



HAJJ PILGRIMS TRAVEL GUIDE

Know Your Rights & Responsibilities as an Airline Passenger

A businessman returning from Hajj, and a prolonged vacation, had his laptop and cellphone temporarily confiscated by Customs agents at a US airport; since then, he has been routinely stopped for hours every time he attempts to travel overseas.

A student was detained for six hours and placed in handcuffs after officials mistook their identity for someone on a watch list. The student had a common Muslim name.

While traveling to a Muslim country, an American man's name was placed on a "No-Fly List." He was offered no recourse, or details for removing his name and was held indefinitely in the foreign country.

Given the increase in the number of complaints to CAIR alleging airport profiling of American Muslims, it is important that all those taking part in this year's Hajj, or other holiday travel, be aware of their legal rights and responsibilities. As an airline passenger, you are entitled to courteous, respectful and non-stigmatizing treatment by airline and security personnel. You have the right to complain about treatment that you believe is discriminatory.

Be prepared before you head to the airport:

- 1. Print, or have available on your smart phone, the CAIR-NY Know Your Rights While Traveling Guide with you at all times**
<http://ok.cair.com/images/stories/pdf/knowyourrightstravel.pdf>
- 2. Be familiar with TSA guidelines regarding screening, clothes, and carry-on items**
 - a. Bulky Clothing Screening & Pat-downs: You should never be asked to remove any article of clothing other than shoes, jackets, and coats. If you are asked to do so, ask for a supervisor.
<http://www.tsa.gov/traveler-information/dress-smart>
 - b. Traveling with Special Needs or Disabilities:
<http://www.tsa.gov/traveler-information/travelers-disabilities-and-medical-conditions>
 - c. Any traveler transporting more than \$10,000 in currency or any other monetary instrument will be forced to file a report with the Dept Treasury:
www.fincen.gov/fin105_cmir.pdf
- 3. Make sure your family, friends, or lawyer (anyone) knows your exact arrival and departure dates and time.**

If you are stopped for secondary screening, or detained for interrogation:**1. You may be subject to additional screening by TSA.**

- If your name appears on a TSA list, if you trigger the electronic detector, if you behave suspiciously, or if you are selected randomly.
- Always cooperate with officials in a courteous and polite manner. Also be mindful that security is always a serious matter—never joke around.

2. TSA & CBP Agents at the airport have a right to inspect your belongings and your person, including the contents on electronic devices such as laptops & cell phones.**3. Ask politely, why you have been selected for an additional search.**

It is unlawful to be singled out based on your looks, dress, race, religion, nationality, ethnicity, or gender.

4. Kindly object to any inappropriate questions by airport agents.

Agents are only allowed to ask questions related to your travel. This does not include your political ideas, religious beliefs, the mosques you attend, or the people you associate with.

5. Request the right to call your lawyer.**6. Document everything as soon as possible.**

You have a right to ask for agent names and badge numbers, and you should write down everything you have been asked that you believe is related to potential profiling or discrimination.

7. Report your experience to CAIR-NY.

CAIR-NY documents instances of potential discrimination and profiling by the government and reports these injustices to our elected officials. We will never be able to demand a change in policies and training if we do not properly document them with proof that supports our requests. Help us protect the rights of all Americans by reporting your complaint.



When returning from Hajj, or other international travel:

- 1. Airlines will NOT allow you to carry liquids over 3 oz. in carry-on luggage.**
For those returning from Hajj, place ZamZam water that you bring with you in your checked luggage.
- 2. If you are bringing back dates, make sure they are processed & sufficiently dry.**
- 3. When packing, ensure that your shoes are cleaned of any soil to avoid having your luggage opened at the airport.**
CBP has strict rules for allowing any soil or chemicals into the country. Many times just a little bit of soil (especially if near agricultural land) can be enough to alert airport agents and lead to luggage search.
- 4. If you are bringing back items worth more than \$800 (per person) declare them using the CBP Declaration Form, made available by airline staff when landing.**
- 5. Fingerprinting and photographing may be conducted for those traveling on a nonimmigrant visa** (i.e. non-U.S. citizens or non-U.S. residents).

If you are not allowed to fly back to the United States:

CAIR has issued a travel advisory containing detailed information regarding the rights that you have (and don't have) as a traveler, and offers steps that you should take if you find yourself being unable to return to the United States due to the FBI or other agency placing you on the no-fly list while you are away, and without reason. All travelers headed to and from Cuba, Iran, Sudan, Syria, Afghanistan, Algeria, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Somalia and Yemen should be aware of this possibility. To download and print this Travel Advisory visit this link: [CAIR Travel Advisory](#)

CAIR-NY also offers "Know Your Rights" pocket guides and live presentations, including one specifically for Muslims leaving for Hajj. If you would like to schedule a Know Your Rights Presentation, or if you would like to share an incident (you can remain anonymous) in which you feel you were profiled, please contact our office at 212-870-2002 or at info@cair-ny.org.