

Press Office
City of Chicago, Department of Aviation
Nuria I. Fernandez, Commissioner



News Release

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CHICAGO'S AIRPORTS EXPECT NEARLY 1.9 MILLION TRAVELERS FOR THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

O'Hare and Midway welcome passengers during the busiest travel season of the year

CHICAGO - The Chicago Airport System will welcome nearly 1.9 million travelers at O'Hare and Midway International Airports over the seven-day period beginning Tuesday, November 21 through Monday, November 27. O'Hare's busiest travel day will be Sunday, November 26 with nearly 243,000 passengers traveling through the airport. The average number of passengers on a regular travel day is 207,000. Nearly 78,000 passengers are expected at Midway Airport on Sunday, November 26.

"We have made some significant customer service enhancements over the last several months and we hope that travelers will take full advantage of them," said Aviation Commissioner Nuria I. Fernandez. "Our goal is to make travel through Chicago's airports as safe, easy and enjoyable as it can be."

Recent customer service enhancements include:

Cell phone parking lots at O'Hare and Midway Airports - Cell phone lots enable motorists to temporarily park free of charge until friends, family members or business associates have deplaned, collected baggage and called to be picked up curbside. At O'Hare, the lot is located at Economy Parking Lot F. At Midway, the lot is located at 61st and Cicero Avenue just south of the main airport entrance. Both cell phone lots are located four minutes or less from the main terminal area and are easily accessible to motorists.

New remote baggage handling and check-in service at O'Hare - For a \$5.00 fee, domestic travelers may check-in their baggage; receive their airline boarding pass and seat assignment at a staffed kiosk located in O'Hare's Economy Parking Lot E; board the Airport Transit System (ATS) to the terminals; and proceed directly to their gate. Participating airlines include Alaska Airlines, American Airlines, Continental Airlines, Delta Airlines and United Airlines, which together account for more than 91 percent of flights departing from O'Hare.

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Re-opening of O'Hare's Economy Parking Lot F - The rate to park in Economy Lot F is \$9.00 per day, the lowest daily rate of all of O'Hare's parking facilities. Travelers parking in Economy Lot F board a shuttle bus to Economy Lot E, where they can access the new baggage handling and check-in service and access the Airport Transit System (ATS) to the terminals. Shuttle service runs every seven minutes between 3:30 a.m. and 11:00 p.m., and every 15 minutes from 11:00 p.m. until 3:30 a.m.

The Department of Aviation also reminds all travelers that the nation's airports continue to operate under an "Orange" or heightened security level. Travelers should expect enhanced security measures airport-wide, including additional canine patrols, more rigorous identity verification and strengthened air cargo security.

In addition, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) wants travelers to remember 3-1-1 for carry-on luggage this holiday season:

- 3 ounce bottle or less for all liquids, gels and aerosols; 1 quart-sized, clear, plastic, zip-top bag to hold all small bottles; 1 bag per passenger placed in screening bin.
- The 1-quart plastic bag per person limits the total liquid volume each traveler can bring in the cabin of the aircraft.
- Remember: The liquid restriction applies only to carry-on bags. You can still pack larger quantities of liquids in your checked baggage.
- Security is a partnership with the public. TSA security officers are expertly trained at discovering threats but we need the traveling public to come prepared and help ensure an efficient screening process.

To assist TSA with this important campaign, the Chicago Airport System will be providing free, 1 quart-sized, clear, plastic, zip-top bags to travelers this holiday travel season. Bags will be available at the front of all security checkpoints at both O'Hare and Midway International Airports.

As a reminder, all travelers must remove their shoes prior for x-ray as part of the security screening process. The Chicago Airport System will provide free foot covers for passengers passing through security checkpoints at O'Hare and Midway. The non-skid foot covers are similar to those used in hospitals and will be available at the front of security checkpoints.

In addition, the Chicago Airport System is also continuing its tradition of providing live entertainment in the terminals during the holiday season. On Wednesday, passengers will be treated to performances by local blues and jazz musicians in all terminals at O'Hare and Midway from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., as well as festive holiday decorations provided by Chicagoland cultural organizations. Also on November 22, the Rockettes will make an appearance in O'Hare's domestic terminals from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

At Midway, our Airport Ambassadors, a volunteer group comprised of Midway-area community residents, will be ushering in the holiday spirit by providing passengers with free hot cocoa on Wednesday, November 22 and Sunday, November 26.

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The Chicago Airport System is self-supporting, using no local or state tax dollars for operations or capital improvements at O'Hare and Midway International airports. Together, Chicago's airports generate more than \$45 billion in annual economic activity and create 540,000 jobs for the region. Please visit www.flychicago.com to learn more about the Chicago Airport System.

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