

Press Office
City of Chicago, Department of Aviation
Richard L. Rodriguez, Commissioner



News Release

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BUSY SUMMER TRAVEL SEASON ARRIVES AT CHICAGO'S AIRPORTS

O'Hare and Midway geared up with plenty of services, amenities for passengers

CHICAGO – More than 1.36 million passengers will travel through O'Hare and Midway International Airports over the extended Memorial Day weekend beginning today through Monday, May 26; officially kicking off the busy summer travel season at the Chicago Airport System. The busiest travel day at both airports will be Friday, May 23, with more than 253,000 passengers expected at O'Hare and more than 65,000 passengers expected at Midway.

"We're working closely with our partner agencies to provide the best customer experience for the millions of travelers passing through our airports this summer," said Aviation Commissioner Richard L. Rodriguez. "The Chicago Airport System has many different services and amenities to satisfy every type of traveler."

The Department of Aviation offers the following tips to help make travel through Chicago's airports more convenient and enjoyable:

Getting to the Airport

Travelers should allow ample time for traveling to the airports, ticketing and checking baggage. It is recommended that all passengers arrive at least two hours before their scheduled flight departure.

Travelers are encouraged to take advantage of the public transportation options available to both O'Hare and Midway. The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) Blue line to O'Hare and Orange line to Midway are convenient ways to get to the airports and the Loop while avoiding roadway congestion. The Metra North Central Service has five weekday inbound and outbound trains between O'Hare and Chicago's Union Station. Regional bus service is also available to and from both airports. PACE provides regional bus service to O'Hare which terminates at the Airport Transit System (ATS) Kiss 'n' Fly.

Parking at the Airport

Midway will be offering a special holiday discounted parking rate of \$2 for two hours in the parking garage from Thursday, May 22, through Tuesday, May 27. O'Hare's hourly parking rates are \$2 for the first hour and \$4 for the second and third hours. Real-time parking information for both O'Hare and Midway airports is posted on www.flychicago.com.

- More -

Motorists are reminded that curbside parking is prohibited and unattended and parked vehicles will be ticketed and towed.

The Chicago Airport System's cell phone parking lots enable motorists to temporarily park free of charge until friends, family members or business associates have deplaned, collected baggage and are ready to be picked up curbside. The O'Hare lot is located at Economy Parking Lot F and the Midway lot is located at 61st Street and Cicero Avenue, just south of the main airport entrance.

Security Checkpoint Preparation

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) reminds travelers they can SimpliFLY their overall checkpoint experience by packing an organized carry-on bag using layers and having their boarding pass and ID ready for inspection at the checkpoint.

If you plan to travel with liquids, gels or aerosols in your carry-on bag remember 3-1-1: 3-ounce or smaller containers; containers must be in 1 quart-size, clear, plastic, zip-top bag and placed in the security bin. Only 1 zip-top bag is permitted per passenger. During Memorial Day weekend, the Department of Aviation will provide complimentary zip-top bags and "footies" to travelers from dispensers located at the entrances of security checkpoint lines.

Passengers traveling through Midway should also be aware of the TSA's new Diamond Lane Self Select Program. The Self Select program is a series of lanes designated by signage directing passengers to enter expert, casual or family/special assistance lines based on their travel needs and knowledge.

Visit the TSA's website, www.tsa.gov, for more information.

Experience Great Food, Art and Music at the Airport

Passengers with time before their flight are encouraged to check out the newest concessions, art and music at O'Hare and Midway, including:

- Johnny Rockets, O'Hare's newest restaurant in Terminal 2, takes travelers on a nostalgic trip back to the days of the authentic 1950s American diner. The menu features wholesome, made to order food, including 1/3 pound burgers, old-fashioned malts and shakes, and hand-cut fries.

Travelers craving the comforts of home-style cooking will find it at BJ's Market & Bakery in Terminal 3 at O'Hare. This locally-owned restaurant serves breakfast, lunch and dinner with main dishes such as smoked chicken, roasted turkey wings, beef short ribs, mustard fried catfish and seafood gumbo.

- Three recent art installations at O'Hare include two lighted geometric sculptures entitled "Beacons" in Terminal 5; a 50-foot blown glass mural entitled "Jet Trails" in Terminal 1; and a mosaic sculpture inspired by the façade of the Red-Rose city of Petra in Jordan that was donated to the City of Chicago from its sister city Amman, also in Terminal 5.

- Passengers traveling through Chicago's airports on May 30, June 5, 6, July 3 and August 28, 29 will enjoy the Department of Aviation's "Music in the Air" entertainment program. To accommodate connecting passengers who are unable to attend the larger Gospel, Blues and Jazz Fests taking place in downtown Chicago, the Department has scheduled bands showcasing the talent, neighborhoods and cultural diversity of the city. Live performances will take place beyond the security checkpoints in all O'Hare and Midway Airport terminals from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.
- O'Hare and Midway visitors will also hear *Terminal Tunes*, the Department of Aviation's revamped overhead music program developed in collaboration with the Chicago Music Commission. *Terminal Tunes* features an extensive catalogue of mostly instrumental songs by Chicago artists ranging from blues to jazz to country and classical and is played in each terminal at both airports.

Visit www.flychicago.com for more information on concessions, art and music at the Chicago Airport System.

Additional Airport Amenities

The Chicago Airport System's customer service amenities also extend to military personnel and families that come through the airports.

For more than 35 years, the United Service Organizations (USO) at O'Hare has provided programs, services, care and comfort to the men, women and families of the Armed Forces. Over Memorial Day weekend, USO volunteers will provide goodie bags filled with snacks, bottled water and informational pamphlets to military personnel at welcome stations located just beyond security in each domestic terminal at O'Hare and Midway.

The USO of Illinois has centers at both O'Hare and Midway that provide military personnel and their families with a place to relax, enjoy a meal, check e-mail, phone home and re-adjust to life before returning home or being deployed. The O'Hare USO center is located on the mezzanine level above Terminal 2 and the Midway USO center is located in Concourse C.

Families looking for a kid-friendly place to relax at O'Hare are reminded to visit the "Kids on the Fly" play area in Terminal 2 or the "Play It Safe" area in Terminal 5. Both play areas are located beyond the security checkpoints and are sponsored by the Chicago Children's Museum.

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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.

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