

Abu Dhabi Airports and Etihad Airways launch Hidden Disabilities Sunflower program at AUH



The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower program launches at AUH

[Abu Dhabi Airports](#) and [Etihad Airways](#) are taking a significant step towards creating a more supportive travel experience with the launch of the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower program at Zayed International Airport ([AUH](#)) and onboard Etihad Airways flights. This initiative underscores both organizations' commitment to supporting all passengers, particularly those with non-visible disabilities, the September 17 press release said.

The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower, a globally recognized symbol for non-visible disabilities, is now available at AUH. This program provides a discreet way for passengers with conditions like autism,

chronic pain or anxiety to signal to staff that they may require additional assistance or compassion. Passengers can pick up their complimentary Sunflower lanyards at the two dedicated Special Assistance desks located in the pre-check-in area of AUH, allowing them to discreetly communicate their needs and fostering a more supportive environment for all.

"At Abu Dhabi Airports, we are dedicated to providing a seamless and inclusive travel experience for every passenger," said Elena Sorlini, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Abu Dhabi Airports. "The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower programme is a natural extension of this commitment, empowering passengers with non-visible disabilities to discreetly communicate their needs and receive the support they deserve throughout their journey at Zayed International Airport. It's about recognising that the kindest gestures are the ones that acknowledge unseen challenges. This means our staff are now even better equipped to assist passengers who may require a little extra time, understanding or assistance, ensuring a smoother and more positive experience for everyone."

To ensure the program's success, both AUH and Etihad Airways have implemented comprehensive staff training. Frontline teams from the airport, its stakeholders and business partners have undergone specialized training to better understand the needs of passengers with hidden disabilities and provide appropriate assistance. Staff members who have completed the training will wear a Sunflower pin to denote being trained supporters of the initiative.

"As part of our vision to be the airline everyone wants to fly, we want to ensure we are catering to the needs of all our guests and making the experience as smooth and seamless as possible for everyone. We're honoured to join the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower programme to educate our teams on the wide range of non-visible disabilities and affirm our reputation for exceptional hospitality can be enjoyed by all," said Antonoaldo Neves, Chief Executive Officer, Etihad Airways.

[Zayed Higher Organization for People of Determination](#) (ZHO) is serving as the exclusive manufacturer and production centre for the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Lanyards in the GCC region. The organization's involvement highlights how each lanyard used at Zayed International Airport is a symbol of inclusivity, hard work, dedication and is made with the skill of its members of determination who craft them at dedicated vocational rehabilitation workshops.

H.E. Abdulla Abdulalee Abdulla Al Humaidan, Secretary-General at Zayed Higher Organization for People of Determination said, "Everyone has the right to travel and explore the world on their own terms. To ensure that every individual can fully enjoy their journey, we must make travel accessible and inclusive for all. The Sunflower lanyard is a simple yet powerful tool that helps create a more supportive environment for travellers with non-visible conditions, ensuring that everyone can travel with confidence and ease."