

Airport Social Story and Resource Guide to Air Travel



Social Story & Resource Guide

A tool for air travel at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA)

Travel can be stressful. This social story and resource guide is designed to make traveling through SEA Airport more approachable and familiar. It is designed for travelers with autism and developmental disabilities to repeatedly review with their family/caregivers prior to travel. Though, it can certainly be used by anyone who might find it helpful.

It can be printed or viewed on a device like a “choose your own adventure” book, sections that do not apply can be skipped. Some pages have sensory icons to indicate anticipated sensory triggers. The resources section also includes maps, web links, signage travelers will see in the airport, and Sensory and Environment Icons for those who use visual supports.

Additional resources to aid the travel experience include sunflower lanyards, our sensory room, FlySEA App, and TSA Cares. [Sunflower lanyards](#) indicate to SEA airport staff that the wearer, or a member of the group, has a hidden or invisible disability and may need extra help or patience. This is an optional program that is growing nationally at other airports. Lanyards can be picked up at our Information Desks, pre-security in between TSA Checkpoints 3 and 4 and our A Concourse Information Desk post-security in between Gates A5 and A6. The [Sensory Room](#) is located at the train station level under the A concourse, is a calming space for travelers in need of a quiet break. The room’s size is suited best for 1 travel group at a time. The [FlySEA Airport App](#) is a great tool for navigation, flight status updates, and more. [TSA Cares](#) is a program that provides pre-travel support for people with disabilities and medical conditions. Read more about these and other resources on the accessibility section of our [website](#).

Safe and healthy travels!

-The SEA Airport Customer Care Team



We're here to help!

We hope this social story & resource guide in addition to other resources proves helpful and we welcome your feedback. Contact SEA Customer Care Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific Standard Time. Unfortunately, we are closed on federal holidays and weekends, but we will get back to you as soon as possible!

Contact us at:

Call or text*: (206) 787-5388* or (800) 544-1965

On social media: @flySEA on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#)

By Email: SEAcustomer@portseattle.org

Cover image of rock pillows within SEA's Sensory Room

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Before I arrive at SEA Airport

Sensory



MASK OPTIONAL




- I will pack all my favorite things and everything I need before my big trip!
- I can wear my favorite face mask at the airport and on the plane.


- I will make sure I have my ID with me when I go to the airport.
- The airport will be filled with lots of people, smells, lights, sights, and sounds.
- I may see airport workers and other travelers wearing face masks and sometimes face shields and gloves.

Getting to the airport


Sensory




MASK OPTIONAL



CAR



TRAIN



BUS



- There are lots of ways to get to the airport. I can go by car, bus, or train.



- When I get dropped off at the airport, I will take my bags with me to the main airport terminal from my ride.
- Once I get to the airport, I can wear my favorite mask for my big trip.

Ticketing and baggage

Sensory



MASK OPTIONAL



LOUD ANNOUNCEMENTS



CROWDED



- I will find the ticket counter for the airline I'm flying with.



- I will wait in line for my turn to use the kiosks or to talk to the ticket agent.
- Once it's my turn, I will give the ticket agent my I.D., information, and bags.
- I will get my luggage back after I land.
- Once I get my boarding pass, I will be sure to keep it somewhere safe, and will later show it to other airport workers.




- If I want, I can grab a sunflower lanyard from the customer service worker at an Information Desk.
- Wearing a sunflower lanyard lets airport workers know that I might need extra time and help.


NOTE: Complimentary sunflower lanyards are available at the Pre-Security Info Desk between checkpoints 3 and 4 and at the A Info Desk between gates A5 and A6.

Going through security with TSA


Sensory




CROWDED



WAITING



LOUD NOISES



MASK OPTIONAL



- I will look on the screens to see how long the wait times are so I know how long I will have to wait.



- I will follow the signs and get in line for the TSA checkpoints.
- Once I find the checkpoint, I will enter the line for security screening.



- The TSA Agent may ask me to remove my mask and they will scan my boarding pass and I.D.
- I will put my things in a bin, then they will go through an x-ray machine.
- I may be asked to take off my shoes too.
- My items will be returned to me soon after.



- When it is my turn, I will go through the screening machines, TSA will help and tell me what I need to do.
- I might hear loud noises and alarms.
- Once I'm done, I will get my things and shoes from the bins and get ready to go to my gate.

Finding my gate

Sensory



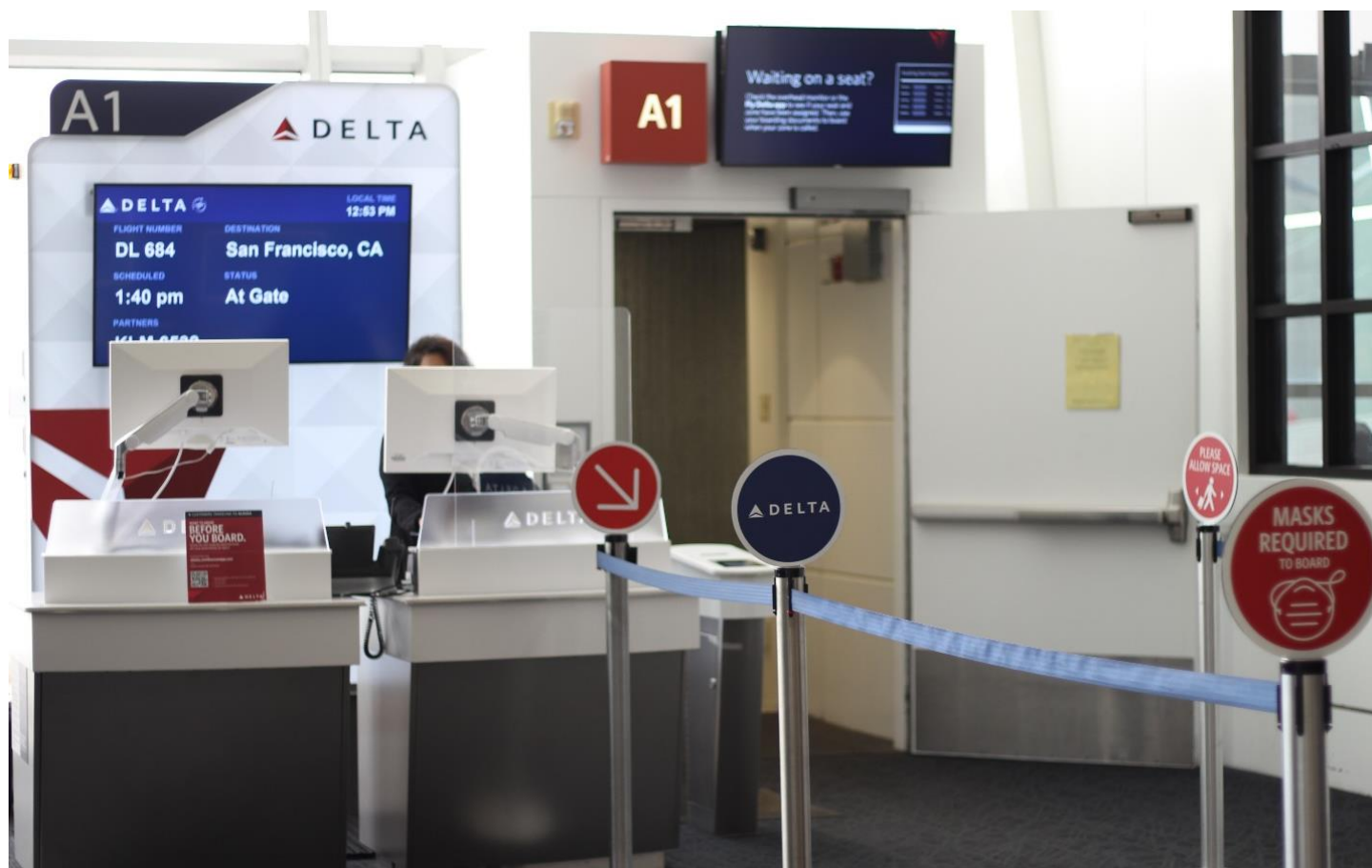
WALKING



MASK OPTIONAL




- I will look at the gate number on my boarding pass (a letter followed by one or two numbers) to know where to go for my flight.




- Signs and maps in the airport or an airport worker can help tell me get to where I need to go.
- If my flight leaves from the N or S Gates I get to take a train to get there. The train is underground and I will take the escalators or elevators down to the train station.
- Once I find my gate I can relax until it's time to board my flight.

Riding the train


Sensory



MASK OPTIONAL



ESCALATORS



LOUD ANNOUNCEMENTS



- If my flight leaves from the N or S Gates I get to take a train.
- I can also take the train to other gates and can follow signs to the train station.




- The train is underground and I will take the escalators or elevators down to the train station.
- Once I'm at the station, I will look at the signs to find the gate letter where my flight is then wait for the train.
- Once the train arrives, I will wait for the doors to open and everyone to get off before I get on the train.





- I can sit down in a seat or hold on to the handrail while on the train.
- I will wait until the train stops at my concourse before I leave the train.
- Once the train is at my stop, I will leave the train and walk to my gate.


While I'm at the airport

Sensory

 **MASK OPTIONAL**

 **FOOD + DRINK**

 **WALKING**

 **LOUD NOISES**



- The airport has lots of restaurants with different kinds of food like Mexican, Asian, African, American, and more.



- I can have a snack or a drink from one of the restaurants at the airport.
- When I am eating or drinking at the airport, I can take my mask off.
- There are lots of different shops at SEA with different items to look at.
- Some stores have snacks, gifts, and coloring books or magazines for my flight.
- I can buy someone a gift or something special for myself.



- There is art all over SEA Airport that I can go and see.
- Art at SEA can be paintings, photos, or sculptures.
- They have lots of different colors to look at and are everywhere we will go.
- I might find my favorite piece of art while at the airport.

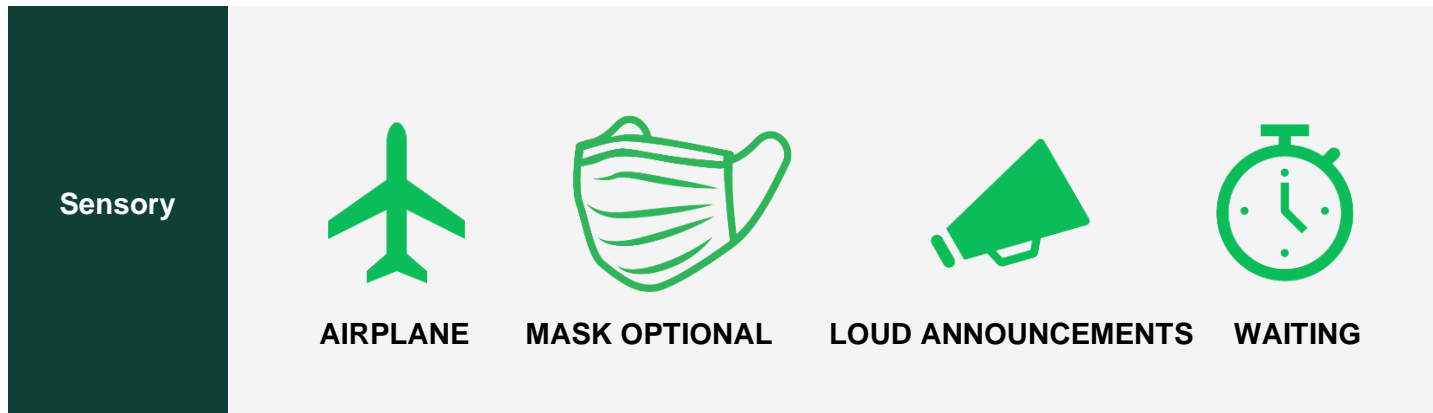


- If there is time, I might get to visit the Sensory Room for a calming break.
- The room has dimmable lights, a ceiling with a starlight sky, soundproofing, and lots of different chairs I can sit, rock, and lounge in.
- If the room is full, I will have to wait my turn.



NOTE: The Sensory Room is located at the train station level, under the A Concourse. Signage, maps, and the app use this icon to identify the space.

Boarding my flight







- My ticket will have a seat number that usually has a letter and numbers.
- I will make sure I'm at the right gate for my flight.



- When it is time to board my flight, the airline worker will call up different groups and numbers to let me know when it's my turn.
- They will scan my boarding pass and I can then walk down to the plane.
- I will go to my assigned seat which could be by the window, in the middle or on the aisle.
- Once I find my spot, I can put my bags underneath the seat in front of me or above me in the overhead bin.
- Then I can take my seat and buckle up until it's time for takeoff.

During my flight

Sensory				
	AIRPLANE	MASK OPTIONAL	LOUD ANNOUNCEMENTS	WAITING







- I will need to put my tray table up and keep my seat upright before we take off.
- When the plane takes off it might be loud and there might be some shaking, I will make sure my seatbelt is on and to listen to all the safety rules.
- I may be on the airplane for a long time depending on where I'm going.



- The flight attendant might come by and ask me if I want something to drink or eat, or I can have my own drinks and snacks.
- I can watch movies, color, take a nap and other things while on the plane.
- I can see a lot of cool things outside of the airplane window, like trees, mountains, clouds and cities.

Preparing for landing and deplaning

Sensory

 **AIRPLANE**  **MASK OPTIONAL**  **LOUD ANNOUNCEMENTS**  **WAITING**

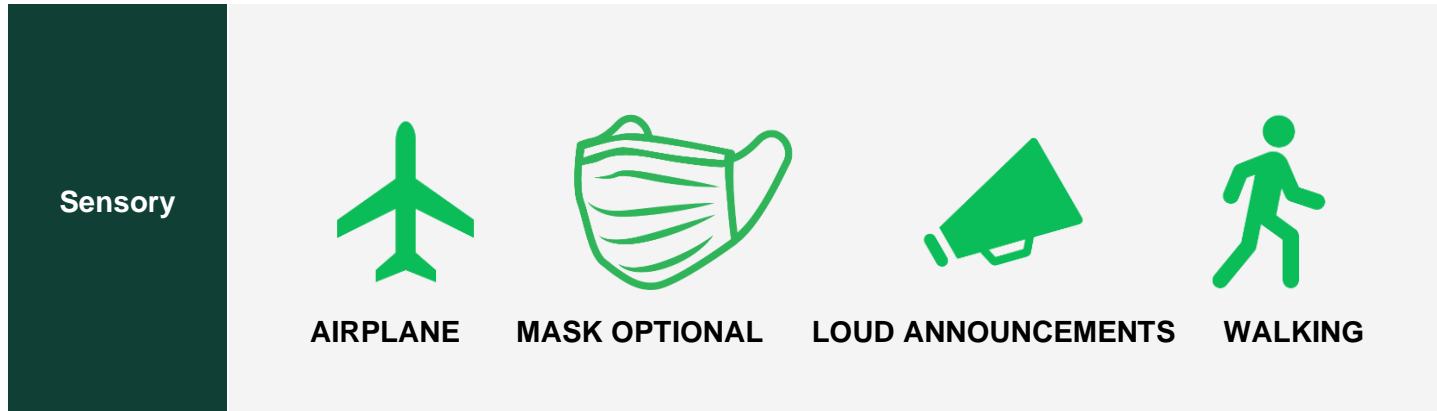


- Once it gets close to where I am going, the plane will begin the landing process.
- Anything I took out during the flight should be put away under the seat in front of me.
- I will make sure I have my seatbelt on so I can be safe.



- The plane might be noisy and shake while it's landing, but I will land safely.
- Once the plane has landed it will taxi on the runway and park at the gate.
- Then I can unbuckle and get any of my bags.
- I made it! With my group, I will follow the line and leave the plane for the airport.

Connecting from one flight to the next




- Once I reach my destination, I will get off the plane with all my things.
- I can look on the screens to see when and where my next flight is.
- It will be on my boarding pass and airport workers can help us get there.





- Sometimes the schedule changes or the gate changes and I might have to wait longer or go to another gate somewhere else.

Getting my bags

Sensory

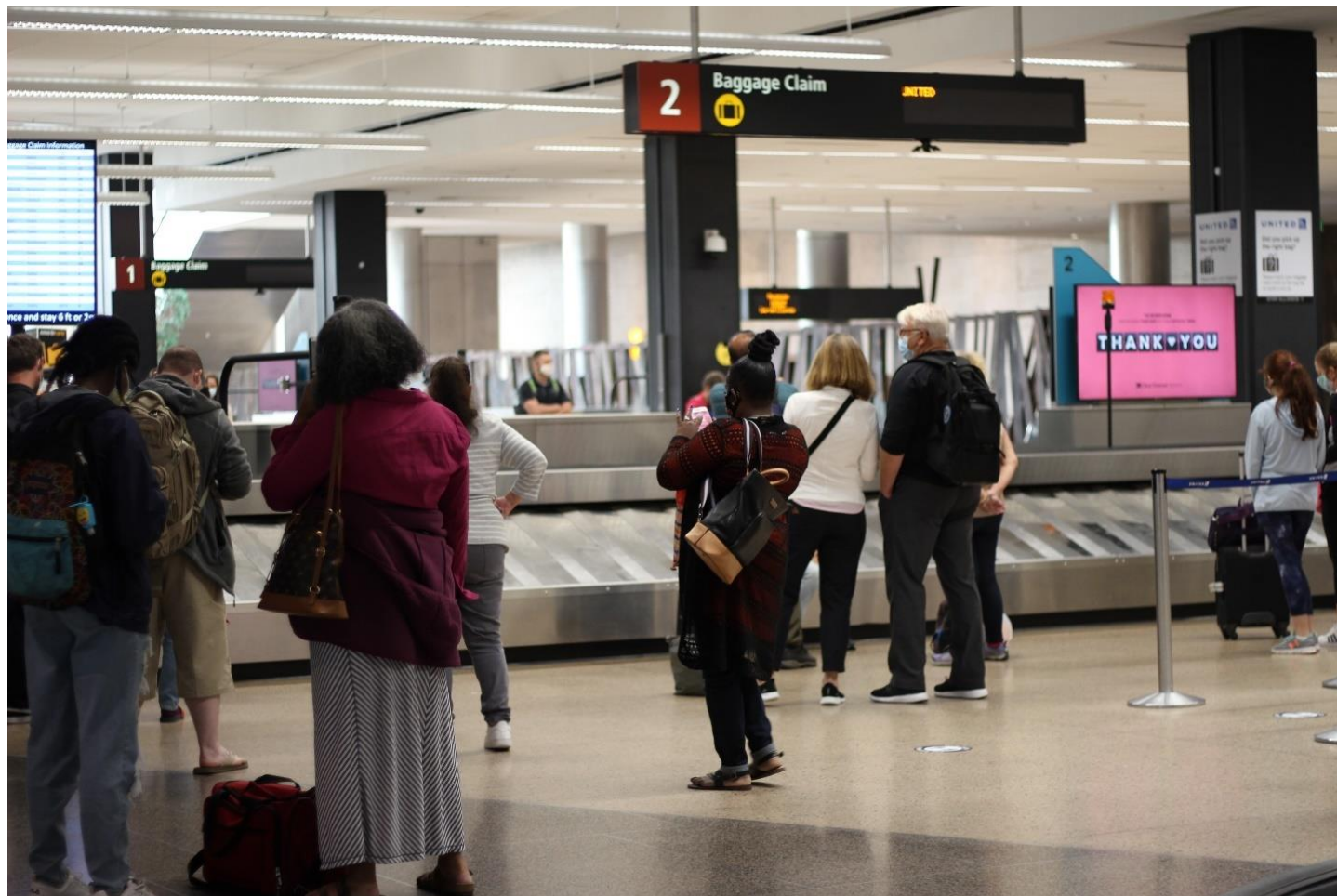
 **MASK OPTIONAL**

 **LOUD ANNOUNCEMENTS**

 **WALKING**




- Once I get off the plane with all my things and I can go grab my bags.
- I can look on the screens or my boarding pass to find the baggage carousel where my bags will be.




- I can follow the signs leading me to claim my luggage at baggage claim then I will grab my luggage off the conveyor belt that moves luggage around.
- I will be sure not to sit on the baggage claim machine as it might start moving.
- I will make sure I know which one is my bag. The bags will go around multiple times so I will have time to grab them.

Leaving the airport


Sensory




MASK OPTIONAL



CAR



TRAIN



BUS




- There are many ways I can travel from the airport.
- Airport workers can help direct us where we need to go when leaving the airport.





- If I came to the airport by car, I will travel back to the parking garage and find the car.


Going to get a rental car

Sensory


MASK OPTIONAL


CAR


TRAIN


BUS




- If we need to rent a car, I will wait in line to ride the Rental Car Shuttle to the Rental Car Facility.





- When I arrive at the Rental Car Facility, I will stand in line with the company we are renting a car from.
- When it's our turn we will get keys to the rental car then travel by car to where we are going next.


Going on the light rail, rideshare, taxi, or bus

Sensory

 **MASK OPTIONAL**

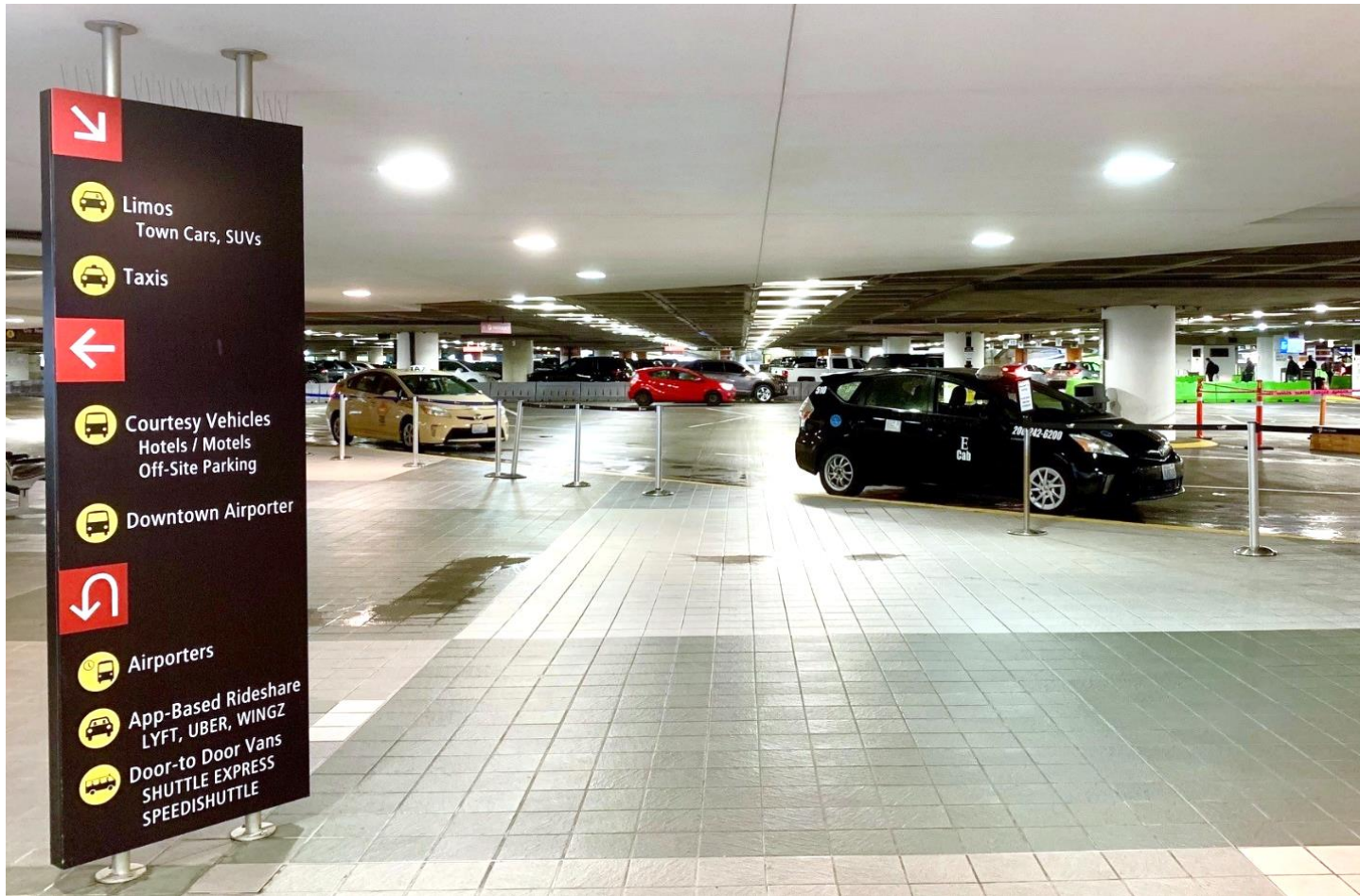
 **CAR**

 **TRAIN**

 **BUS**



- There are many different ways to go somewhere, there are a lot of cars, shuttles, buses, trains and taxis in the parking garage.
- If I am taking the light rail, I will use the Sound Transit Link Light Rail station.



- We can take the Train-to-Plane shuttle from the terminal to the station or walk there if we want. It's available on the 4th floor near the elevators.
- If I miss the train, it is okay because another train will arrive soon.
- If someone else is driving us home, then I will be traveling by ride share or taxi.
- Once the driver arrives, I will put my luggage in the trunk then sit in the backseat and enjoy the ride.



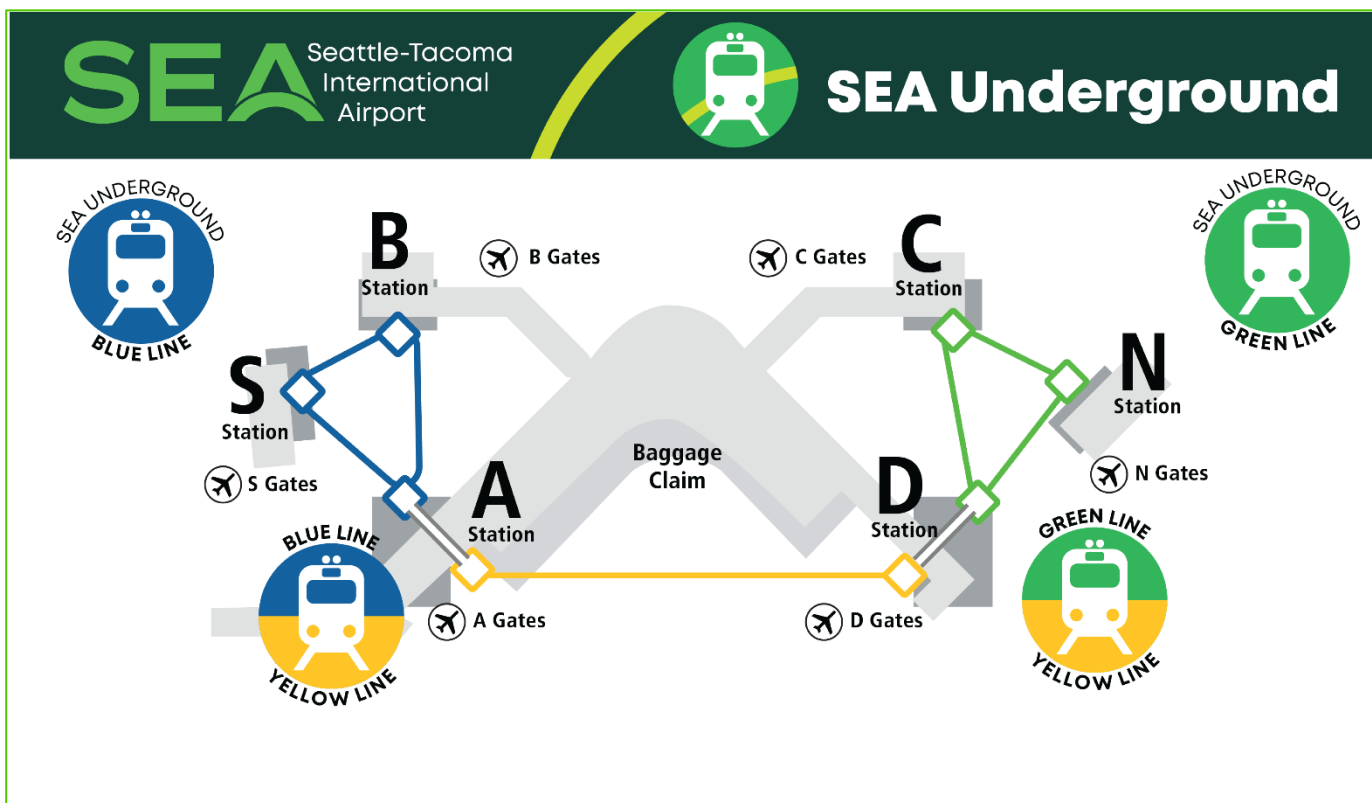
- If I am taking a bus, then I will walk through the airport parking garage or the lower drives of the airport to reach my bus stop.
- When I board the bus, I will enjoy the ride home.

Traveling Resources

Terminal Map of SEA Airport




Below is a general terminal overview of SEA Airport. SEA consists of one terminal with 6 gates. On the south end A, B and S Gates and on the north end D, C and N Gates, these can all be accessed with our North and South train systems to get from one side of the terminal to the other quickly, you can see a [User's Guide to the Trains at SEA](#) to be a pro in getting where you need to go.

Signage and staff are available in the terminal to help guide you to all your destinations! Please use [our interactive map](#) for step-by-step directions or view an expanded [SEA Airport Terminal Map](#).




I am Feeling

I can point to the face that I am feeling so other can help understand how I feel.

 HAPPY	 SAD	 WORRIED	 ANGRY
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Boarding Pass Template

Input a passenger's name, what city you're leaving from and going to. And, the gate, seat, and baggage claim number for reference.

 BOARDING PASS	MY NAME:	COMING FROM:	GOING TO:	GATE NUMBER:	SEAT NUMBER:	BAGGAGE CLAIM:

Sequence Chart

Copy and paste the visuals for a **First → Then → Next** structure. The first sequence chart is an example and a blank template below is provided to help!

FIRST	THEN	NEXT
 HOME	 CAR	 AIRPLANE

FIRST	THEN	NEXT

Sensory Template

Copy and paste the icons of the sensory trigger that may be applicable to the passenger.



Sensory	 MASK OPTIONAL
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Sensory	
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Visual Supports/Sensory and Environment Icons

Copy and paste the icons needed for a **First → Then → Next** sequence or for the sensory templates. You can also create your own icons with the blank spaces as needed.

 LOUD NOISES	 HOME	 BATHROOM	 FOOD + DRINK
 SMELLY	 AIRPLANE	 TRAIN	 CAR
 BUS	 CROWDED	 ESCALATORS	 FLASHING LIGHTS
 WAITING	 MUSIC	 TOUCH	 MASK OPTIONAL
 NOISE-CANCELING HEADPHONE	 WALKING	 ELEVATOR	 CONSTRUCTION

 <p>LOUD ANNOUNCEMENTS</p>	 <p>SENSORY ROOM</p>		

Web Resources

Click the hyperlinks below to help make your trip as seamless as possible!

- [Airline Accessibility Contact Information](#)
- [SEA Airport Accessibility](#)
- [SEA Airport Wheelchair Services](#)
- [SEA Airport Interactive Map](#)
- [SEA Airport Sensory Room, Hidden Disabilities, and Sunflower Lanyard Program](#)
- [SEA Airport Transportation, Directions, and Parking](#)
- [TSA Cares Program](#)
- [TSA Special Procedures and Traveling with Children](#)

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to our friends at The Arc of King County and Washington Autism Alliance & Advocacy for invaluable guidance and support with this Social Story & Resource Guide.

Thank you for your support!



[The Arc of King County](http://www.arcofkingcounty.org)

www.arcofkingcounty.org

[Washington Autism Alliance](http://www.washingtonautismalliance.org)

www.washingtonautismalliance.org

**This resource was created and provided by the
Seattle-Tacoma International Airport Customer Care team**



Seattle-Tacoma
International
Airport

Thank you for traveling with us!