either in the cabin or as checked luggage. It is Northwest policy not to require health certificates for service animals, although their destination may require them.

A service animal should be seated on the floor at the customer's feet and cannot block an aisle or other area that must remain clear for emergency evacuation. For this reason, exit row seating is not permitted.

A harness, tag or vest indicating status as a service animal will be helpful in distinguishing them to airport personnel. It may also be helpful to provide written documentation or identification cards that the animal is a service animal. Credible verbal assurance that the animal is providing a service to assist with a disability will suffice however, should inquiry be made.

Emotional support animals for the customer's emotional well being are accepted in the cabin. All conditions for service animals apply in addition to the following requirement for documentation. Documentation dated within the past 12 months on letterhead from a mental health professional stating that:

1. The passenger has a mental health related disability. The documentation does not need to specify the type of mental health disability (e.g. panic attacks).
2. Having the animal accompany the passenger is necessary to the passenger's mental health or treatment or to assist the passenger with his or her disability.
3. The individual providing the assessment of the passenger is a licensed mental health professional and the passenger is under his or her professional care.

Customers with service animals may choose to sit anywhere they wish (except in exit rows) they are not required to sit in the bulkhead or in window seats.



Service animals and emotional support animals may be held in the customer's lap during flight, including taxi, take-off and landing, provided it is no larger than a lap-child.

There is no limit to the number of service animals that may be carried on any one flight (except in exit rows).

If your travel includes destinations outside the United States, be aware that some countries have restrictions on animals transiting through or destined for their country, including service animals. Our reservations personnel will be glad to check with the countries on your itinerary for any restrictions that apply.

Medicine

You should carry your medication with you onboard the flight in your carry-on luggage. In fact, you should never put your medication in your checked luggage.

Our aircraft do not have refrigerators onboard, so please plan accordingly.

Also, if you use needles to inject medication, it is helpful to have your doctor's prescription with you just in case security officers have questions.

Customer-owned Oxygen Units

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations prohibit use of personal oxygen units during flight. However, the FAA has recently issued guidelines for use of certain portable oxygen concentrators onboard.

With advance notice to NWA Reservations and a Doctors prescription, Northwest allows the use of the following Portable Oxygen Concentrators onboard:

- Inogen One
- AirSep FreeStyle
- AirSep LifeStyle - only if equipped with the sticker: "RTCA/DO-160D" Section 21 Category M Compliant"
- SeQual Eclipse
- Respironic EverGo

To rent a portable oxygen concentrator, please visit www.oxygentogo.com/nwa or call toll free 1-866-692-0040.

Again, once your travel plans are confirmed, please contact [Reservations](#) to let us know you'll be using your approved portable oxygen concentrator device during your flight. Be sure to bring a medical certificate from your doctor to confirm the need for a portable oxygen concentrator during flight and required liters per minute (LPM) flow rate.



If you are a constant user, meaning you will need to use your portable oxygen concentrator during taxi, take-off and landing, you will need to be seated in a location that does not block access to the aisle or exits. For example, a window seat on a narrow body aircraft. Also you may not be seated in an exit or bulkhead seat (except on aircraft with soft-divider bulkheads) if you are using a portable oxygen concentrator.

Please note that aircraft electrical power is not available for portable oxygen concentrators. Therefore, make sure to have enough batteries for the duration of the flight as well as any unanticipated delays.

You may bring other portable oxygen concentrators with you but not use them during flight.

Since portable oxygen concentrators are considered assistive devices, they do not count toward carry-on limits. They must be able to fit underneath the seat or in an overhead compartment. You may also bring oxygen containers along as checked luggage, provided they are empty and free of pressure. Oxygen tanks must be declared before they are checked in so Northwest agents may verify that tanks are purged.

Please note that portable oxygen systems containing liquid oxygen are not accepted onboard any Northwest, Mesaba or Pinnacle flights.

Oxygen Service

We provide supplemental oxygen service for a fee on most flights with a minimum of forty-eight (48) hours advance notice. This gives us time to ship oxygen containers to your departing city. The aircraft's emergency oxygen cannot be used for this purpose.

Medical oxygen is not available on Pinnacle operated flights.

Due to limited supply, once your travel plans are confirmed, please contact [Reservations](#) to request supplemental oxygen as soon as possible (preferably at time of ticket purchase). You will need to present a medical certificate from your doctor when checking-in for your flight to confirm the oxygen request and required liters per minute (LPM) flow rate.

We provide oxygen for inflight use only, not for use at airport locations. You will need to make your own arrangements if you need ground oxygen at your departing, connecting or arrival cities. Allow enough time, at least one (1) hour prior to departure, to check-in for your flight. If you check-in less than one hour prior to departure, we will make reasonable efforts to accommodate you without delaying the flight.

Each oxygen unit contains 1000 cc compressed oxygen, a regulator flow valve, a flow rate gauge, a pressure gauge, a disposable mask and/or a nose cannula.



Life Support Equipment

A customer dependent on life support equipment may bring such items into the cabin for use during the flight provided their equipment can fit underneath a seat, or can be strapped into an adjoining seat. Should it be necessary to use a seat for this equipment, the seat needs to be purchased at the applicable fare.

Examples of life support equipment are: incubators, respirators, nebulizers and ventilators.

Wet cell batteries are not permitted in the cabin of the aircraft for safety reasons. Dry or gel cell batteries are acceptable for operation of life support systems/equipment on the aircraft.

Many of Northwest's aircraft have the capability to hook-up personal life support systems to aircraft power for operation. Advance arrangements are necessary to determine accessibility of aircraft and to assign specific seats to accommodate the electrical power hook-up.

Where onboard electrical connections are available, a passenger's life support equipment must be compatible with 115 volt 400 HZ power. A dry or gel cell battery should be brought along as backup since aircraft electrical power is not available at all times dependent on operational needs to maintain aircraft safety. In addition, electrical power is subject to power surges during hookup and unhooking from ground power.

Customer Personal Wheelchair Equipment

Customer's Personal Wheelchair

Northwest transports all types of customer personal wheelchairs including folding, collapsible or non-folding manual wheelchairs, electric/battery powered wheelchairs and electric powered carts.

Forty-eight (48) hours advance notice and one (1) hour check-in on day of departure is needed for any electrical equipment as we want to ensure meeting all dangerous goods handling requirements.

Cabin Stowage

Customers who take advantage of pre-boarding may request to stow their personal wheelchair onboard. Wheelchairs stowed onboard have priority over other carry-on items except those of through customers. Not all stowage locations accommodate all sizes of wheelchairs.

Checking Your Wheelchair

Your wheelchair can be checked at the ticket counter and/or the gate. Powered equipment that may require disassembly is appreciated being checked at the ticket counter so that proper handling can be arranged. You may use Northwest's wheelchair equipment after checking your personal wheelchair.

Checking and returning of personal wheelchairs at the gate area during departure and upon arrival can be arranged.



Please advise us in advance if you prefer to use your own personal wheelchair at your connecting airport. Due to time constraints and the reassembly and disassembly of your wheelchair, this service may not be feasible during your layover. We recommend that you take advantage of our wheelchair service instead.

Manual Wheelchairs

Customers' manual wheelchairs may be checked for stowage in the cargo compartment at the ticket counter or at the gate. Please provide as much information to our employees to ensure proper transportation. Detachable items such as seat cushions and footrests can be carried onboard or tagged and stowed with the wheelchair in the cargo compartment.

Customers who pre-board may request to have their chair stowed in any accessible closet. Northwest provides at least one (1) priority wheelchair stowage location in the cabin of all aircraft. Not all stowage locations accommodate all wheelchairs.

Powered Wheelchairs

Electric/Battery powered wheelchairs will not be disassembled, including leaving the batteries attached, whenever the wheelchair will fit upright through the aircraft cargo compartment door and be stowed upright. If the size of the aircraft cargo compartment door or cargo compartment itself prohibit this, our employees may ask you for instructions on how to disassemble your equipment. It is helpful to have the assembly/disassembly instructions with you along with the type of battery used.

Batteries

Batteries on powered wheelchairs will remain attached whenever the wheelchair will fit upright through the aircraft cargo compartment door and be stowed upright.

Batteries must be identified as either spillable or non-spillable so that our employees may establish correct dangerous goods handling procedures.

Spillable Batteries (Wet-cell)

Wet cell batteries are considered spillable. Special preparations must be made before being transported by air. The battery must be disconnected and terminals protected against electrical shorting. If the equipment cannot fit upright through our cargo compartment door or if the battery appears cracked or damaged the battery must be removed. It will be shipped in Northwest's battery box to meet all dangerous goods handling requirements.

Non-spillable Batteries (Dry-cell or Gel-cell)

Dry cell and gel cell batteries are considered non-spillable and fewer requirements are required for handling. Batteries will remain attached to the powered wheelchair when the equipment fits upright through the aircraft cargo compartment door. Northwest personnel will disconnect the battery post connectors and wrap each post connector with tape to prevent electrical shorts during shipping.



Customer Advisory Board on Disabilities

NWA formed the Customer Advisory Board on Disabilities in December 1999 to obtain advice and recommendations on how the airline can better serve and communicate with the growing travel segment of air travelers with disabilities. It is the cornerstone of NWA's program for customers with disabilities, and demonstrates NWA's commitment to providing accessible air travel.

The 11-member Customer Advisory Board is made of individuals who represent different disabilities and disability advocacy organizations. Board members meet regularly to review Northwest's existing and proposed policies and procedures as well as training programs related to services for passengers with disabilities.

Most recently they completed a comprehensive review of Ground Operations, Inflight Services and Reservations initial and recurrent training programs. Recommendations are currently being evaluated for incorporation into future training programs.

The Customer Advisory Board is part of Northwest's [Customers First](#) service plan, which was implemented on December 15, 1999.

Board Members

Stephanie Cooper

[Society for Accessible Travel and Hospitality](#)

New York City, New York

Ms. Cooper has served as a board member since March 2004. She has been in the travel business for over 25 years as a travel consultant - 22 years as owner of Cooper Travel Service, and 3 1/2 years as a partner of Cooper-Kaleidoscope-Carlson Wagonlit. She now works as independent travel consultant. She is an active member of several business, professional, civic and charitable organizations and has served on many boards of directors. She resides in Asheville, North Carolina.

Lydia Graber

[Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns \(MCDC\)](#)

Lansing, Michigan

Ms. Graber has served as a board member since April 2002. She has been a member of the Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns since 1993 and served as chair from 1996 to 2003. MCDC has twenty-one governor appointed commissioners who serve in an advisory capacity and provide the perspectives of people with disabilities, the business community, and professional service providers. She resides in Belleville, Michigan.

Michael Harris

[Paralyzed Veterans of America \(PVA\) - Michigan](#)

Novi, Michigan

Mr. Harris has served as a board member since August 2001. He is government relations director, advocacy



officer, and chapter legislative director of the Michigan chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA). He resides in Westland, Michigan.

Wilson Hulley

Disability Advocate

Chevy Chase, Maryland

Mr. Hulley has served as a board member since April 2002. He helped Northwest develop and produce training videos and printed materials on travelers with disabilities. He was most recently Executive Assistant to the Executive Director and Chair at the President's Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities. He serves on a number of domestic and international disability rights organizations including the International Association for Assistance Dog Partners (largest international disability rights for assistance and guide dogs) organization. He was presented recently the Unsung Hero Honor for his work with the U.S. Department of Transportation. He continues to serve as an advisor to a number of corporate executives in the private sector and to senior Administration officials in the public sector. He resides in Chevy Chase, Maryland.

Lolly Lijewski

[Metropolitan Center for Independent Living - Minnesota \(MCIL\)](#)

St. Paul, Minnesota

Ms. Lijewski has served as a board member since December 1999. She has been advocacy manager for Metropolitan Center for Independent Living - Minnesota since 1995. She holds a social work degree from The College of St. Catherine as well as a second major in radio and television production. She resides in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Patrick Maher

[National Spinal Cord Injury Association](#)

Mr. Maher has served as a board member since March 2004. At NSCIA, he is the Vice President for Chapters and served on their board since November 2003. As Manager for nAblement Services of SPR, an IT staff consulting and project management firm, Pat develops opportunities for organizations to hire qualified IT professionals with disabilities for a wide range of IT support needs. The nAblement Apprenticeship program has been designed to support an IT career path for new college graduates with a disability, and has been very well received by SPR clients. Pat resides in Westmont, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago.

David Nelson

[National Association of the Deaf](#)

Mr. Nelson has served as a board member since October 2004. He has been with NAD since 1978 and recently received the organization's most prestigious award, the Fred C. Schreiber Distinguished Service Award. Mr. Nelson has been employed at the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) for the past 14 years as disability advocacy specialist. He is responsible for providing accessibility information and outreach activities to the disability community. He holds a bachelor's degree from Rochester Institute of Technology as well as degrees from National Technical Institute of the Deaf (NTID) and Florida School for the Deaf and Blind. He resides Washington, DC.



John Schatzlein

Minnesota Department of Health - Minnesota Spinal Cord & Brain Injury Trauma Data Bank Advisory Committee

St. Paul, Minnesota

Mr. Schatzlein has served as a board member since August 2000. He is currently a consultant for the Minnesota Department of Health. He has served as a Spinal Cord Injury advisory member since July 1991. He is also a member of the Rochester Mayo Hospital Spinal Cord Injury Advisory Committee and is active with numerous National and State rehabilitation agencies. He resides in Bloomington, Minnesota.

Margaret Schuster

[Ventures Travel, LLC](#)

Eden Prairie, Minnesota

Ms. Schuster has served as a board member since April 2002. She is President of Ventures Travel, LLC which provides educational and recreational vacation opportunities for people with developmental disabilities and others who benefit from supervised travel vacations. In addition, Ventures Travel, LLC provides support and respite for parents, families, and other care providers.

Alternates

Rich Diedrichsen

[Self-Help for Hard of Hearing People \(SHHH\)](#)

Bethesda, Maryland

Mr. Diedrichsen has served as an alternate for Board Member Brenda Battat since December 1999. He is president of the Minnesota State Association of Self-Help for Hard of Hearing People. He is also the regional manager of the East/West Central Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Office for the State of Minnesota. Diedrichsen holds a degree in psychology as well as rehabilitation counseling from Minnesota State University at Mankato. He resides in St. Cloud, Minnesota.

Barbara Jacobsen

[Society for Accessible Travel and Hospitality \(SATH\)](#)

New York City, New York

Ms. Jacobsen has served as an alternate since December 1999. She is a member of SATH and is president of Flying Wheels Travel in Owatonna, Minnesota.

Toll-Free Hotline For Air Travelers With Disabilities

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) has established a toll-free hotline to assist travelers with disabilities.

The hotline will provide general information to consumers about the rights of air travelers with disabilities, respond to requests for printed consumer information, and assist air travelers with time-sensitive disability-related issues that need to be addressed in "real time." Effective October 1, 2006, the hours for the hotline are 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern time, Monday through Friday except federal holidays. Air travelers who experience



disability-related air travel service problems may call the hotline at **1-800-778-4838** (voice) or **1-800-455-9880 (TTY)** to obtain assistance. As in the past, air travelers who would like DOT to investigate a complaint about a disability issue must submit their complaint in writing or via e-mail. [Click here](#) for details.

"I believe today as I believed over a decade ago, as a co-author of the Americans with Disabilities Act, that accessibility in transportation is a civil right," said Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta. "The U.S. Department of Transportation is committed to increasing mobility for all Americans, particularly those with disabilities. The establishment of the toll-free hotline is a major step in facilitating accessible air travel for all individuals with disabilities."

In assisting individuals with disabilities who may have air travel complaints that require immediate intervention, the role of the DOT employees would be one of facilitating compliance with DOT's rules and suggesting possible customer-service solutions to the airline involved. Since compliance with the Air Carrier Access Act and DOT's implementing regulations remains the obligation of the carrier, airline employees would continue to decide what action will be taken in any given situation.