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# Houston airports offer assistive tech service

By **Rachel Debling** on February, 12 2018 | Airline & Terminal News



Christine Ha demonstrates how Aira works at a TSA checkpoint

[Aira](#), a subscription-based wearable technology service for blind and low-vision individuals, is [now available in two of Houston's airports](#) as the result of a deal that aims to make travel more accessible.

Beginning February 8, 2018, Aira is available for free to the service's subscribers as they travel through George Bush Intercontinental Airport and William P. Hobby Airport, making these locations the first in Texas to join the tech company's airport network. Only four airports in the United States, including the two Houston locations, are currently part of this network.

As part of this agreement, the minutes used by Aira subscribers while in the terminals of these airports will be paid for by the [Houston Airport System](#) (HAS) until the end of 2018.

How does it work? Travelers are guided through the airport via narration from a remote, specially trained agent who views a livestream of the traveler's whereabouts, sent to them from the camera on the glasses or a smart phone. By following their verbal guidance, the customer can maneuver to important travel checkpoints such as luggage claim, their gate, and ground transportation.

"The Houston Airport System is constantly assessing how it can better enhance the airport experience. We work with our federal partners including the FAA - constantly reviewing and adapting the airport to exceed ADA standards," said HAS Chief Operating Officer Jesus Saenz. "This partnership with Aira is one way of enhancing accessibility to a segment of the population that experiences blindness and low vision, and is another example of our efforts to go beyond the standard and truly make travel a great experience for everyone who comes through our airports."

Tim Joniec, the Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator for Houston Airports, also voiced his support, saying: "Aira is a unique technology that gives users the information they need when they need it, and we are delighted to be able to offer this convenience to our passengers."

"Aira's mission is to make information instantly accessible, anytime, anywhere," said Suman Kanuganti, CEO of Aira. "With more than 50 million passengers coming through Houston airports each year, this partnership will allow Aira's technology to reach a huge number of people, enhancing the airport experience for travelers who are blind and low vision. We hope every airport in the nation will follow Houston's lead and join the Aira Airport Network."

Supporters of Aira include [The National Federation of the Blind](#) and the [American Foundation for the Blind](#), and [Christine Ha](#), a New York Times Bestselling Author who was the winner of *MasterChef's* Season 3 (and who also happens to be a Houstonian and an experienced traveler), recently paid a visit to the two Houston airports to show press firsthand how the technology works.

Aira has also created a video to showcase exactly how the glasses work. [Click here to view the video walkthrough.](#)