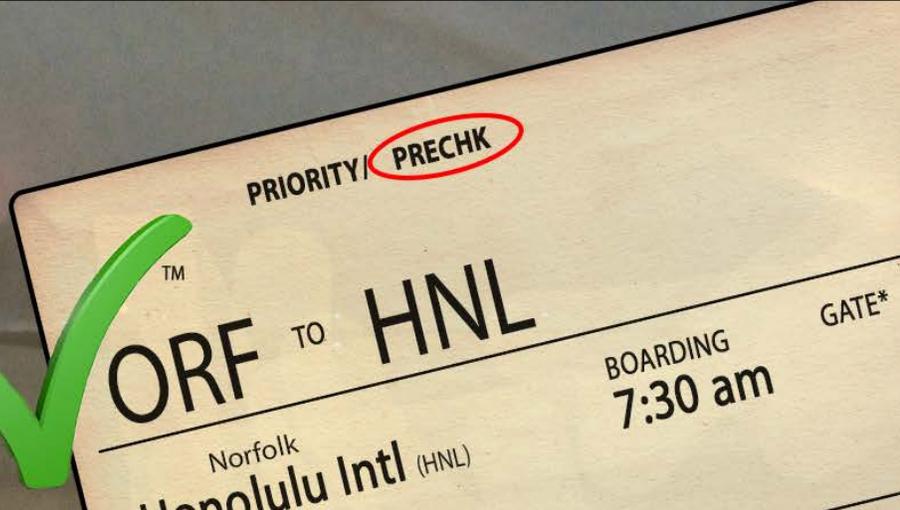


a Benefit of SERVICE TSA Pre✓



By Chief Mass Communication Specialist Christopher E. Tucker

In an effort to thank Sailors and other service members for their service to the nation, the Transportation Security Administration announced free enrollment in its PreCheck expedited screening program for air travel in the U.S. starting on or after Dec. 20.

Here's how it works:

When booking travel through the Defense Travel System or directly with an airline online, look for a data field called "Known Traveller Number." This is where you will enter your DoD ID number found on the back of your Common Access Card. (If booking travel through a travel agent or an airline representative, inform them that you have a known traveller number.) When you get your boarding pass, you should see the TSA's PreCheck logo printed on it. This means you've been successfully enrolled in the program.

"Service members going through the PreCheck [security] lane are going to get a number of benefits," said Mark Howell, a TSA spokesperson. "When they go through they're not going to have to take off light outerwear, like their jackets. They can leave their boots on and their belts on, and they can keep their laptop in a bag. So, when they come to the line, they can just take some loose change and other things out of their pockets and go through."

The automatic enrollment is only for active duty, reserves and National Guard. Family members over the age of 12 and retirees are not given automatic enrollment. However, military families and retirees can sign up for the TSA PreCheck program just like any U.S. resident, which will cost \$85 for a five-year enrollment.

PreCheck is a domestic traveller program, while the Global Entry Program is for travelers who perform a lot of international travel. There is a separate fee to enroll in that program, or families or retirees can pay TSA \$100 to enroll in both PreCheck and the Global Entry Program at the same time.

Howell said that PreCheck is a "risk-based, intelligence driven program," which means that not all service members will be granted automatic PreCheck status on

every trip, even if they have provided their ID number to TSA.

"The other thing we want people to know is that it's not guaranteed," he said. "It's kind of randomized, so we don't guarantee expedited screening to any passenger. There may be a chance that there will be one time you'll go through and you're not going to get it."

If, by chance, service members had already enrolled in TSA's PreCheck program prior to the automatic enrollment announcement, Howell said they should continue to use the number that was provided to them when they first enrolled.

Currently, there are over 100 domestic U.S. airports that participate in the PreCheck program, and Howell said the program continues to expand to many of the nation's smaller airports.

"It's at most of the major airports; all the major airports that most people would use for travel: Denver, Atlanta, Los Angeles and Chicago, all the major [airports] have it," he said. "It's the smaller, regional airports that are starting to expand and get this program now. It's going to continue to get bigger, continue to expand, and be more convenient for passengers across the United States."

So, while it may be too late for some service members to use PreCheck traveling for the holidays, (remember, this doesn't go into effect until Dec. 20) it's a nice way for TSA to show they care about the military.

"TSA's workforce is made up of 25 percent veterans. We appreciate the service of the military as much as anybody," Howell said. "One of the ways we're showing that is by providing TSA PreCheck free of charge to all service members, whether that be active duty, reservists or National Guard."

TSA's PreCheck program is linked to DEERS (Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System), which means that as service members retire, they will no longer be eligible for free and automatic enrollment in the program. They would have to re-enroll and pay the \$85 fee to continue to get the PreCheck expedited screening benefit.