

3 LEVELS OF AIR PASSENGER RIGHTS

1st Level: Rights With Compensation

When an airline fails to perform as required or promised, it has to pay you something.

2nd Level: Rights Enforced By Gov't

When an airline violates government rules, the government can impose a fine.

3rd Level: Rights in Airline Contracts

When an airline fails to perform as promised, its official contract with you requires that it either accommodate you or refund your money.

RIGHTS WITH COMPENSATION

BUMPING

- **Cash penalty** - If an airline bumps you from a flight, it owes you 200% of the one-way fare, with a \$650 maximum, if it can't get you to your destination within two hours; or 400%, with a maximum of \$1300, if the delay is more than four hours. Those time limits double for international flights.

- **Overbooking** - This rule applies only when you're bumped due to overbooking: It does not cover "denied boarding" for other reasons.

- **Cash requirement** - An airline may offer vouchers or some other non-monetary compensation, but you can demand a check or a credit to your credit card.

BAGGAGE

- If an airline loses or damages your checked baggage, it owes you up to \$3500 (domestic) or \$1600 (international).

- Loss compensation applies only if an airline can't locate and deliver your baggage within 30 days, and it does not apply at all to delayed baggage.

RIGHTS ENFORCED BY GOVERNMENT

The Department of Transportation enforces many regulations that apply to airlines. Beyond safety and corporate behavior, four are specific to passenger rights:

1. To deplane if your flight is delayed on the tarmac for more than three hours, with a few minor exceptions, and the right to water and a working toilet during a long tarmac delay.
2. To see honest, airfare advertising and online postings on airline and third-party websites.
3. When you reserve and buy a ticket, if the flight is more than a week in the future, you can cancel and get a full refund without penalty if you can find a better deal within 24 hours of your first purchase.
4. To full and accessible disclosure of the terms and conditions of each airline's contract of carriage.

SMARTER TRAVEL

AIR PASSENGER RIGHTS



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- Although the other airlines do not mention it in their contracts, they actually may offer assistance. But it isn't guaranteed by contract.
- Westjet provides flight accommodations for "mild" delays, and Spirit provides for overnight accommodations.
- Delta, Sun Country, United, and Alaska provide free meal expenses, Spirit says it "may" provide such help only in the case of mechanical delays.
- In a long delay, Virgin America provides meal expenses, Delta, Sun Country, United, and Westjet provide such help only in the case of the same.
- In a long delay, Virgin America promises to provide meals to passengers who need them within an airline's control. Some airlines promise nothing.
- In a long delay, your rights depend on the cause of the delay. If it is caused by some weather, the airlines promise nothing.
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DIVERSIONS: AMENITIES

RIGHTS IN DELAYS, CANCELLATIONS, & TRANSFERS TO ANOTHER AIRLINE

DIVERSIONS: TRANSFERS, CANCELLATIONS, & RIGHTS IN DELAYS, CANCELLATIONS, & TRANSFERS TO ANOTHER AIRLINE

- You do not actually own your frequent flyer miles; airlines own them. Airlines can change no recourse.
- You do not actually own your frequent flyer miles without notice, and you have frequent flyer rules without notice.
- Airlines are not liable for consecutive damage fees if a late flight causes you to miss a cruise departure or you miss an important meeting.
- Almost all airlines do not refund baggage fees if your bags are not delivered immediately from your flight. Alaska, however, offers a \$25 discount on a future flight if you don't get your checked bag within 20 minutes of arrival.
- Airlines do not promise to seat family groups together.
- Airlines do not guarantee your seat assignment, even when reserved and assigned in advance.
- Airlines do not guarantee seat schedules.

HAVE RIGHTS YOU DO NOT HAVE

CONTRACTS

RIGHTS IN AIRLINE CANCELLATIONS, & DIVERSIONS BEARING TO THE AIR TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION (NOW AIRLINES FOR AMERICA)

DEVELOPED A CONSISTENT SET OF CUSTOMER SERVICE PLANS:

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RIGHTS IN DELAYS, CANCELLATIONS, & TRANSFERS TO ANOTHER AIRLINE

DIVERSIONS: TRANSFERS, CANCELLATIONS, & RIGHTS IN DELAYS, CANCELLATIONS, & TRANSFERS TO ANOTHER AIRLINE