

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



News Release

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CHICAGO'S AIRPORTS WELCOME MORE THAN 3 MILLION TRAVELERS FOR HOLIDAYS

Free gift-wrapping at O'Hare and Midway begins tomorrow

CHICAGO - The Chicago Airport System expects 3.2 million travelers at O'Hare and Midway International Airports this holiday season beginning Thursday, Dec. 20 through the end of the year. The busiest travel day is expected to be Saturday, Dec. 22 with nearly 231,000 passengers at O'Hare and more than 63,000 passengers traveling through Midway.

Both airports will host live entertainment for holiday travelers on Wednesday, Dec. 19, Friday, Dec. 21 and Monday, Dec. 24 from 2 to 5 p.m. and include performances by local blues and jazz bands. Strolling carolers will fill the air with traditional and popular holiday songs on Thursday, Dec. 20 from 3 to 5 p.m. at O'Hare and from 2 to 4 p.m. at Midway.

"As our customers make their way home for the holidays, we are offering a bit of the holiday spirit," said Aviation Commissioner Nuria I. Fernandez. "Our goal is to make travel throughout our airports at this time of year as festive and stress-free as possible."

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) asks that travelers not bring wrapped gifts to the airport because they may be opened and inspected as part of the security screening process. To make gifts festive again after screening, the Chicago Airport System will provide free gift-wrapping services beginning Wednesday, Dec. 19 through Friday, Dec. 21 from 2 to 5 p.m. at O'Hare and 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Midway.

A selection of holiday wrapping paper and gift bag designs, including one created by students in the After School Matters program, will be available at gift wrapping stations and retail shops. After School Matters is Chicago's award-winning program that provides enriching experiences for students during after-school hours.

Volunteer Airport Ambassadors will wrap gifts at a location near Harry Caray's restaurant at Midway. At O'Hare, gift-wrapping stations will be located in Terminal 1, B Concourse near dinosaur exhibit; in Terminal 2, near Goose Island; and in Terminal 3, near Gate H1.

The Department of Aviation advises travelers to call ahead for the status of their flight and to arrive at the airport at least two hours in advance of their scheduled departure. Passengers are also reminded about the TSA's 3-1-1 restriction: If you bring liquids, gels and aerosols as carry-ons, they must be in 3-ounce or smaller containers placed in a 1-quart, clear plastic zip-top bag and only 1 bag per passenger is allowed. Larger quantities should be placed in checked luggage.

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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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