



Richard M. Daley, Mayor



Rosemarie S. Andolino, Commissioner

# News Release

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## **CHICAGO'S AIRPORTS WELCOME NEARLY 1.8 MILLION PASSENGERS DURING CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY**

CHICAGO – Nearly 1.8 million passengers are expected to travel through Chicago's airports for the Christmas holiday travel period between Tuesday, December 21 and Tuesday, December 28, 2010. Airlines project that the busiest travel day at both O'Hare and Midway International Airports will be Thursday, December 23, with nearly 190,000 passengers expected at O'Hare and nearly 63,000 passengers at Midway.

"On behalf of Mayor Richard M. Daley, we extend a warm welcome to the millions of passengers traveling to visit friends and family, or heading out for vacation," said Aviation Commissioner Rosemarie S. Andolino. "We invite travelers to enjoy our special holiday entertainment and free gift-wrapping services, as well as the airports' many food and retail offerings."

Both O'Hare and Midway will feature live blues and jazz bands for passengers today and tomorrow from 2 to 5 p.m. Performances at O'Hare will take place beyond the security checkpoints in each domestic terminal and in the Arrivals Level of International Terminal 5. Live music at Midway will take place in the Baggage Claim area.

The Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) will continue to offer complimentary gift-wrapping services at both airports today and tomorrow. Gift-wrapping services are available in each domestic terminal at O'Hare from 1 to 5 p.m. and near Harry Caray's restaurant at Midway from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The CDA has brought back Mail Safe Express at O'Hare to provide travelers with an option to retain personal items not allowed through TSA security checkpoints. The system allows passengers to choose to securely mail home liquids and other items via the United States Postal Service. Each Mail Safe Express kiosk provides a one-stop packaging, payment and vaulted drop-off station that allows passengers to mail items to domestic or international addresses. The kiosks are located just past Security Checkpoints 1 and 2 in Terminal 1; Checkpoint 5 in Terminal 2; and Checkpoints 7 and 7A in Terminal 3. All major credits cards are accepted for payment.

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Travelers can enjoy new, local food choices at O'Hare with the grand openings of Wicker Park Sushi and Seafood Bar in Terminal 2 near the Butch O'Hare exhibit and America's Dog in the C Concourse of Terminal 1. Passengers can also take a slice of Chicago with them by stopping at the newly-expanded Eli's Cheesecake Café in Terminal 1 between Gates B8 and B9.

American Airlines and the USO of Illinois have opened a "Cyber Canteen" for U.S. troops in Terminal 3 at O'Hare. The new facility seats approximately 120 military personnel and their families. It features "home away from home" comforts for traveling military and their families, including free Wi-Fi Internet access, refreshments and a lounge area. The facility is open seven days a week from 6 a.m. until 10 p.m.

### **Chicago Department of Aviation Holiday Travel Tips**

The following tips will help make travel through Chicago's airports more convenient and enjoyable:

#### Getting to the Airport

Passengers are advised to visit their airlines' Web site to check the status of their flights before leaving home. Passengers should allow time for traveling to the airports, ticketing, checking baggage and security checkpoint process. It is recommended that all passengers arrive at O'Hare or Midway at least two hours before their scheduled flight departure.

#### Parking at the Airport

O'Hare's hourly parking rates are \$2 for the first hour and \$4 for the second and third hours in the parking garage.

Midway's parking rates are \$2 for 10 minutes to 30 minutes, \$4 for one hour or less, \$6 for two hours or less and \$2 for each additional hour.

The Chicago Department of Aviation's cell phone parking lots enable motorists to temporarily park free of charge until friends, family members or business associates are ready to be picked up curbside.

At O'Hare, the cell phone lot is located at Economy Parking Lot F. Exit I-190 at North Mannheim Road and follow the signs to Economy Parking Lot F/Cell Phone Lot. A billboard-size flight information display is located in the O'Hare cell phone parking lot for the convenience of motorists who are picking up passengers. The screen displays real-time flight arrival information and is viewable from anywhere within the parking lot.

The Midway cell phone parking lot is located at 61<sup>st</sup> Street and Cicero Avenue, just south of the main airport entrance.

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Real-time parking availability information for both O'Hare and Midway is posted on [www.flychicago.com](http://www.flychicago.com).

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

**Additional Airport Amenities**

Both airports offer a wide variety of food and beverage, and retail options, including many local favorites that help provide a Chicago experience for travelers.

O'Hare and Midway each support an Interfaith chapel for worship and meditation. The chapel at O'Hare is located in Terminal 2 on the mezzanine level (pre-security) and the Midway chapel is located in Concourse C on the mezzanine level (post-security).

The United Service Organizations (USO) center at O'Hare is located in Terminal 2 on the mezzanine level prior to security checkpoints.

The Midway USO center is located on the secure side of the airport and is easily accessible to traveling military personnel and their families. The USO centers at both airports will remain open throughout the holiday period.

Wi-Fi is offered pre- and post-security. The fee is \$6.95 for 24-hour period through the Boingo Network. Once initiated, the service can be used at other Boingo-affiliated locations throughout the U.S. during the paid period.

The Chicago Children's Museum operates two play areas at O'Hare in Terminals 2 and 5. In the "Kids on the Fly" play area in Terminal 2, children can interact with airport models such as an airplane, control tower and helicopter. The "Play It Safe" area in Terminal 5 features an interactive fire safety exhibit, where children can learn about fire and home safety.

At O'Hare, fresh flowers can be purchased at two locations in Terminal 1 - in the baggage claim area, as well as in Concourse C.

Seasonal flu shots and teeth whitening services are available at the O'Hare medical clinic operated by staff of the University of Illinois-Chicago (UIC). Flu shots are also offered from kiosks in each domestic terminal. The clinic is located in the main corridor that connects Terminals 2 and 3 (airside).

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Security Checkpoint Preparation

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) operates “Family Lanes” at each security checkpoint at O’Hare to provide a better screening experience for families and individuals with medically necessary liquids. These lanes allow families, individuals unfamiliar with air travel procedures, and travelers with special needs to go through security at their own pace.

At Midway, the TSA operates its “Diamond Self-Select” program, featuring separate lanes for Expert, Casual and Family travelers.

The TSA recommends that travelers pack carry-on bags neatly to eliminate clutter; have ID and boarding pass out and ready before entering the checkpoint queue; take coats and shoes off; and remember 3-1-1 for liquids, gels or aerosols in carry-on bags. Travelers are also advised to remove laptops from bags before security checkpoints and to mark them with business cards or another form of identification.

Visit [www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov) for a list of what you can carry through security and other information.

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The Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) 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](http://www.flychicago.com) to learn more about the Chicago Department of Aviation.

The CDA continues to incorporate and expand sustainable initiatives for airport planning, operations and maintenance, and concessions and tenants in accordance with the CDA Sustainable Airport Manual (SAM) Version 2.0, released in November 2010. To view case studies, lessons learned and new technologies, and for more information on the SAM, please visit [www.airportsgoinggreen.org](http://www.airportsgoinggreen.org).

The O’Hare Modernization Program (OMP), introduced by Mayor Richard M. Daley in June 2001, transforms O’Hare’s airfield from an outdated system of intersecting runways into a modern parallel runway configuration. The program will reduce overall delays at the Airport by 79 percent, and bad weather delays by 95 percent. It will create 195,000 new jobs and \$18 billion in additional economic activity each year. Please visit [www.oharemodernization.org](http://www.oharemodernization.org) to learn more about the OMP.

Editor’s Note: One photo is attached.



Photo Caption - The Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) offers complimentary gift-wrapping services, as well as live musical entertainment for travelers O'Hare (above) and Midway International Airports for the Christmas holiday  
Photo courtesy – Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA)/kp