

New online dashboard helps flyers with delays, cancellations

September 1 2022, by ASHRAF KHALIL



Destination	Flight Number	Time	Gate	Status
Asheville	AA 4498	2:14pm	42	Cancelled
Atlanta	AA 818	5:22pm	D8	Cancelled
Bermuda	AA 4363	3:45pm	C3	Now 4:35pm
Charleston, SC	AA 1942 MH 9547	10:15pm	D10	Cancelled
Charlotte, NC	AA 2031	11:59pm	C9	Cancelled
Charlottesville, Va	AA 3477	2:59pm	58	Cancelled
Chicago O'Hare	AA 295 JL 7658	9:40pm	D6	Cancelled
Chicago O'Hare	AA 357 BA 6591	11:40pm	D8	Cancelled
Cincinnati	AA 3688	9:22pm	D8	Now 9:55pm
Columbus, OH	AA 4393	10:15pm	C14	On Time
Dallas Fort Worth	AA 1608	3:29pm	D7	Cancelled
Dallas Fort Worth	AA 2434	5:01pm	D3	Cancelled
Dallas Fort Worth	AA 2286	5:38pm	D3	Cancelled
Dallas Fort Worth	AA 1888 QF 4642	7:04pm	D1	Cancelled
Dallas Fort Worth	AA 2166	8:59pm	D5	Cancelled

The arrivals board at the American Airlines terminal at LaGuardia Airport displays the flights that have been canceled or delayed and one that is on time, March 21, 2020, in New York. Flight delays and cancellations have bedeviled airline travel so far this year. The Transportation Department is launching a customer service dashboard to assist vacationers ahead of the travel-heavy Labor Day weekend. Credit: AP Photo/Mary Altaffer, File

Amid months of mass flight cancellations and delays, the Department of Transportation has launched [a customer service dashboard](#) to help vacationers ahead of the travel-heavy Labor Day weekend.

Starting Thursday, travelers will be able to check the dashboard and see what kinds of guarantees, refunds or compensation the major domestic airlines offer in case of flight delays or cancellations. It's designed to allow travelers to shop around and favor those airlines that offer the best compensation.

The dashboard is part of an extended pressure campaign from Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, who has publicly challenged the major carriers to improve service and transparency after a summer marred by cancellations and flight delays. As summer travel returned to nearly pre-coronavirus pandemic levels, airlines struggled to keep pace, with mass cancellations being blamed on staffing shortages, particularly among pilots.

"Passengers deserve transparency and clarity on what to expect from an airline when there is a cancelation or disruption," Buttigieg said in a statement Wednesday. The new tool, he said, will help travelers to "easily understand their rights, compare airline practices, and make informed decisions."

The dashboard compares all the major domestic airlines' policies on issues such as which offer meals for delays of more than three hours and which offer to rebook flights on the same or different airlines at no additional charge. It focuses on what it calls "controllable" cancellations or delays—meaning those caused by mechanical issues, staffing shortages or delays in cleaning, fueling or baggage handling. Delays or cancellations caused by weather or security concerns do not count.

The Department of Transportation is hoping that the dashboard will

encourage competition among airlines to offer the most transparency and the best protections for customers.

So far this year, airlines have canceled about 146,000 flights, or 2.6% of all flights, and nearly 1.3 million flights have been delayed, according to tracking service FlightAware. The rate of cancellations is up about one-third from the same period in 2019, before the pandemic, and the rate of delays is up nearly one-fourth.

Federal officials have blamed many of the disruptions on understaffing at airlines, which encouraged employees to quit after the pandemic started. The airlines have countered by blaming staffing problems at the Federal Aviation Administration, which employs air traffic controllers.

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