

# Have Diabetes, Will Travel

One woman's business travel situation has a happy ending | By Taryn Egelanian

**A**ir travel (all types of travel, really) can be stressful for anyone. The millions of people living with diabetes in the United States face additional challenges—wherever they go, their diabetes and medical supplies come along for the ride.

Erin Argueta of Stamford, Connecticut, knows this well. She has type 1 diabetes, wears an insulin pump, and has visited more than 100 countries around the world. She also travels several times a year for her job as a business analyst. She's learned to allow extra time at the airport because the security process for her involves a pat-down search rather than the regular X-ray screening. (An airport body scanner is not recommended for her particular device because it can cause a malfunction.)

In preparation for one particular business flight, Argueta let her supervisor know that she would need to leave work 30 minutes earlier than an employee typically would in order to make the flight. She explained that Transportation Security Administration (TSA) pat-downs can involve unexpected delays. But Argueta's supervisor warned her that, if she left early, she could be written up and disciplined for not obeying the organization's rules.

So Argueta contacted the American Diabetes Association for help.

## The Expert Assist

One of the Association's legal advocates (a lawyer experienced with diabetes discrimination cases) explained to Argueta her legal rights. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, Argueta could



## Help at Hand

**Need a friendly voice to help advocate for your rights and fair treatment as a person living with diabetes? The American Diabetes Association can help. Call 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383) or visit [diabetes.org/gethelp](http://diabetes.org/gethelp).**



## Don't Fear Flying

Traveling by air with diabetes? Check out these tips about security screenings and diabetes gear: [diabetes.org/airtravel](http://diabetes.org/airtravel).

ask for a “reasonable accommodation” from her employer. In this case, that meant she could ask to leave earlier to get through airport security in a timely manner. Once she better understood her rights, Argueta sent a more formal request to her employer, which included information about the law and a supportive letter from her doctor.

## The Result

Argueta was given the accommodation she needed and can now leave work earlier to get to her gate in plenty of time.

“Having lived with type 1 diabetes for over 42 years, and having traveled a lot, this was the first time I have ever needed help with a travel matter,” Argueta says. “The Association is remarkable in standing up for the rights of people like me who have ‘invisible’ disabilities that others so often overlook. Thank you, American Diabetes Association and your amazing legal advocate.”