

Firearms and ammunition


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Traveling with firearms and ammunition

Laws on the possession of firearms differ between states and countries. Please check the requirements of your destination before you travel. Contact Reservations for international travel requirements.

If any part of your trip is operated by another airline, contact them directly for requirements. You must notify most airlines at least 72 hours before your travel date.

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Requirements

Within the U.S., you can only travel with firearms and ammunition, including pellet and BB guns, in your checked bags if you're over 18 years old. You must check them with an agent at check-in and declare that you're traveling with firearms and ammunition.

Firearms must be:

- Unloaded
- In a locked hard-sided container where the firearm is totally inaccessible
- Rifle cases require locks on each end

Ammunition must be:

In the original packaging from the manufacturer or in packaging specifically designed to carry small amounts of ammunition (made of fiber, wood or metal), with a maximum of 11 pounds (5 kgs) per container or customer. Ammunition is not accepted loose or in magazines or clips.

[Watch the TSA Traveling with Firearms video](#)

Allowance

There is no limit to the number of items you can carry in your rifle, shotgun or pistol case, but bag and oversize / overweight charges may apply.

[Oversize and overweight bags »](#)

Restrictions

Loose ammunition, magazines or clips and firearms are not accepted when traveling to or from Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago (POS).

Firearms are not allowed in checked bags on Landline motorcoach connections.

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Law enforcement officers flying armed

All Law Enforcement Offices (LEOs) flying armed are required to check in with an American Airlines agent at the airport before boarding the flight on which they will have their weapon accessible. State, local and territorial LEOs flying armed must submit a National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS) message during airport check-in to the American Airlines airport agent. The NLETS message sent by the employing agency replaces the original letter of authority, signed by the chief or agency head, required under 49 CFR 1544.219. Once the NLETS message is received by TSA, a return NLETS message will be sent to the employing agency with an eight-character unique alphanumeric Identifier for verification at the airport on the day of travel. The current procedures for federal LEOs flying armed remains unchanged.

§1544.219 Carriage of accessible weapons.

(a) Flights for which screening is conducted. The provisions of §1544.201(d), with respect to accessible weapons, do not apply to a law enforcement officer (LEO) aboard a flight for which screening is required if the requirements of this section are met. Paragraph (a) of this section does not apply to a Federal Air Marshal on duty status under §1544.223.

(1) Unless otherwise authorized by TSA, the armed LEO must meet the following requirements:

- (i) Be a Federal law enforcement officer or a full-time municipal, county, or state law enforcement officer who is a direct employee of a government agency.
- (ii) Be sworn and commissioned to enforce criminal statutes or immigration statutes.
- (iii) Be authorized by the employing agency to have the weapon in connection with assigned duties.
- (iv) Has completed the training program "Law Enforcement Officers Flying Armed."

(2) In addition to the requirements of paragraph (a)(1) of this section, the armed LEO must have a need to have the weapon accessible from the time he or she would otherwise check the weapon until the time it would be claimed after deplaning. The need to have the weapon accessible must be determined by the employing agency, department, or service and be based on one of the following:

- (i) The provision of protective duty, for instance, assigned to a principal or advance team, or on travel required to be prepared to engage in a protective function.
- (ii) The conduct of a hazardous surveillance operation.
- (iii) On official travel required to report to another location, armed and prepared for duty.
- (iv) Employed as a Federal LEO, whether or not on official travel, and armed in accordance with an agency-wide policy governing that type of travel established by the employing agency by directive or policy statement.
- (v) Control of a prisoner, in accordance with §1544.221, or an armed LEO on a round trip ticket returning from escorting, or traveling to pick up, a prisoner.
- (vi) TSA Federal Air Marshal on duty status.

(3) The armed LEO must comply with the following notification requirements:

- (i) All armed LEOs must notify the aircraft operator of the flight(s) on which he or she needs to have the weapon accessible at least 1 hour, or in an emergency as soon as practicable, before departure.
- (ii) Identify himself or herself to the aircraft operator by presenting credentials that include a clear full-face picture, the signature of the armed LEO, and the signature of the authorizing official of the agency, service, or department or the official seal of the agency, service, or department. A badge, shield, or similar device may not be used, or accepted, as the sole means of identification.
- (iii) If the armed LEO is a State, county, or municipal law enforcement officer, he or she must present an original letter of authority, signed by an authorizing official from his or her employing agency, service or department, confirming the need to travel armed and detailing the itinerary of the travel while armed.
- (iv) If the armed LEO is an escort for a foreign official then this paragraph (a)(3) may be satisfied by a State Department notification.

(4) The aircraft operator must do the following:

- (i) Obtain information or documentation required in paragraphs (a)(3)(ii), (iii), and (iv) of this section.
- (ii) Advise the armed LEO, before boarding, of the aircraft operator's procedures for carrying out this section.
- (iii) Have the LEO confirm he / she has completed the training program "Law Enforcement Officers Flying Armed" as required by TSA, unless otherwise authorized by TSA.
- (iv) Ensure that the identity of the armed LEO is known to the appropriate personnel who are responsible for security during the boarding of the aircraft.
- (v) Notify the pilot in command and other appropriate crewmembers, of the location of each armed LEO aboard the aircraft. Notify any other armed LEO of the location of each armed LEO, including FAM's. Under circumstances described in the security program, the aircraft operator must not close the doors until the notification is complete.
- (vi) Ensure that the information required in paragraphs (a)(3)(i) and (ii) of this section is furnished to the flight crew of each additional connecting flight by the Ground Security Coordinator or other designated agent at each location.

(b) Flights for which screening is not conducted. The provisions of §1544.201(d), with respect to accessible weapons, do not apply to a LEO aboard a flight for which screening is not required if the requirements of paragraphs (a)(1), (3), and (4) of this section are met.

(c) Alcohol. (1) No aircraft operator may serve any alcoholic beverage to an armed LEO.

(2) No armed LEO may:

- (i) Consume any alcoholic beverage while aboard an aircraft operated by an aircraft operator.
- (ii) Board an aircraft armed if they have consumed an alcoholic beverage within the previous 8 hours.
- (d) Location of weapon. (1) Any individual traveling aboard an aircraft while armed must at all times keep their weapon:
 - (i) Concealed and out of view, either on their person or in immediate reach, if the armed LEO is not in uniform.
 - (ii) On their person, if the armed LEO is in uniform.

(2) No individual may place a weapon in an overhead storage bin.

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