

Screening Partnership Program

Since 2004, all federalized airports are eligible to apply to the Screening Partnership Program. The Screening Partnership Program contracts with qualified screening vendors to provide private security screening under TSA oversight at airports nationwide. There are a total of 21 airports that participate in the Screening Partnership Program.

The FAA Authorization and Reform Act of 2012 set the standards for processing Screening Partnership Program applications. The Act directs TSA to approve an airport's application to participate in the Screening Partnership Program if approval will not compromise security, detrimentally affect cost efficiency, or detrimentally affect the screening effectiveness of passengers or property. Performance measures to include covert testing show that performance for federal and privatized screening is comparable.

How to Apply

Step 1: Interested airports must submit an application to their local federal security director. Application information can be found under the "For Industry" section on tsa.gov.

Step 2: Applicants will receive a notification of application status within 120 days. Once an airport application is approved, the procurement and the award process can take approximately 12 months.

Step 3: After a contract is awarded, transition into the program may take between four to six months based on airport size.

Important Details

- The screening vendor works for TSA and not the airport authority.
- The Federal Security Director remains in charge of security, incident management, and stakeholder relations.
- TSA monitors vendor performance not vendor staffing levels.
- Private screening vendors must comply with all TSA Standard Operating Procedures, policies, guidelines, enhanced pat-down protocol and the use of Advanced Imaging Technology.
- Private screening vendors must use TSA provided screening technologies and cannot use their own.
- Wait times* are the same whether an airport is privatized or federalized.

* Passenger volume has increased at most large airports. However, the time during which passenger volume increases can impact wait times. If passenger volume increases during non-peak periods, instead of peak periods, then there is a minimal effect on wait times.

Private security screening companies are subject to the same hiring restrictions and challenges as the federal government. Contract security screening candidates receive the same security background and medical checks as prospective federal transportation security officers.

