



Transportation
Security
Administration

Advisory

January 28, 2005

Reminder to Travelers of Requirements for Transporting Firearms, Firearm Parts and Ammunition on Commercial Aircraft

I. Passengers are prohibited from carrying firearms, firearm parts and ammunition

Federal regulations administered by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) prohibit the carriage of firearms and guns, as well as parts of firearms and guns (such as magazines or clips, bolts, firing pins, and other components), in the traveler's possession or in carry-on luggage on commercial aircraft.

Ammunition also is NOT allowed as a carry-on item. Carrying even a single round of ammunition through airport security checkpoints is a violation of regulations.

There are certain limited exceptions for law enforcement officers (LEOs) who are authorized to fly armed by meeting the requirements of 49 CFR § 1544.219.

TSA regulations are strictly enforced. Violations can result in criminal prosecution and imposition of civil penalties of up to \$10,000 per violation. In the case of violations by government employees, TSA may also forward the matter to the employee's agency. In the case of violations by military personnel related to the performance of military duties, TSA will forward an Enforcement Investigative Report to the service member's command for appropriate action.

II. Checked-baggage requirements for transporting firearms and ammunition

All persons carrying firearms and ammunition in checked baggage, including LEOs, must comply with the provisions of 49 CFR § 1540.111. Following is a summary of key requirements of this section and other regulatory provisions.

- All firearms must be declared to the air carrier during the ticket counter check-in process. Travelers with firearms should check-in at the ticket counter and not use electronic check-in (e.g., kiosks or the Internet). Electronic check-in will not provide adequate compliance with the requirement to declare firearms to the air carrier and will expose the traveler to greater potential for violation and resulting civil or criminal enforcement action.
- All declared firearms must be unloaded and transported in a locked hard-sided container. While some firearm "parts" are not within the broad definition of the term "firearm,"

travelers are advised to place all firearm parts in a locked hard-sided container to avoid violations.

- Access to the declared firearm must be restricted, with only the passenger possessing the container combination or key to the lock. During the screening process, TSA may notify the passenger that the hard-sided container must be opened for inspection. In this event, it is preferred that the passenger turn over the key or combination to the screener. If the combination is sensitive, the passenger may unlock the lock, but TSA personnel must open the container.
- Any ammunition transported must be placed in checked baggage and securely packed in fiber (such as cardboard), wood or metal boxes or other packaging specifically designed to carry small amounts of ammunition. Firearm magazines/clips do not satisfy the packaging requirement unless they provide a complete and secure enclosure of the ammunition (e.g., by securely covering the exposed portions of the magazine or by securely placing the magazine in a pouch, holder, holster or lanyard).
- The ammunition may also be located in the same hard-sided case as the firearm as long as it is properly packed as described above.
- It is also recommended that the ammunition package in checked baggage be stabilized, either by taping it to the interior wall of the bag, or by use of packing material or other means to ensure the ammunition package does not move about the interior of the bag during transportation.
- Black powder, including Pyrodex, and percussion caps used with black-powder type firearms are not permitted on board aircraft, either as accessible property or in checked baggage.

Air carriers may have their own additional requirements on the carriage of firearms and the amount of ammunition an individual may place in checked baggage. Therefore, travelers should also contact the air carrier regarding its firearm and ammunition carriage policies.

Additional information about the carriage of firearms, firearm parts and ammunition, as well as other air travel tips, can be found at www.tsa.gov or by contacting the TSA Contact Center toll-free at 1-866-289-9673 or by email at TSA-ContactCenter@dhs.gov.