



| THE PLANE TRUTH, PART 2

The best and the worst airlines for complaints, cancellations, refunds, losing luggage, bumping and more

U.S. PIRG
Education Fund

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refunds, losing luggage, bumping and more**

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**CONSUMER WATCHDOG
U.S. PIRG EDUCATION FUND**

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| CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
COMPLAINTS BY AIRLINE PER 100,000 BOARDED PASSENGERS	4
Types of complaints that consumers file	6
COMPLAINTS AGAINST TICKET AGENTS INCREASE TENFOLD	7
The unbelievable Michael Mathews case involving Delta	7
The online ticket/travel agents with the most complaints	8
COMPLAINTS ABOUT CANCELLATIONS, DELAYS	9
Which airlines have the most and fewest complaints	10
The on-time records for the 10 largest airlines.....	12
The promises the airlines have made after canceled, delayed flights	13
COMPLAINTS ABOUT REFUNDS	14
COMPLAINTS ABOUT LUGGAGE, WHEELCHAIRS	16
BUMPING IS ON THE RISE	20
DOT IS INVESTIGATING "UNREALISTIC" SCHEDULING	23
WHAT'S BEING PROPOSED IN WASHINGTON	25
RECOMMENDATIONS	27
METHODOLOGY	32
TIPS FOR CONSUMERS TO PROTECT THEMSELVES	33
APPENDIX	37

| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Michael Mathews and his wife Marjorie booked a Delta flight from Detroit to Fort Lauderdale in January. They got ticket confirmation by email and, after calling Delta, even got seat assignments for flight 1378, confirmed through email. When he couldn't get their boarding passes the day before their March 25 flight, he started making calls, only to be told that his ticket had been canceled. Delta blames his ticket agent, Farebubble.com. The ticket agent blames Delta.

The mind-blowing part of the story is Delta told him there were no seats available for the Saturday flight they had booked for \$628 per ticket. But at the last minute, Delta sold him two seats on the exact same flight, 1378, for \$1,708 each. And, they were the *exact same seats* – 28B and 28C. So the couple paid a total of \$2,160 more for the trip they'd booked two months earlier. Plus they still haven't gotten a refund for the \$628 tickets. Again, Delta blames the ticket agent, which blames Delta.

Mathews filed a complaint this month with the U.S. Department of Transportation, which regulates airlines. It's a process that has become more popular the last few years as airline performance has declined and problems have soared.

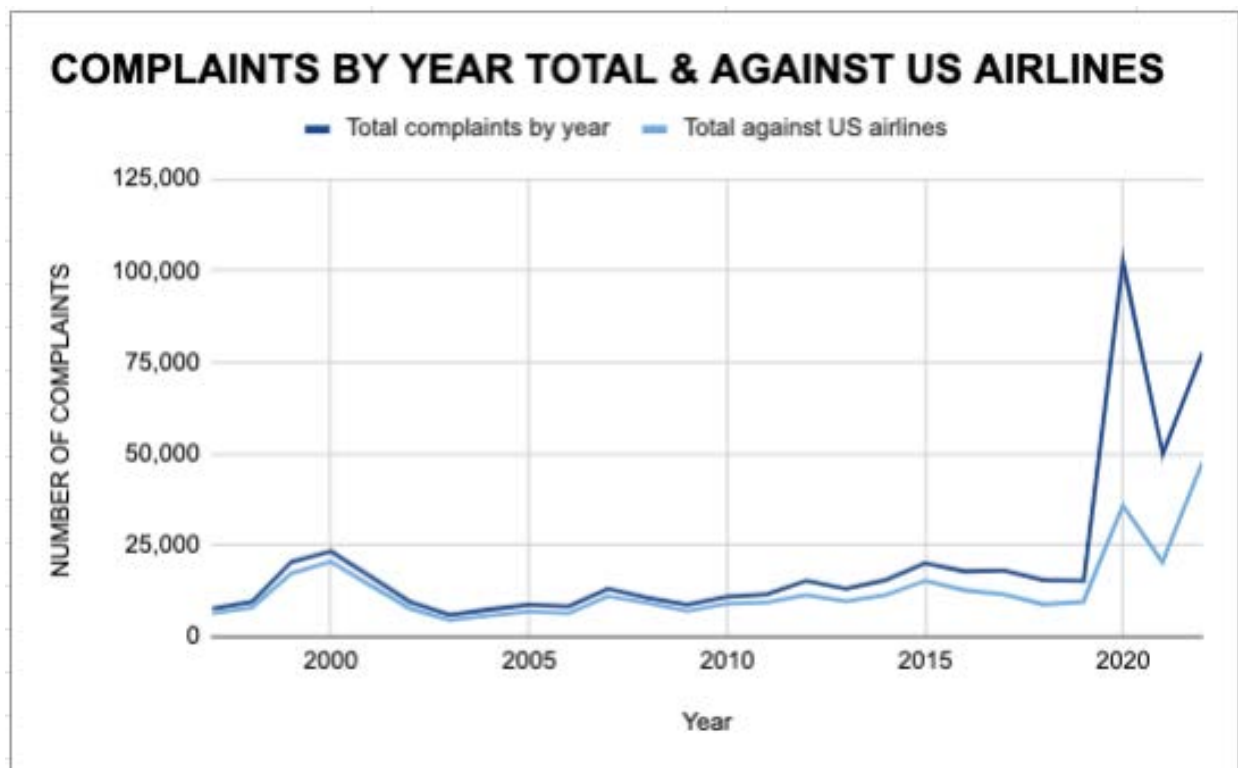
In fact, consumers filed more complaints against U.S. airlines last year than in any year in at least a quarter-century, according to [new data](#) from the DOT.

The DOT this month released details about the December complaints filed against U.S. and foreign airlines, travel agencies and tour operators on issues including cancellations, refunds, bumping and lost baggage.

Consumers filed 77,656 total complaints in 2022, the second-highest number behind refund-plagued 2020, according to DOT records going back to at least 1990. But in 2020, most of the 102,550 complaints were against foreign airlines. U.S. airlines had more complaints in 2022 than in any prior year going back to at least 1990, with 47,591 complaints filed.

Other takeaways from the 80-page government report:

- Nearly one-third of total complaints (not just against U.S. airlines) were about flight problems (cancellations and delays,) propelling it to the top complaint in 2022. No. 2 was refunds and No. 3 was mishandled baggage and wheelchairs.
- Frontier Airlines had the largest number of complaints per 100,000 boarded passengers, followed by Spirit Airlines and JetBlue Airways.
- Horizon Airlines had the lowest complaints-to-passengers ratio, followed by SkyWest Airlines and Mesa Airlines. Among the big four airlines, Delta fared best.
- The complaints-to-passengers ratio was more than five times higher in 2022 than in 2019.



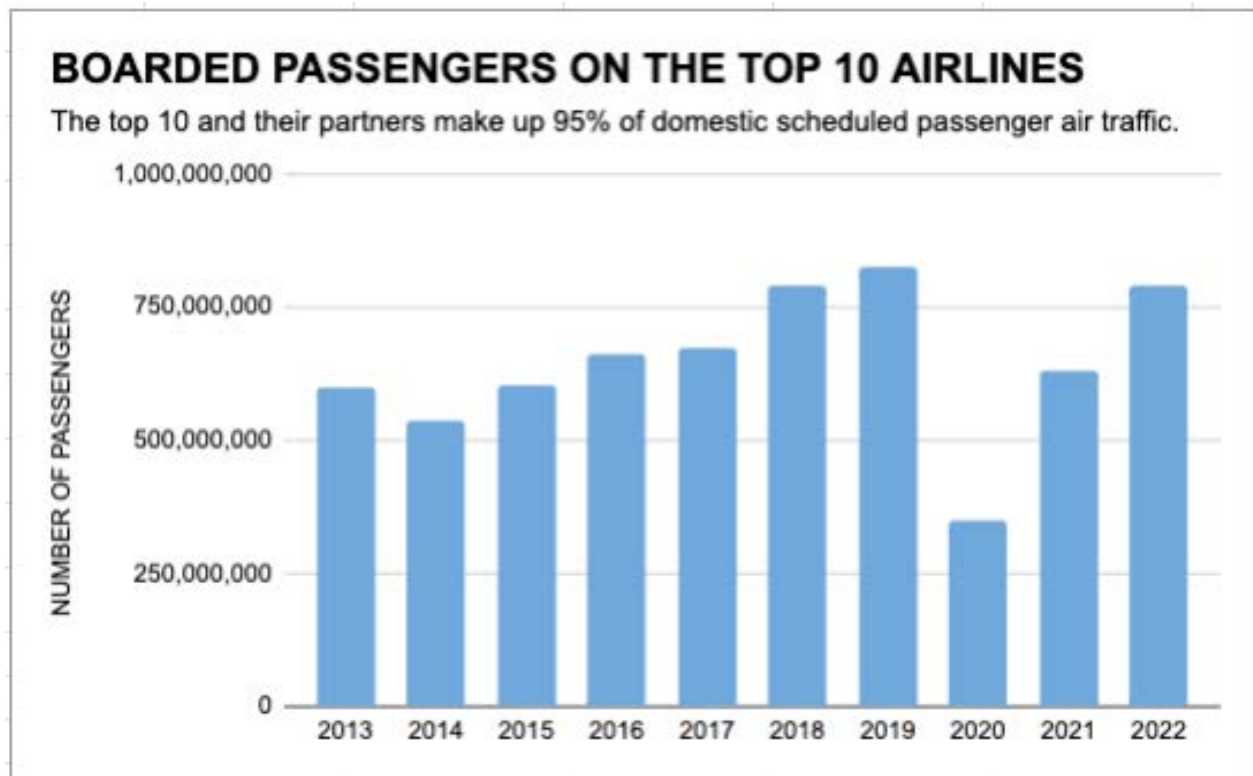
- Complaints against ticket/travel agents were 13 times higher last year than in 2019.
- After adding in 16,876 complaints for December, the 2022 total was five times more than in 2019, the last normal pre-pandemic year, even though there were fewer passengers in 2022. Before the December complaints were released, the volume from January through November was quadruple the number for all of 2019.
- Based on DOT data apart from complaints collected by DOT from consumers, American, Republic and Envoy had the worst records for mishandled baggage, measured per 100 checked bags. Allegiant and Hawaiian had the best records.
- A subset of the baggage data is mishandled (damaged or lost) wheelchairs and scooters. Spirit and JetBlue were the worst with handling wheelchairs and scooters that are checked, with more than five per 100 damaged or lost. Allegiant, Endeavor and Delta were best.
- Frontier had the worst record on involuntary bumping in 2022, by a wide margin, measured by the number of passengers bumped involuntarily per 10,000. Meanwhile, Delta, Allegiant and Endeavor didn't have a single passenger who was bumped involuntarily last year.
- The 17 largest airlines last year had an on-time performance of 76.6%. It's been below 77% only one other time in the last 15 years.

To be clear, 2022 was a bad year for the airlines long before the Christmastime meltdown. But the year-end winter storm disaster that ruined holiday plans for millions of families added more fuel to efforts by regulators and lawmakers to improve consumer protections on everything from scheduling to junk fees to family seating.

Our analysis of the numbers in this month's DOT report – which shows complaints were at record highs and performance was among the worst years in a quarter-century –

demonstrates there is considerable room for improvement.

At a meeting this month with DOT Secretary Pete Buttigieg and other top DOT officials, Buttigieg told U.S. PIRG Education Fund and eight other consumer advocates that he wants the DOT under his tenure to accomplish the “strongest expansion of passenger rights in recent history.” To be sure, some meaningful steps have already been taken. But there is much that needs to be done.



RATIO OF COMPLAINTS-TO-PASSENGERS

One of the most interesting sets of data in the annual report looks at the volume of complaints for the 17 largest airlines, per 100,000 boarded passengers. This gives us an apples-to-apples view of the airlines.

Frontier Airlines' ratio of complaints-to-100,000 boarded passengers was twice as high as the next airline. Frontier received 20.3 complaints per 100,000 passengers in 2022, more than three times higher than in 2021. Frontier was followed by Spirit Airlines with 10.1 complaints per 100,000 and JetBlue Airlines with 9 complaints per 100,000.

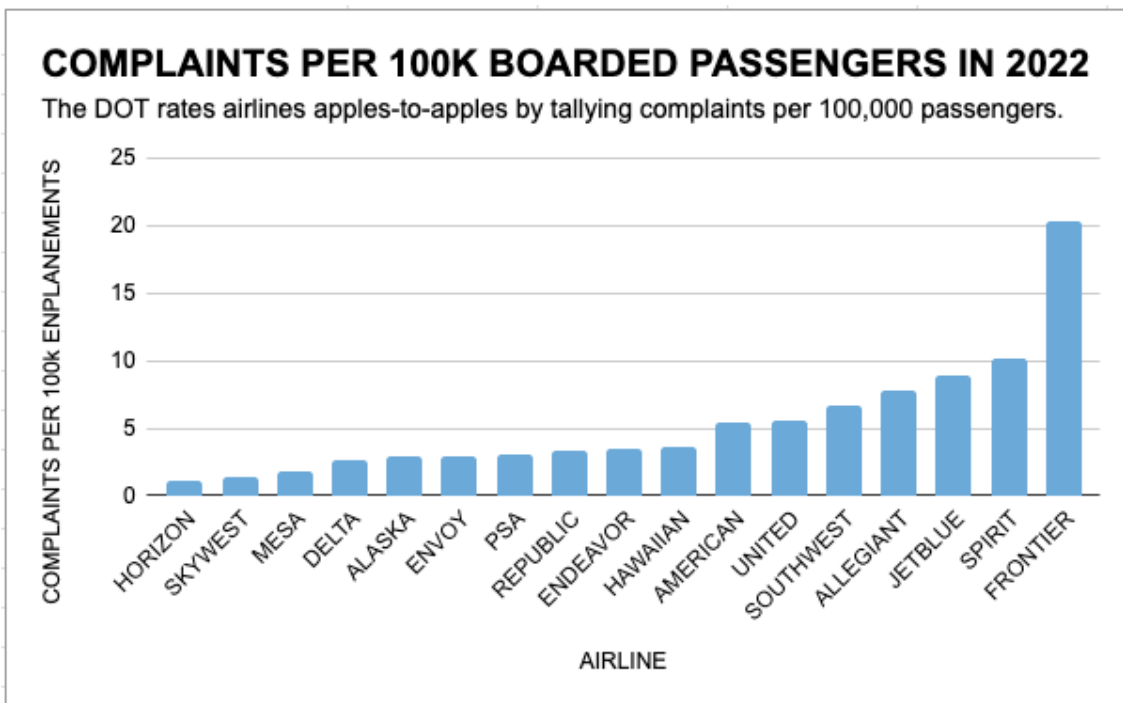
In 2021, Spirit had the most complaints per 100,000 boarded passengers, at 11.5,

followed by JetBlue with 6.4 and Frontier with 5.8.

Horizon Airlines had the lowest complaint ratio in 2022, followed by SkyWest Airlines and Mesa Airlines. Among the big four airlines, Delta fared best.

The complaint ratio average among the 17 airlines jumped from 3.1 in 2021 to 5.6 in 2022.

For 2022, Southwest and Endeavor had the biggest ranking declines. Southwest's complaints per 100,000 passengers tally jumped from 1.4 in 2021 to 6.8 in 2022.



For just December 2022, Southwest was at the bottom, with 73.06 complaints for 100,000 boarded passengers. Southwest in December had a catastrophic Christmastime meltdown, canceling about 17,000 of its flights in December, 15% of its flights. Southwest was responsible for more than half of the 30,582 December cancellations for the 17 largest airlines.

There's every reason to believe the 77,656 complaints do not represent all of the travelers who had issues in 2022 or had a basis to file a complaint. Millions and millions of travelers were affected in December alone, and some of those have told U.S. PIRG Education Fund they're still hopeful of resolution before filing a complaint.

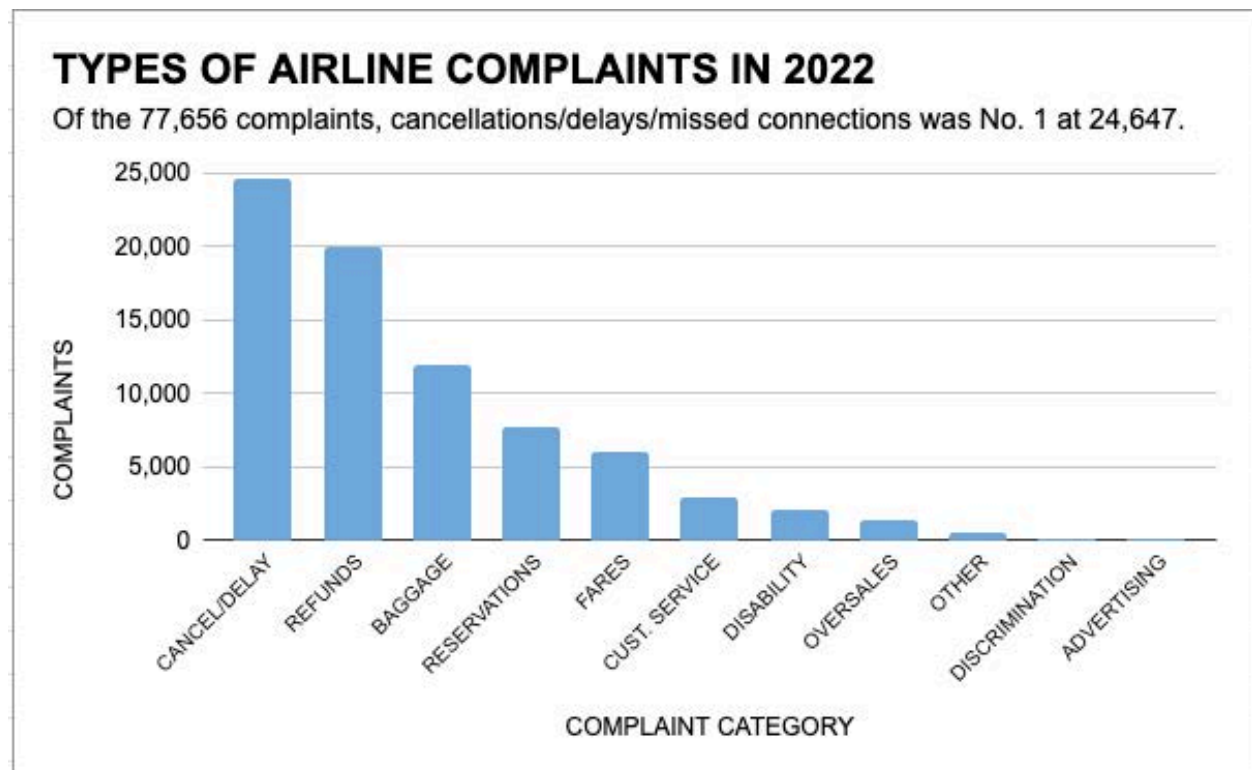
In any case, only a fraction of consumers actually file complaints about anything – It's

just human nature – even though the process through DOT is easy online or by phone.

Travelers can file complaints against U.S. airlines, foreign airlines, travel agents, tour operators or others. Notably, the DOT encourages consumers to try to resolve their issue with the airline or whoever they think is responsible before filing a complaint.

So the complaints generally represent those travelers who were unable to get an acceptable resolution.

Airlines are then required to acknowledge complaints filed with the DOT within 30 days and respond in writing within 60 days. Ticket agents are also expected to respond to consumer complaints, although there's no timeline for replies.



Consumers can [file a complaint](#) with the DOT about a host of issues. The categories are:

- Flight problems: Cancellations, delays, missed connections.
- Oversales: Bumping, regardless whether reimbursed according to federal law.
- Reservations/tickets/boarding: Mistakes made by airlines or travel agents concerning reservations and ticketing, problems making reservations or getting tickets because of busy phone lines or waiting in line in person or delays in receiving tickets by mail.
- Fares: Inaccurate or incomplete information about fares, fare costs in general, discount fares, overcharges, price increases.
- Refunds: Problems getting a refund when a flight is canceled or when a ticket otherwise isn't used or lost, problems with a fare adjustment.
- Baggage: Lost, damaged or delayed baggage, including wheelchairs and scooters, charges for excess baggage, issues with carry-ons, difficulty filing a claim.
- Customer service: Rude or unhelpful employees, issues with meals or cabin service, treatment of travelers who are delayed, dissatisfaction with seat assignments, problems with family seating.
- Disability: Civil rights complaints by passengers with disabilities.
- Advertising: Ads that are misleading, deceptive or offensive.
- Discrimination: Civil rights complaints by passengers concerning race, national origin, religion, etc.
- Animals: Loss, injury or death of an animal under the airline's care.
- Other: Frequent flyer issues, and problems with cargo, airport facilities, injuries, sexual assault/misconduct and any other issues not in another category.

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR RIGHTS

[Passengers have rights](#) for issues such as refunds, cancellations, delays, tarmac delays and lost baggage.

When flights are canceled or significantly delayed, travelers should [know what they're entitled](#) to regarding refunds, overnight lodging, meals, ground transportation.

And if they [choose to accept](#) a credit or voucher for a flight, it's important to understand how they work at each of the 10 largest domestic airlines.

Here's how to [file a complaint](#) with the DOT.

COMPLAINTS SKYROCKET AGAINST TICKET/TRAVEL AGENTS

The number of complaints against travel agents, which primarily means third-party booking websites, exploded in recent years, jumping from 436 complaints in 2019 to 14,604 in 2020. Complaint volume fell in 2021 and again in 2022, but still remains more than 10 times higher than pre-pandemic, at 5,852 complaints last year.

It's all about refunds, or lack of.

While the third-party websites can help travelers find great deals on airline tickets (as well as hotels and other travel options,) the companies often finger-point when a refund is legally owed.

Just ask Michael and Marjorie Mathews, the Michigan couple who are out more than \$3,400 after their nightmare trip to Fort Lauderdale last month. Although Delta sent the couple emails with the seat confirmations back in January, the airline said their tickets were somehow canceled and that no seats were available on their Saturday flight. Delta offered tickets for Sunday, but their beach home and car rentals started Saturday. Then Delta sold them the *same* tickets for the *same* seats on the *same* flight number on the *same* day at the *same* time – at nearly triple the price.

Mathews has spent hours and hours this month trying to get his \$3,400 back. He filed a complaint with DOT and is trying to

dispute the charge with his credit card issuer.

Delta tells him it can't help because the original tickets were booked through Farebubble.com, he said.

"They claim that they are unable to send me the documentation that I have requested," Mathews said. "I do not believe them, but what can I do? For the record, it took me almost two weeks, untold hours of phone calls and emails to get to this point with Delta.

"They purposely make it so difficult – most people would give up," he said. "But I'm not going away."

Mathews' issues are multi-layered and complex. But the frustration he shares with thousands of travelers is difficulty getting a timely refund. Part of the problem is that, while airlines are required by law to issue refunds within seven business days for tickets purchased with a credit card, "[prompt is not defined](#)" for ticket agents, according to DOT.

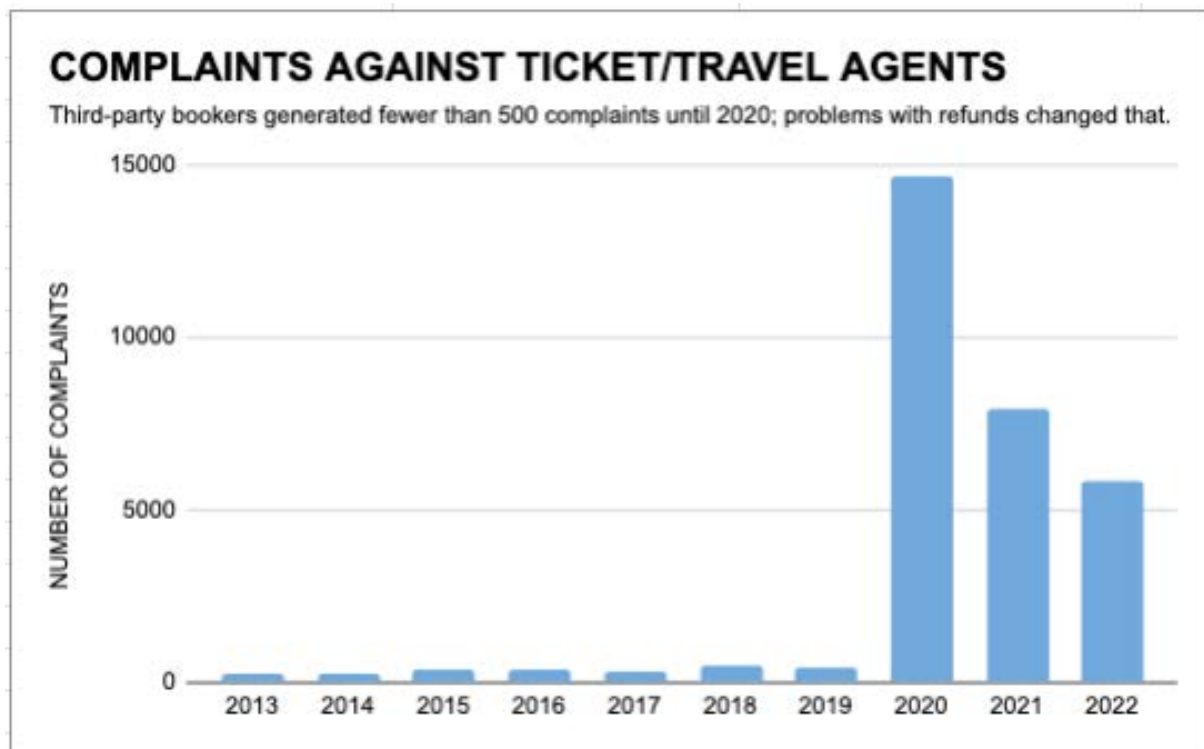
At a meeting this month with DOT Secretary Buttigieg and other top DOT officials, U.S. PIRG Education Fund asked why travel agents don't have a refund deadline like airlines do. The explanation

provided: Officials said there is sometimes disagreement between the airline and travel agent about who actually has the customer's money.

The vast majority of complaints against travel agents/ticket websites concern refunds. The other leading categories are fares (such as inaccurate or incomplete information, or overcharges,) and reservations/tickets/boarding (such as mistakes with reservations or ticketing).

Of the 46 travel agents listed by the DOT, 11 had 100 or more complaints. In order, they are:

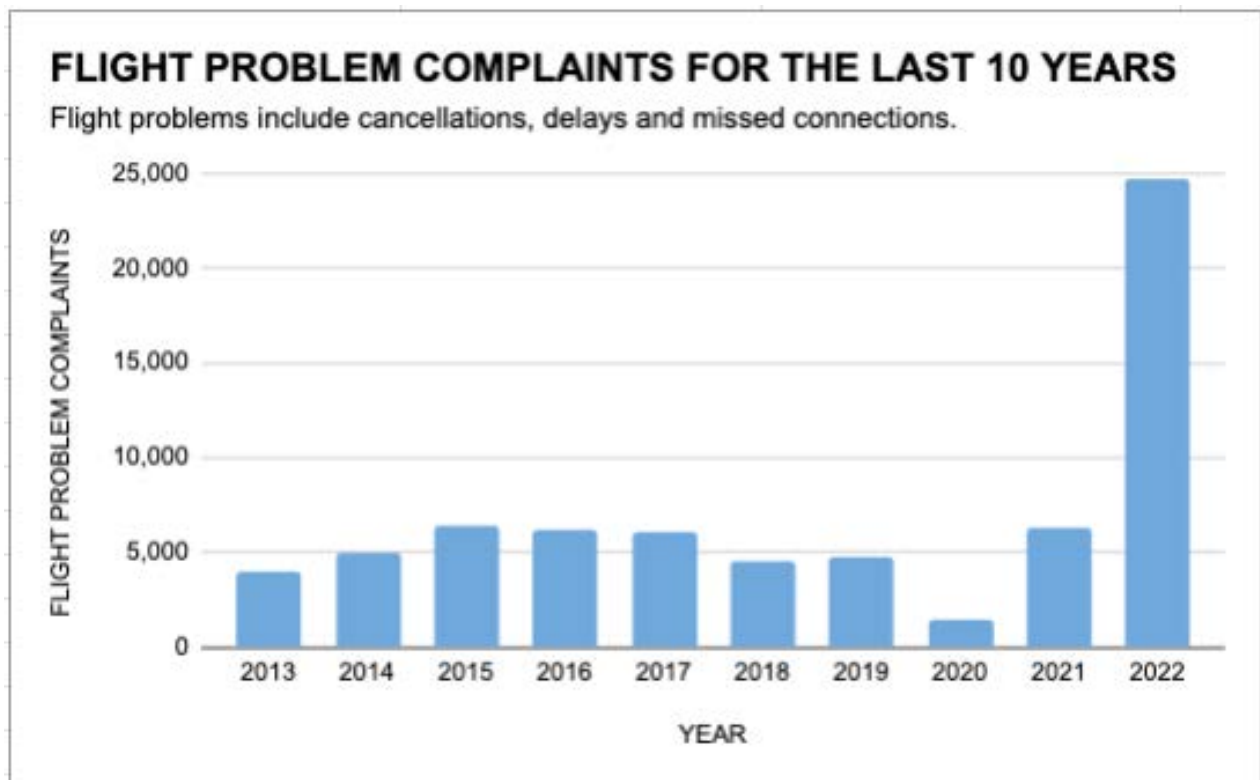
Expedia.com: 1,098
Kiwi.com: 521
JustFly.com: 377
GoToGate: 350
CheapOAir.com: 333
Priceline.com: 324
Orbitz.com: 236
EDreams.com: 216
Travelocity: 215
ASAPtickets.com: 209
Chase Travel: 185



COMPLAINTS ABOUT CANCELLATIONS, DELAYS AND MISSED CONNECTIONS

Complaints about cancellations, delays and misconnections topped the list of grievances travelers filed with DOT in 2022. The flight problems at Christmastime – some understandable and some not – propelled this category to No. 1, pushing it past refunds.

There were 24,647 complaints about flight problems last year, up from 6,316 in 2021 and 4,757 in 2019. Flight problems made up 31.7% of all complaints. This category also included [not getting reimbursed for expenses](#) related to cancellations and delays.



Of the total flight problem complaints in 2022, 21,023 of them were against U.S. airlines. One-third of those – more than 7,000 complaints – were aimed at Southwest.

Here's a breakdown of the 2022 flight problem complaints:

Cancellations: 16,434

Delays: 4,593

Missed connections: 2,232

Here's the tally of flight problem complaints for U.S. airlines. DOT reports flight problem complaints for airlines that received at least 10 complaints in all categories combined.)

Southwest Airlines	7,087	Envoy	151
American Airlines	3,017	Sun Country Airlines	84
United Airlines	2,211	Hawaiian	82
Frontier Airlines	1,896	Breeze Airways	75
Spirit Airlines	1,521	Mesa Airlines	69
JetBlue Airlines	1,506	Alevo	38
Delta Air Lines	1,482	Silver	37
Allegiant	420	Piedmont	44
Alaska	300	Horizon	22
Republic	246	Eastern	18
SkyWest	224	Boutique	11
PSA Airlines	218	Cape	11
Endeavor	215	Elite Airways	1

Among the 17 largest airlines, Republic Airways had the highest percentage of cancellations in 2022, at 4.7%, or 14,862 canceled flights.

Hawaiian Airlines had the lowest percentage, canceling less than 1% of flights in 2022.

Among the big four airlines, Southwest had the highest percentage of cancellations; Delta had the lowest.

Along with cancellations, there are delays. A flight is considered by the DOT to be on time if it arrived within [15 minutes of the scheduled time](#), meaning it wasn't delayed or canceled.

There are similarities between the best and worst on the cancellation list and the best

and worst on the not-on-time list.

Allegiant had the worst on-time record for 2022, at 63.4% on time. It was followed by JetBlue at 64.6% on time, and Frontier with 66.1% on time.

While some flights are delayed because of severe weather, security delays or heavy traffic, the single biggest reason for delays is an issue within the airline's control, according to the DOT. "Examples include: maintenance or crew problems, cabin cleaning, baggage loading and fueling,"

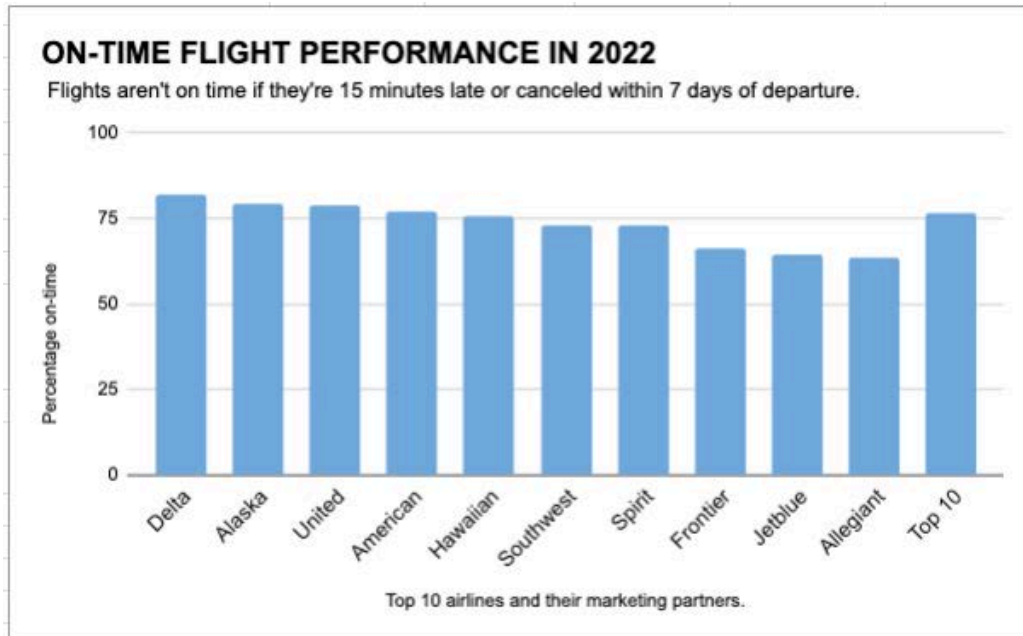
DOT says. In 2022, issues within the air carrier's control were the No. 1 reason for delays every month except in July.

The DOT every month, every quarter and every year releases details of the top airlines' cancellation records.

But it only tallies flights not canceled within the last seven days.

CANCELED FLIGHTS BY AIRLINE

CARRIER	JANUARY - DECEMBER 2022		
	FLIGHT OPERATIONS SCHEDULED	FLIGHT OPERATIONS CANCELED	PERCENT OF OPERATIONS CANCELED
HAWAIIAN AIRLINES	73,865	680	0.92
DELTA AIR LINES	893,172	14,317	1.6
HORIZON AIR	88,791	1,512	1.7
SKYWEST AIRLINES	733,576	13,331	1.82
UNITED AIRLINES	626,473	11,886	1.9
ENVOY AIR	248,059	5,550	2.24
ALASKA AIRLINES	228,384	6,218	2.72
FRONTIER AIRLINES	155,482	4,455	2.87
AMERICAN AIRLINES	874,145	25,894	2.96
SPIRIT AIRLINES	232,400	6,973	3
PSA AIRLINES	214,450	6,612	3.08
SOUTHWEST AIRLINES	1,307,149	42,655	3.26
MESA AIRLINES	114,779	3,810	3.32
ALLEGiant AIR	116,877	4,110	3.52
ENDEAVOR AIR	231,941	8,202	3.54
JETBLUE AIRWAYS	273,058	10,219	3.74
REPUBLIC AIRWAYS	316,524	14,862	4.7
TOTAL	6,729,125	181,286	2.69



The question this raises is whether airlines are putting together unrealistic schedules. As noted in [our previous report](#) in March, these cancellation and on-time performance numbers don't include flights canceled more than seven days before departure. These are called "discontinued flights" and they're not tracked by DOT. The airlines still owe customers refunds, but there are no consequences.

Even with DOT using the data it has about canceled and delayed flights, in February [officials announced](#) they're asking about schedules, saying:

"DOT remains committed to ensuring airline passengers are treated fairly and is concerned about recent flight cancellations and flight disruptions. The Department is currently investigating four domestic airlines

to ensure that they are not engaging in unrealistic scheduling of flights."

We know one of the airlines is Southwest. The other three haven't been publicly disclosed. The DOT says producing [unrealistic flight schedules](#) is considered under federal law to be "an unfair and deceptive practice."

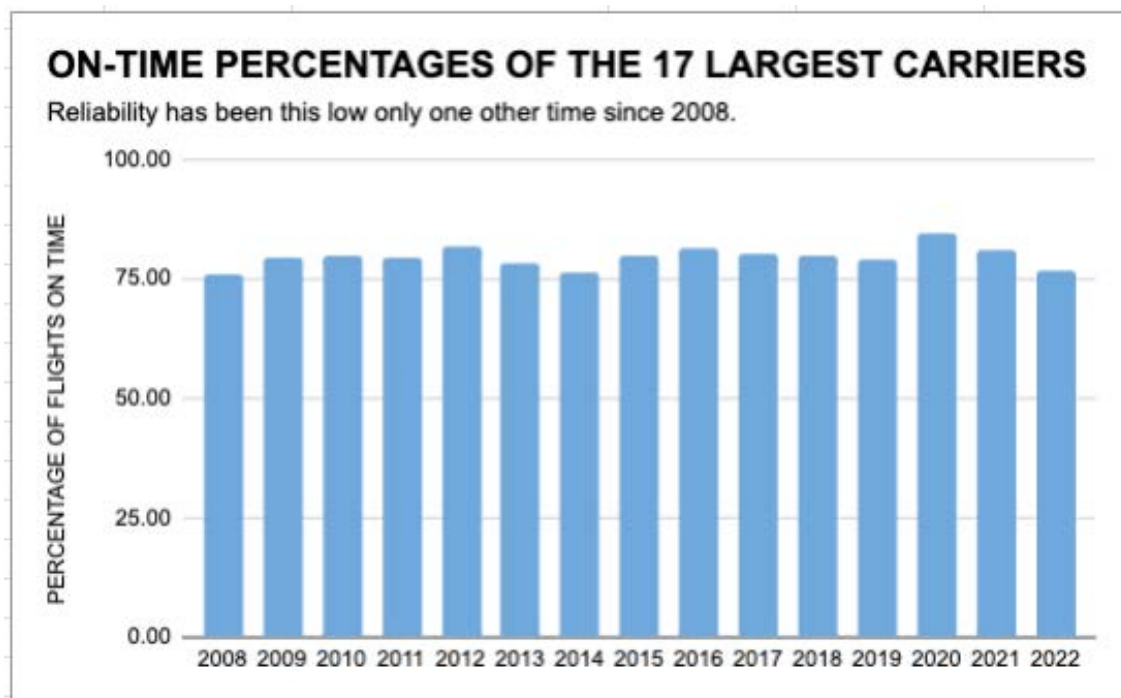
The DOT for the last year has been pressuring airlines to do right by customers when the airline is responsible for a cancellation or delay. DOT [secured agreements](#) from the top 10 carriers to take certain steps to accommodate customers in the event of a controllable cancellation or delay. Until last summer, [none of the top 10 airlines guaranteed hotels or meals](#) when they caused the cancellation or long delay.

Now, when a cancellation or delay within the airlines' control delays a passenger by three hours or more:

- All of the top 10 carriers will rebook a passenger on their own airline and provide money or a voucher for meals.
- With a controllable cancellation, six will rebook a passenger on a partner airline or another airline with which it has an agreement, at no additional cost to the customer: Alaska, American, Delta, Hawaiian, JetBlue and United. But four will not rebook with another airline: Allegiant, Frontier, Southwest and Spirit.
- With a controllable delay, five will rebook a passenger with a partner or another airline with which it has an agreement, at no cost to the customer: Alaska, American, Delta, JetBlue and United. But five will not rebook with another airline: Allegiant, Frontier, Hawaiian, Southwest and Spirit.

- All except Frontier will pay for a hotel and ground transportation to and from a hotel when a cancellation or delay within the airline's control strands a customer overnight.
- In cases of cancellation or a delay of three hours or more, Frontier will only rebook with its own airline and provide cash or a voucher for a meal.

The airlines' promises become part of its contract that the DOT says it will enforce. The commitments are publicly displayed on the DOT website on its [Airline Customer Service Dashboard](#). The hope: That such an easy-to-understand, public-facing comparison will put pressure on the airlines to adopt more customer-friendly policies.



COMPLAINTS ABOUT REFUNDS

Refunds were the top complaint in 2020 and 2021, but not in 2022. About [25.7% of complaints last year](#) dealt with refunds – usually not getting one even in cases where required by law.

Nearly 20,000 complaints were filed about refunds last year. That’s nearly 20,000 ticket buyers – who may have purchased multiple tickets for their families – and in many cases, may still not have gotten their money back.

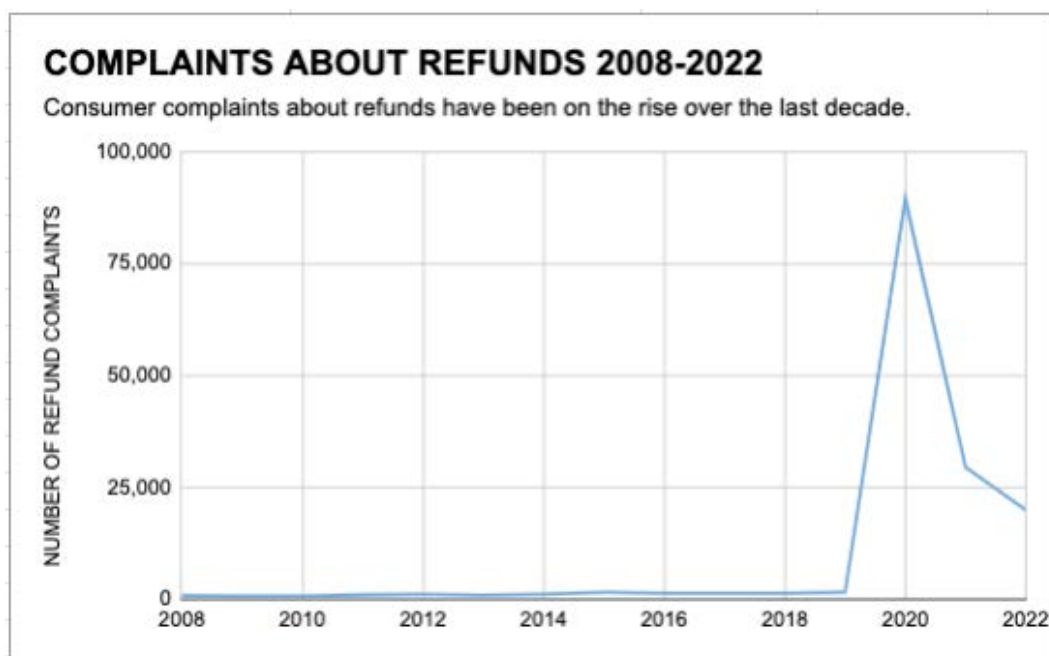
Remember that complaints are generally filed after an issue hasn’t been resolved with the airline directly; even one complaint about not getting a legally required refund is too many.

That said, refund complaints stayed between 600 and 1,600 a year from 2008 to 2019, although the trend was upward. The lid blew

off in 2020, when more than 300,000 flights were canceled in the United States and 89,511 complaints were filed about refunds.

Experts determined that travelers were owed about [\\$10 billion in refunds](#) from 2020. [DOT says that](#), since 2021, DOT has helped get more than \$1 billion refunded to travelers. That leaves a lot unaccounted for.

The DOT did [fine a half-dozen airlines](#) in November for taking too long to issue refunds. But it included only one U.S. airline – Frontier Airlines. The refunds involved flights that had been canceled or significantly delayed or changed. The airlines were ordered to refund more than \$600 million in refunds and pay more than \$7.25 million in civil penalties. DOT promised more enforcement; that hasn’t happened yet.



2022 REFUND COMPLAINTS BY AIRLINE

U.S. AIRLINES	2022 REFUND COMPLAINTS
ALASKA AIRLINES	163
ALLEGiant AIR	317
AMERICAN AIRLINES	1,604
AVELO AIRLINES	21
BOUTIQUE AIR	6
BREEZE AIRWAYS	38
CAPE AIR	5
DELTA AIR LINES	603
EASTERN	34
ELITE AIRWAYS	6
ENDEAVOR AIR	90
ENVOY AIR	64
FRONTIER AIRLINES	1,008
HAWAIIAN AIRLINES	110
HORIZON AIRLINES	9
JETBLUE AIRWAYS	580
MESA AIRLINES	19
MOKULELE AIRLINES	1
OTHER US COMMUTERS & AIR TAXIS	15
PIEDMONT AIRLINES	16
PSA AIRLINES	39
REPUBLIC AIRWAYS	105
SILVER AIRWAYS	35
SKYWEST AIRLINES	98
SOUTHWEST AIRLINES	895
SPIRIT AIRLINES	810
SUN COUNTRY AIRLINES	41
UNITED AIRLINES	1,112
OTHER U.S. AIRLINES	20

COMPLAINTS ABOUT MISHANDLED LUGGAGE, WHEELCHAIRS

Consumers filed 12,007 complaints last year about baggage, up from 1,996 in 2021, and up from 2,565 in 2019, when there were more travelers and more checked bags.

Of 470 million bags boarded in 2022, the DOT says nearly 3 million were mishandled. It only counts checked [baggage on direct flights](#), not connecting ones.

Three of the big four airlines – United,

Southwest and American – had similar numbers of complaints, ranging from 1,033 to 1,119. The last of the big four, Delta, had fewer than half that amount, at 492 complaints.

For Frontier, which had less than 20 percent of the passengers and checked bags that Delta had last year, consumers filed 582 baggage complaints. DOT reports baggage complaints for airlines that received at least 10 complaints in all categories combined.)

U.S AIRLINES AND NUMBER OF BAGGAGE COMPLAINTS IN 2022

ALASKA AIRLINES	143
ALLEGiant AIR	119
AMERICAN AIRLINES	1,033
AVELO AIRLINES	17
BOUTIQUE AIR	2
BREEZE AIRWAYS	25
CAPE AIR	6
DELTA AIR LINES	492
EASTERN	1
ELITE AIRWAYS	0
ENDEAVOR AIR	39
ENVOY AIR	62
FRONTIER AIRLINES	582
HAWAIIAN AIRLINES	35
HORIZON AIRLINES	14
JETBLUE AIRWAYS	356

MESA AIRLINES	13
MOKULELE AIRLINES	0
OTHER US COMMUTERS & AIR TAXIS	6
PIEDMONT AIRLINES	15
PSA AIRLINES	29
REPUBLIC AIRWAYS	66
SILVER AIRWAYS	33
SKYWEST AIRLINES	80
SOUTHWEST AIRLINES	1,075
SPIRIT AIRLINES	380
SUN COUNTRY AIRLINES	48
UNITED AIRLINES	1,119
OTHER U.S. AIRLINES	7

As with many other consumer issues, the DOT actually quantifies baggage problems, aside from complaints.

DOT tallies incidents of bags that are lost, delayed or have items missing. The industry average for the 17 largest airlines last year was 0.63 per 100 bags. The airline with the worst record was American, with nearly one bag (0.94) out of every 100. The airline with the best record was Allegiant, with incidents with 0.16 bags per 100.

Of the big four:

- American: 633,843 bags mishandled (0.94 per 100).
- United: 320,596 bags mishandled (0.65 per 100).
- Delta: 410,361 bags mishandled (0.55 per 100).
- Southwest: 655,053 bags mishandled (0.54 per 100).

MISHANDLED BAGS IN 2022 AMONG THE 17 LARGEST AIRLINES

RANK	CARRIER	JANUARY - DECEMBER 2022		
		NUMBER OF BAGS ENPLANED	NUMBER OF BAGS MISHANDLED	NUMBER OF BAGS MISHANDLED PER 100 ENPLANED
1	ALLEGiant AIR	6,621,329	10,295	0.16
2	HAWAIIAN AIRLINES	6,192,423	23,435	0.38
3	FRONTIER AIRLINES	9,852,249	41,499	0.42
4	ENDEAVOR AIR	9,030,888	45,049	0.5
5	SPIRIT AIRLINES	12,976,167	64,831	0.5
6	SOUTHWEST AIRLINES	121,394,275	655,053	0.54
7	DELTA AIR LINES	74,402,459	410,361	0.55
8	SKYWEST AIRLINES	28,805,305	160,894	0.56
9	HORIZON AIR	4,371,724	27,846	0.64
10	UNITED AIRLINES	49,459,806	320,596	0.65
11	JETBLUE AIRWAYS	15,350,805	104,132	0.68
12	PSA AIRLINES	11,270,720	76,508	0.68
13	MESA AIRLINES	5,136,738	35,424	0.69
14	ALASKA AIRLINES	20,738,655	156,561	0.75
15	ENVOY AIR	9,199,711	76,205	0.83
16	REPUBLIC AIRWAYS	8,644,672	74,734	0.86
17	AMERICAN AIRLINES	67,091,578	633,843	0.94

MISHANDLED WHEELCHAIRS IN 2022 AMONG THE 17 LARGEST AIRLINES

RANK	CARRIER	JANUARY - DECEMBER 2022		
		NUMBER OF WHEELCHAIRS AND SCOOTERS ENPLANED	NUMBER OF WHEELCHAIRS AND SCOOTERS MISHANDLED	NUMBER OF WHEELCHAIRS AND SCOOTERS MISHANDLED PER 100 ENPLANED
1	ALLEGiant AIR	17,275	68	0.39
2	ENDEAVOR AIR	13,556	95	0.7
3	DELTA AIR LINES	159,173	1,301	0.82
4	HORIZON AIR	5,128	46	0.9
5	SKYWEST AIRLINES	41,682	412	0.99
6	UNITED AIRLINES	98,039	1,149	1.17
7	REPUBLIC AIRWAYS	12,611	166	1.32
8	MESA AIRLINES	6,454	89	1.38
9	HAWAIIAN AIRLINES	7,444	117	1.57
10	ALASKA AIRLINES	25,659	408	1.59
11	SOUTHWEST AIRLINES	171,501	2,786	1.62
12	FRONTIER AIRLINES	24,328	416	1.71
13	ENVOY AIR	9,481	179	1.89
14	AMERICAN AIRLINES	94,450	1,885	2
15	PSA AIRLINES	7,527	187	2.48
16	JETBLUE AIRWAYS	28,140	1,465	5.21
17	SPIRIT AIRLINES	8,813	508	5.76
TOTAL		731,261	11,277	1.54

It's interesting that Southwest's record wasn't worse in 2022, considering that in December, it mishandled 117,145 bags, or 1.20 out of every 100, for one of the worst records. Southwest was one of the best in 2021, at 0.37 bags per 100 mishandled.

Among the items mishandled last year: 11,389 wheelchairs and scooters. This counts only those placed in the cargo compartment.

This is a bigger problem than might be immediately apparent because these often take weeks or months to get repaired [because of repair restrictions](#).

Eleven of the 17 airlines had worse records for wheelchair/scooter handling in December than for the full year: Endeavor, Horizon, United, Mesa, Hawaiian, Alaska, Southwest, American, PSA, JetBlue and Spirit.

If travelers' bags are lost, pilfered or delayed, [they do have rights](#), including a refund for any checked bag fees and reimbursement for lost items, up to \$3,800.

And DOT counts wheelchairs and scooters put in the cargo compartment as bags.

But devices used to assist passengers with disabilities are not subject to the \$3,800 limit if they're lost or damaged on domestic flights. "If an airline destroys or loses a \$20,000 assistive device during a domestic flight, the airline is liable for \$20,000," [DOT says](#). "If an airline damages but doesn't destroy a \$20,000 assistive device, then the airline is liable for the damage up to the cost of original purchase price."

Assistive devices are defined as those that help people with a disability to see, hear, communicate, maneuver or perform other everyday tasks.

Assistive devices include but aren't necessarily limited to:

- Crutches, canes, and walkers.
- Braces/prosthetics.
- Wheelchairs.
- Hearing aids.
- Portable oxygen concentrators.
- Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machines.
- Prescription medications and any devices needed to administer those medications, such as syringes.

Airlines have been required to report incidents with wheelchairs and scooters separately since January 2019.

| BUMPING IS ON THE RISE

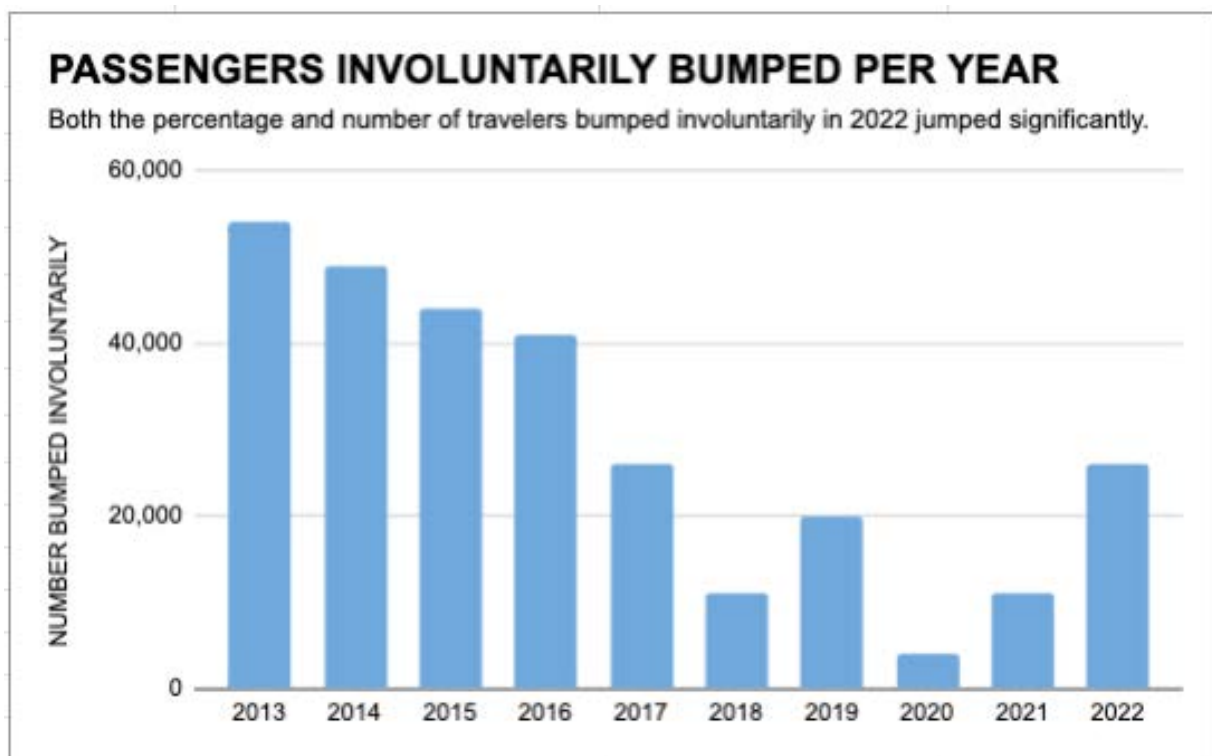
Anyone who has flown recently knows most flights are really full. Sometimes too full.

To maximize the number of passengers who can get somewhere, and to maximize revenues, airlines often oversell tickets. They believe, based on algorithms, that a certain number of passengers won't show up for a specific flight, either for personal reasons or because their previous flight was too late to catch the connecting flight. Those no-show predictions often hold close to reality. But when too many passengers line up for a particular flight, decisions have to be made.

Airlines that are oversold generally ask for volunteers and offer another flight plus compensation of varying amounts to those who give up their seats willingly.

Of the 309,503 travelers bumped from flights with the 17 largest U.S. airlines, more than 90 percent volunteered when asked. But that left 25,013 bumped or "denied boarding" involuntarily.

The percentage of passengers bumped involuntarily in 2022 nearly doubled from 2021.



By a wide margin, Frontier had the worst record on involuntary bumping in 2022, with 2.66 passengers bumped involuntarily per 10,000 boarded passengers. At Frontier, 6,081 were denied boarding voluntarily, while 9,731 agreed to be bumped.

Frontier's record was nearly four times as bad as the next closest airline, Envoy Air, where 0.67 passengers per 10,000 boarded were denied boarding involuntarily.

Meanwhile, Delta, Allegiant and Endeavor didn't have a single passenger who was bumped involuntarily.

Frontier had 2.9% of all boarded passengers but 24% of involuntary denied boardings.

As for complaints, Frontier had 200 complaints filed against it regarding bumping. That represented 21% of the 972 total bumping complaints.

Just because an airline didn't bump anyone involuntarily doesn't mean all passengers were happy. The three airlines that didn't involuntarily bump a single person still had a combined 120 complaints against them.

Involuntary bumping has been on the rise the last few years. Last year's 0.32 per 10,000 boarded passengers is the [highest level since 2017](#).

Volunteering to get bumped from a flight can be lucrative, particularly in recent years. For example, last June, Delta oversold a flight from Grand Rapids, Michigan, to Minneapolis, Minn. Eight travelers [ended up](#)

[with \\$10,000](#) to give up their seats. On another Delta flight, this one in July from LaGuardia Airport in New York to West Palm Beach, Fla., [travelers were offered up to \\$3,000](#).

Airlines seem more willing to offer generous amounts after an awful incident in 2017. An overbooked United Airlines flight from Chicago resulted in a [Kentucky doctor being knocked unconscious](#) after airline representatives forcibly removed him from the plane. He declined to give up his seat because he said he had patients to see the next day. He was left bleeding, had teeth knocked out and his glasses were broken. A video of the confrontation went viral on social media. The doctor settled with United for [about \\$140 million](#).

The \$10,000 and \$3,000 offers involved passengers who, like the Kentucky doctor, were already on board. It's more customary for travelers to get offers of a few hundred or maybe \$1,000 or so for relinquishing their seat before they board.

For passengers who are bumped involuntarily, the [airline must provide compensation](#) if the person will be delayed one hour or more.

- For domestic flights with a one- to two-hour delay, the compensation is double your one-way fare, up to \$775.
- If the delay is more than two hours, the compensation is quadruple your one-way fare, up to \$1,550.
- The compensation levels are higher for international flights.

Last year, 1,336 travelers filed complaints about bumping – indicating they likely weren’t satisfied with whatever happened.

That’s more than four times as many as in 2021 and more than three times as many as in 2019.

VOLUNTARY AND INVOLUNTARY BUMPING AT THE 17 LARGEST AIRLINES IN 2022

JANUARY - DECEMBER 2022						
RANK	CARRIER ¹	DENIED BOARDINGS (DB'S)		ENPLANED PASSENGERS	INVOLUNTARY DB's PER 10,000 PASSENGERS	COMPLAINTS FROM CONSUMERS
		VOLUNTARY	INVOLUNTARY			
1	DELTA AIR LINES	64,942	0	131,792,631	0	96
2	ALLEGiant AIR	1,564	0	16,796,544	0	15
3	ENDEAVOR AIR	12,864	0	11,995,835	0	9
4	HAWAIIAN AIRLINES	753	4	9,811,352	0	3
5	UNITED AIRLINES	16,682	136	99,302,329	0.01	126
6	JETBLUE AIRWAYS	5,222	209	34,981,753	0.06	30
7	ALASKA AIRLINES	10,220	334	30,670,714	0.11	16
8	SKYWEST AIRLINES	30,451	492	38,484,750	0.13	17
9	HORIZON AIR	1,973	99	5,424,597	0.18	0
10	MESA AIRLINES	2,107	137	7,384,078	0.19	4
11	SPIRIT AIRLINES	14,727	1,324	36,096,463	0.37	111
12	AMERICAN AIRLINES	28,421	5,211	135,675,687	0.38	198
13	REPUBLIC AIRWAYS	10,209	676	17,136,082	0.39	14
14	PSA AIRLINES	4,758	651	12,115,337	0.54	16
15	SOUTHWEST AIRLINES	62,972	8,751	155,674,042	0.56	55
16	ENVOY AIR	6,894	908	13,529,927	0.67	25
17	FRONTIER AIRLINES	9,731	6,081	22,820,700	2.66	200
	OTHERS					37
	TOTAL	284,490	25,013	779,692,821	0.32	972

¹ All U.S. airlines with at least half of one percent of total domestic scheduled-service passenger revenues.

| DOT IS INVESTIGATING "UNREALISTIC" SCHEDULING

The 2022 avalanche of complaints clearly was fueled by December, when DOT received 16,876 traveler complaints, the third highest level for a single month. Nearly 22 percent of the year's total came in December. More than half of those complaints were filed against Southwest, DOT said. The [only two months in history](#) when travelers filed more complaints were April and May 2020, with 19,856 and 21,914 complaints, respectively.

The 8,729 complaints filed in December against Southwest stemmed largely from the airline's technology breakdown that stranded millions of travelers.

The DOT said it launched ["a rigorous and comprehensive investigation"](#) into Southwest's issues and, more broadly, whether it "engaged in unrealistic scheduling of flights," which is regarded as "an unfair and deceptive practice" under federal law, DOT said. In addition, the DOT said it will hold Southwest accountable on the airline's promise to refund tickets and reimburse customers for related expenses.

And DOT said it's also currently investigating three other U.S. airlines about whether they are producing unrealistic flight schedules.

Just as December's complaint data was released more than a month late, January's

complaint data is late and is expected to be released in early May. Without that, it's unknown whether complaint levels are going back to normal, or the new normal.

The airlines have three big issues, and two of them can be easily addressed:

- The airlines say they still have staffing challenges, particularly for pilots.
- Airlines cancel and delay too many flights.
- When flights are canceled or significantly delayed, they often don't issue timely refunds. Or, if the traveler prefers rebooking on the next-available flight on that airline or another carrier at no extra charge, the airlines often don't do that.

Staffing shortages take time to fix. But if airlines don't have enough staff, or enough other resources for flights they're scheduling, then they should not schedule them to begin with. And if flights are disrupted, and customers can't be or don't want to be rebooked at no cost, the airlines should refund customers quickly and without hassle.

Just these steps would go a long way toward addressing the problems the airlines have been causing for consumers the last few years.

The complaint record, at this point, was 102,550 in 2020 -- obviously driven by COVID and cancellations and the lack of refunds. The total has exceeded 20,000 in a year only six times in 26 years.

The totals those years were:

1999: 20,438

2000: 23,381

2015: 20,175

2020: 102,550

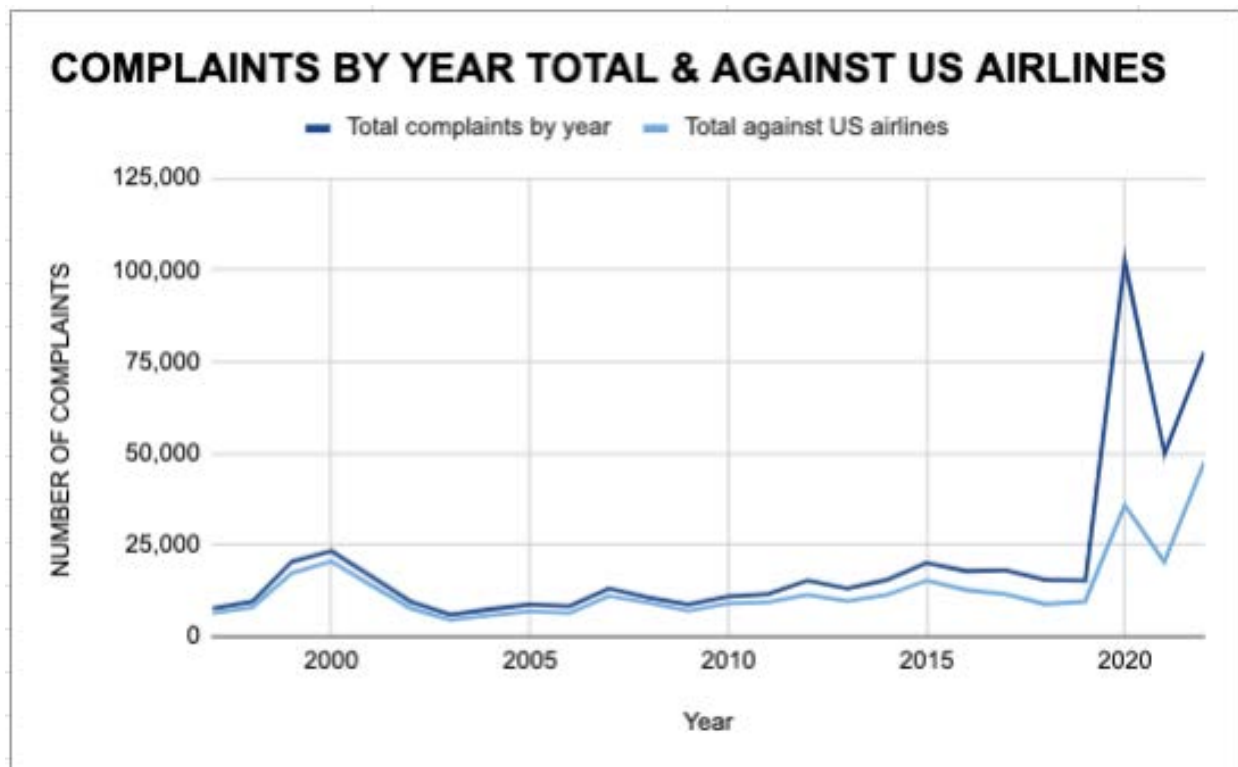
2021: 49,991

2022: 77,656

Complaints have been at 10,000 or higher every year starting in 2007, with the exception of 2009, when there were 8,821.

We wonder whether, this year, we will see fewer than the record 47,591 complaints filed against U.S. airlines last year. The airlines can do better and consumers deserve better.

We're entering into what experts predict will be another busy travel season. We hope that, soon, air travel will return to the higher standards we enjoyed before 2020.



I WHAT'S BEING PROPOSED IN WASHINGTON

In Congress:

- [Airline Passengers' Bill of Rights](#), introduced in January 2023. It covers a lot of territory: Compensation for people whose flights are delayed or canceled by staffing, schedule snafus, equipment etc. Also protections and compensation for bumped passengers, better customer service, unreasonable fees, pricing disclosures, refunds and more.
- [FAIR Fees Act](#), introduced February 2023. (FAIR stands for Forbidding Airlines from Imposing Ridiculous Fees Act of 2023.)
- [Emergency Vacating of Aircraft Cabin Act](#), introduced in December 2022. Deals with seat size, primarily for safety reasons. This issue is already on the books as part of a [past FAA Reauthorization](#). If seats are too small and crammed too close together without enough leg room, it can make it impossible for a plane full of passengers to evacuate within 90 seconds, as is required by law.
- The Senate in March held a hearing on [Enhancing Consumer Protections and Connectivity in Air Transportation](#).

The DOT has:

- Told airlines they must do better with refunds. DOT said its [November enforcement action](#) against [a half-dozen airlines](#) in November for taking too long to issue refunds won't be the last civil penalties issued if the airlines don't get their act in gear and provide timely refunds as required by law. This enforcement included only one U.S. airline – Frontier Airlines. The refunds involved flights that had been canceled or significantly delayed or changed. The airlines were ordered to refund more than \$600 million in refunds and pay more than \$7.25 million in civil penalties.
- Proposed [new protections for travelers owed a refund](#) by defining when refunds must be offered:
 1. When a flight's departure or arrival time varies by three hours or more than scheduled for a domestic flight. The threshold is six hours or more for an international flight.
 2. When the departure or arrival airport changes.
 3. When the number of connecting flights increases.
 4. When the type of plane causes a "significant downgrade in the air travel experience" or amenities available.

- Told the airlines it wants [better transparency in pricing](#). The DOT wants to make sure consumers have access to more fee information upfront.

Under the rule, airlines and “travel search websites” would have to disclose any fees to sit with your child, change or cancel your ticket or to check or carry on any bag. The disclosures would be required the first time the airfare cost is displayed.

“The proposal seeks to provide customers the information they need to choose the best deal. Otherwise, surprise fees can add up quickly and overcome what may look at first to be a cheap fare,” DOT said in a statement.

- Strongly [encouraged U.S. airlines](#) “to do everything in their power to ensure that children who are age 13 or younger are seated next to an accompanying adult with no additional charge.” DOT said it receives complaints involving babies as young as 11 months old who are not able to be seated next to their adult travel companion. DOT this month [submitted a legislative proposal to Congress](#) on this issue.
- Has taken some steps to improve travel for consumers. In summer 2022, for example, it unveiled an

[Airline Customer Service Dashboard](#) that discloses the various policies for the 10 largest airlines and how customer-friendly or not those policies are.

The dashboard states the airlines' commitments on these issues; they can't go back on their word to the DOT.

The three policies outlined for now are:

1. Commitment to Fee-Free Family Seating, which “guarantees adjacent seats for (a) child 13 or under and an accompanying adult at no additional cost for all fare types subject to [limited conditions](#).”
2. Commitments for Controllable Cancellations.
3. Commitments for Controllable Delays.

States want to:

- Eliminate federal preemption involving the airlines. The states should be able to enforce existing federal consumer protection laws, but they can't. Airlines are just about the only industry that is protected from state enforcement of consumer protection laws. And 35 of the state attorneys general [signed a letter to Congress on this issue](#) last August.

I RECOMMENDATIONS

ADDRESS FLIGHT UNRELIABILITY

Prioritize resolving chronic cancellations and delays.

Besides safety issues, this should be the top priority for the DOT/FAA. As we found in our [March analysis of data](#) from the DOT, U.S. airlines last year canceled 190,038 flights in the United States, or 2.7% of all scheduled flights.¹ And 1.44 million more flights – 20.6% – were delayed.

Setting aside 2020, those 2022 numbers represented the highest number of cancellations and the highest percentage of cancellations since 2001. (Airline travel that year of course was disrupted by the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.)

The 2022 cancellation numbers are simply stunning. DOT should investigate the reasons behind this escalation and work with the airlines on what needs to be done to improve these numbers quickly. DOT said this year it's conducting a probe involving at least four airlines (one is Southwest) about the recent flight cancellations and disruptions. The problem may go deeper than four airlines. The DOT says producing [unrealistic flight schedules](#) is considered under federal law to be "an unfair and deceptive practice."

¹ For the 10 largest airlines and their marketing partners, which make up more than 95% domestic scheduled passenger air traffic.

Flight problems (meaning cancellations/delays) was the No. 1 consumer complaint to DOT for 2022, comprising 44% of complaints. Flight problem complaints were nearly four times as high as in 2021 and five times as high as in 2019; even though there were fewer passengers both of those years.

In addition to the increase in cancellations, the airlines' [on-time performance also suffered in 2022](#).² A flight is considered by the DOT to be on time if it arrived within [15 minutes of the scheduled time](#), meaning it wasn't delayed or canceled.

On-time arrivals for the top 17 U.S. operating airlines the last five years:

2022: 76.6%
2021: 81.2%
2020: 84.6%
2019: 79.2%
2018: 79.7%

As mentioned, the on-time rate has been below 77% only one other time since 2008. If 1 percentage point difference doesn't seem like much, it's notable because that means thousands of flights.

Get an actual picture of cancellations.

DOT doesn't know the full scope of cancellations because it tallies only flights canceled within seven days of the planned

²

<https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2023-03/February%202023%20ATCR.pdf>, page 10.

departure date.³ Flights that get scrubbed more than seven days before departure are considered “[discontinued flights](#).” DOT doesn’t keep track of “discontinued flights.”

So while a flight that gets canned eight or 10 days before a trip might be a hassle to rebook – possibly causing a traveler to face higher prices or no available seats – it doesn’t count against the airline. This must change. How can DOT hold airlines accountable for large numbers/percentages of cancellations when DOT doesn’t even know how many cancellations there are?

Hold airlines accountable.

Air carriers should be required to maintain a minimum percentage of on-time flights every month, based on the schedule it produced and what actually happened. And then the DOT should hold airlines accountable when they routinely schedule flights that don’t happen.

Institute a reciprocity agreement.

The DOT should institute an industry-wide reciprocity agreement so passengers whose flights are canceled or delayed could have tickets transferred to another airline with seats available at no charge, if that second flight could get the passenger to their destination quicker. This would benefit travelers, and incentivize airlines to set reasonable flight schedules and actually maintain those schedules.

³ DOT policy: “Canceled flight means a flight operation that was not operated, but was listed in a carrier’s computer reservation system within seven calendar days of the scheduled departure. Discontinued flight means a flight

Currently, in cases of a controllable cancellation, only six of the 10 largest airlines have committed to rebook a passenger on a partner airline or another airline with which it has an agreement, at no additional cost to the customer.

PROTECT CONSUMERS’ WALLETS

Enforce the law on refunds.

Full refunds are required by law when an airline cancels or discontinues a scheduled flight, for any reason. Full refund includes baggage fees, seat fees, taxes, etc. [Refunds are due](#) within seven days if payment was by credit card, and within 20 days if payment was by cash or check.

Issues with refunds was the No. 2 consumer complaint in 2022, with 19,983 consumer complaints about refunds. That is more than 10 times higher than the number of refund complaints in 2019, the last normal, pre-pandemic year.

If a traveler can’t be or doesn’t want to be rebooked, airlines should not try to offer consumers a credit or voucher *first* instead of a refund.

The volume of refund complaints indicates too many consumers aren’t getting timely refunds, even when they ask for them. And we believe, based on human nature, that

dropped from a carrier’s computer reservation system more than seven calendar days before its scheduled departure.”
<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-1997-title14-vol4/html/CFR-1997-title14-vol4.htm>

complaints actually filed represent only a fraction of consumers who were mistreated.

The DOT did [penalize a half-dozen airlines](#) in November for taking too long to issue refunds. But it included only one U.S. airline – Frontier Airlines. The refunds involved flights that had been canceled or significantly delayed or changed. The airlines were ordered to refund more than \$600 million in refunds and pay more than \$7.25 million in civil penalties.

This regulatory action by DOT doesn't scratch the surface to address the extent of the problem. Consumers are still owed upwards of \$10 billion from flights canceled during the pandemic. [DOT says that](#), since 2021, DOT has helped get more than \$1 billion refunded to travelers. Where's the other \$9 billion?

Hold ticket agents accountable for refunds too.

In addition, the DOT should demand that ticket/travel agents (mostly online booking sites) comply with the deadlines to issue refunds. [DOT policy says](#): "Airlines and ticket agents are required to make refunds promptly. For airlines, 'prompt' is defined as being within 7 business days if a passenger paid by credit card, and within 20 days if a passenger paid by cash or check. For ticket agents, prompt is not defined." ⁴

At an in-person meeting in Washington on April 10, 2023, with Secretary Buttigieg and

key top staffers, we asked why there is no deadline for ticket agents to issue refunds. We were told there is disagreement in many cases about who is holding the money – the airline or the ticket agent. Unacceptable. Someone should find this out. We hear from far too many consumers who can't get refunds for months because of the finger-pointing between ticket agents and airlines. A total of more than 28,000 consumer complaints were filed with DOT against travel agents during 2022, 2021 and 2020. That's an average of more than 9,000 per year for the last three years. Pre-pandemic, in 2019, there were just 178 refund complaints against ticket agents.

Require delay compensation.

There is compensation for [passengers who are bumped](#), but not for those whose flights are canceled or delayed by three or more hours. When this occurs within 14 days before the scheduled departure date – due to issues within the air carrier's control – affected travelers should receive compensation. (Examples of "within the air carrier's control" include: maintenance or crew problems; cabin cleaning; baggage loading; and fueling.)

Such compensation should be automatic; travelers shouldn't be required to apply for it. This could be modeled after current European Union regulations to incentivize

4

[https://www.transportation.gov/individuals/aviation-consumer-](https://www.transportation.gov/individuals/aviation-consumer-protection/refunds#:~:text=Airlines%20and%20ticket%20agents%20are,paid%20by%20cash%20or%20check.)

[protection/refunds#:~:text=Airlines%20and%20ticket%20agents%20are,paid%20by%20cash%20or%20check.](https://www.transportation.gov/individuals/aviation-consumer-protection/refunds#:~:text=Airlines%20and%20ticket%20agents%20are,paid%20by%20cash%20or%20check.)

greater airline operational performance and compensate travelers.⁵

Require airlines to cover hotel and meal costs when travelers are stranded by delays and cancellations.

Airlines have [inconsistent policies](#) for covering passengers' meal and hotel costs when they're affected by cancellation or lengthy delay within the airline's control, as defined by the DOT.⁶

Congress should require airlines to provide this compensation, similar to what's required under EU regulations.

Require plain language notices of passenger compensation rights.

One of the biggest issues we see is that way too many consumers do not know their rights as airline travelers, or that they even have rights to begin with. The rights they have under U.S. and international law should be displayed throughout public airports and on airlines' mobile apps and websites. Such notices should specifically include rights afforded by the Montreal

Convention⁷ and the EU's Flight Compensation Regulation.⁸

REFORM AIRLINE FEES AND SEATING

Require fee transparency.

Airlines and third parties should disclose all fees up front, as part of the ticket price, and clearly spell out any ancillary fees for baggage, seat selection, etc., before a traveler gets ready to click the button to book the flight. This would allow consumers to better compare prices and would promote competition between airlines.

Ensure that parents and caregivers can be seated with their minor children at no additional charge if seats are available at booking.

Congress has previously urged the DOT to act on family seating requirements in the 2016 FAA Reauthorization,⁹ yet the DOT is only now initiating a rulemaking on the issue – a lengthy process that is beginning almost seven years late. The White House has called on Congress to pass a bill to

⁵ Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 February 2004 establishing common rules on compensation and assistance to passengers in the event of denied boarding and of cancellation or long delay of flights, and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 295/91 (Text with EEA relevance) - Commission Statement

⁶ Department of Transportation. "Flight Delays and Cancellation." Online: <https://www.transportation.gov/individuals/aviation-consumer-protection/flight-delays-cancellations>

⁷ The International Air Transport Association. *Convention For The Unification Of Certain Rules For International Carriage By Air*. 1999.

<https://www.iata.org/contentassets/fb1137ff561a4819a2d38f3db7308758/mc99-full-text.pdf>

⁸ EUR-Lex. *Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 February 2004 establishing common rules on compensation and assistance to passengers in the event of denied boarding and of cancellation or long delay of flights, and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 295/91 (Text with EEA relevance) - Commission Statement*. (2004). <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=celex:32004R0261>

⁹ Congress.gov. *Public Law 114–190—July 15, 2016: Sec. 2309. Family Seating*. (2016). <https://www.congress.gov/114/plaws/publ190/PLAW-114publ190.pdf>

ensure that parents and caregivers are not required to pay a fee to sit next to their minor children on a flight; this would bypass the need for a lengthy DOT rulemaking process.

ADDRESS BASIC SERVICE STANDARDS

Establish minimum standards.

Passengers should be entitled to, as part of their ticket price: a seat, a boarding pass, customer service for check-in, a personal item, a carry-on item, water and an accessible lavatory. Air carriers should also be encouraged to offer a toll-free customer service phone number, with adequate staffing so that wait times are reasonable. We know at least [one major carrier](#) recently eliminated its customer service phone number.

Establish a minimum passenger seat size.

Shrinking seat sizes cause health risks and create potential evacuation hazards. The 2018 FAA Reauthorization required the FAA to set minimums for passenger seat width and pitch within one year of the reauthorization's enactment. Years later, the FAA still hasn't enforced this.

¹⁰ U.S. Department of Transportation. *Air Canada Settlement Agreement*. (2021). <https://www.transportation.gov/individuals/aviation-consumer-protection/air-canada-settlement-agreement>

ENABLE STRONGER ENFORCEMENT OF PASSENGER PROTECTIONS

Empower state attorneys general to enforce existing federal consumer protection laws.

The DOT doesn't have enough resources to address the avalanche of valid complaints from travelers. For example, despite record levels of consumer complaints the last three years, the DOT has completed only one enforcement action against one U.S. airline.¹⁰

Interpretations of the 1978 Airline Deregulation Act's preemption of the regulation of conduct prevents states from protecting travelers in most cases. Eliminating federal preemption and allowing state attorneys general to share enforcement of existing federal consumer protection laws will give consumers more outlets to make sure their rights are being protected. A bipartisan coalition of 35 state attorneys general in 2022 [urged Congress](#) to act.¹¹

Establish a private right of action to allow consumers to get federal consumer protection laws enforced.

Travelers should be able to file their own actions when they experience unfair, deceptive or discriminatory practices. This would provide another way to hold air carriers accountable.

¹¹ National Association of Attorneys General. *Bipartisan Coalition of Attorneys General Fight to Protect Airline Consumers*. (2022). <https://www.naag.org/press-releases/bipartisan-coalition-of-attorneys-general-fight-to-protect-airline-customers/>

| METHODOLOGY

U.S. PIRG Education Fund reviewed Department of Transportation [Air Travel Consumer Reports](#) dating back to 1998. The reports, which often include 55 to nearly 80 pages worth of data, cover everything from performance of airlines, including cancellations, departure and arrival records and tarmac delays; on-time departures and arrivals at major airports nationwide; and complaints about airlines and others that are part of the air travel experience.

Complaint categories are flight problems, oversales, reservations/ticketing/boarding, fares, refunds, baggage, customer service, disability, advertising, discrimination, animals and other.

For this report, we analyzed data on complaints, cancellations, delays, on-time performance, bumping, mishandled baggage and mishandled wheelchairs, documented in the DOT reports for multiple years, in some cases, we went all the way back to 1997, the oldest year available online (through the lookback 1998 report.) Most of the data involves U.S. airlines; some involves travel agents (most online booking websites,) foreign airlines that operate in the United States, tour operators and others.

DOT generally looks at issues through three lenses:

- Top 10 airlines and their 11 marketing partner airlines.
- All U.S. operating airlines with revenue that represents at least 0.5 percent of all of the industry's revenues (last year there were 17 airlines in this group).
- All U.S. airlines, regardless of size.

In both of the first two categories, the top airlines represent about 95 percent of the domestic scheduled passenger air traffic.

The top 10 airlines and their branded codeshare (marketing) partners for last year included four airlines with partners:

American Airlines: Envoy Air, Mesa Airlines, Piedmont Airlines, PSA Airlines, Republic Airways and SkyWest Airlines.

Alaska Airlines: Horizon Air, SkyWest Airlines.

Delta Air Lines: Endeavor Air, Republic Airways, SkyWest Airlines.

United Airlines: Air Wisconsin Airlines, Commutair, GoJet Airlines, Mesa Airlines, Republic Airways, SkyWest Airlines.

The Air Travel Consumer Reports usually are released early every month, with the data from the end of the month two months' prior. The report for the entire year usually comes out in late February or early March. For calendar year 2022, it came out March 16. The December data was released a month late by DOT, on April 12, because of the avalanche of complaints from the Christmas mess. In general, we compared 2022 against 2019 because 2019 was the most recent "normal" travel year before the pandemic.

Generally, the February/March reports include the entire previous year, and revisions to data from the year before that. The quarterly reports are in May for Q1, August for Q2 and November for Q3.



TIPS: AIRLINE TRAVELERS' RIGHTS WHEN THINGS GO WRONG

First, the big one: If any airline cancels your flight for any reason, you're entitled by law to a full refund of your ticket price, taxes, baggage fees and other ancillary fees. Here's advice if you prefer a [credit or voucher](#) instead. Airlines and ticket agents must issue refunds promptly. Airlines must issue the refund within seven business days if you paid by credit card and within 20 days if you paid by cash or check. Here's [advice on getting that refund](#).

If you learn your flight is canceled or will be significantly delayed or changed and you find a flight on another airline with available seats, you can ask the first airline to transfer your ticket to the second airline. Airlines aren't required by law to do this, but several have made binding agreements with DOT. This could save you a significant amount of money compared with getting a refund and buying the new ticket, because tickets often become more expensive closer to the departure date.

You also have [legal rights](#) if you are bumped from a flight that departs, if your baggage is misplaced or lost or if you're stuck on the tarmac.

Airlines often are accommodating when they cancel or delay a flight for a reason that's their fault. The Department of Transportation last year [launched a dashboard](#) so travelers can see the policies of various airlines when they cancel or delay flights for reasons *within* the airline's control. Many airlines rebook you, pay for hotels, meals, etc.

Here's advice on what you can do to avoid headaches and what you should know if something goes wrong.

BEFORE YOU GO

Hedge your ticket purchase

Many airlines will hold tickets for 24 hours without payment, or will let you cancel your reservation and get a refund within that time frame, so you can make sure you get the best deal.

Check the flight's record

Major airlines are required by law to provide on-time performance information on their websites when you consider what flight to buy. Check these out to help avoid long delays.

Give yourself a buffer

If possible, plan to fly out a day before you actually need to be somewhere by a certain time, particularly if you're attending a wedding or going on a cruise.

Pay with a credit card, not a debit card

If you buy your plane ticket with a credit card, you have far greater protection to dispute the charge under the federal [Fair Credit Billing Act](#).

Fly in the morning

Schedule your flight as early in the day as possible. The DOT says you're more likely to get where you're going. The later in the day you fly, the more chances there are for the airline to get off schedule. And if you have a late-night flight that's canceled, there may not be another one until the next morning.

Avoid connecting flights

This isn't always possible, of course. But two flights mean two chances for a problem. And a delay on the first leg could mean you miss the second leg. The extra cost of a non-stop may save you a lot of stress and expense.

Avoid checking a bag

This also isn't always possible. But having a carry-on reduces the chances of you getting separated from your bag.

Consider buying travel insurance

It won't keep your flight from being canceled but should help with other expenses. (But read the terms and conditions.)

Get the app

Get the airline's app on your phone a couple of days before your flight. It can help you with notifications, rebooking and contacting customer service.

AT THE AIRPORT

Involuntary bumping

If you're involuntarily bumped, airlines must provide you with a list of your rights and compensate you according to how long your flight will be delayed.

Delay compensation

- Less than 1 hour: None
- 1-2 hours: (Domestic) 200% of your one-way fare up to \$775
- 1-4 hours: (International) 200% of your one-way fare up to \$775
- More than 2 hours: (Domestic) 400% of your one-way fare up to \$1,550
- More than 4 hours: (International) 400% of your one-way fare up to \$1,550

Tarmac delays

Airlines have to provide medical attention and working bathrooms the entire time the plane is on the tarmac. After two hours, you must have food and water. After three hours, you must be in the air or back in the airport—or the airline faces massive fines.

Flight delays

If your flight is delayed more than 30 minutes, airlines must give you regular updates.

POST-FLIGHT PROBLEMS

Delayed bags

If your bag is delayed overnight, most airlines set guidelines that allow their employees to reimburse you for some emergency expenses.

Lost bags

Airlines must refund any checked baggage fees, and reimburse you for the lost items up to \$3,800.

Complaints

Airlines are required to give you information on how to file complaints. Airlines need to acknowledge written complaints within 30 days and respond within 60 days. If you don't get satisfaction from an airline, [file an official complaint with the DOT](#).

To file a complaint against an airline, an airport or a ticket agent, go to <https://airconsumer.dot.gov/escomplaint/ConsumerForm.cfm>

For other information about passenger rights, go to <https://www.transportation.gov/airconsumer>

THE SOUTHWEST CHRISTMAS MESS

If your flight was canceled, you're entitled by law to a refund of your ticket price, taxes, baggage fees, any extra charges and ancillary fees. If you haven't received that yet, request a flight refund from Southwest <https://www.southwest.com/traveldisruption/>

In addition, Southwest says: "If you have been impacted by a flight cancellation or significant flight delay between December 24, 2022, and January 2, 2023, you may submit receipts for consideration ... We will honor reasonable requests for reimbursement for meals, hotel, and alternate transportation."

To fill out a claim and upload receipts, go to: <https://support.southwest.com/email-us/s/?clk=TRAVEL-DISRUPTION-LP>

A reminder: Your rights and responsibilities as an air traveler may change. Please check the [Department of Transportation website](#) for the most complete and up-to-date information about your rights.

APPENDIX

VOLUNTARY AND INVOLUNTARY BUMPING BY AIRLINE, 2022

JANUARY - DECEMBER 2022					
RANK	CARRIER ¹	DENIED BOARDINGS (DB'S)		ENPLANED PASSENGERS	INVOLUNTARY DB's PER 10,000 PASSENGERS
		VOLUNTARY	INVOLUNTARY		
1	DELTA AIR LINES	64,942	0	131,792,631	0.00
2	ALLEGiant AIR	1,564	0	16,796,544	0.00
3	ENDEAVOR AIR	12,864	0	11,995,835	0.00
4	HAWAIIAN AIRLINES	753	4	9,811,352	0.00
5	UNITED AIRLINES	16,682	136	99,302,329	0.01
6	JETBLUE AIRWAYS	5,222	209	34,981,753	0.06
7	ALASKA AIRLINES	10,220	334	30,670,714	0.11
8	SKYWEST AIRLINES	30,451	492	38,484,750	0.13
9	HORIZON AIR	1,973	99	5,424,597	0.18
10	MESA AIRLINES	2,107	137	7,384,078	0.19
11	SPIRIT AIRLINES	14,727	1,324	36,096,463	0.37
12	AMERICAN AIRLINES	28,421	5,211	135,675,687	0.38
13	REPUBLIC AIRWAYS	10,209	676	17,136,082	0.39
14	PSA AIRLINES	4,758	651	12,115,337	0.54
15	SOUTHWEST AIRLINES	62,972	8,751	155,674,042	0.56
16	ENVOY AIR	6,894	908	13,529,927	0.67
17	FRONTIER AIRLINES	9,731	6,081	22,820,700	2.66
	TOTAL	284,490	25,013	779,692,821	0.32

¹ All U.S. airlines with at least half of one percent of total domestic scheduled-service passenger revenues.

MISHANDLED BAGS IN 2022 AMONG THE 17 LARGEST AIRLINES

RANK	CARRIER ¹	JANUARY - DECEMBER 2022		
		NUMBER OF BAGS ENPLANED	NUMBER OF BAGS MISHANDLED	NUMBER OF BAGS MISHANDLED PER 100 ENPLANED
1	ALLEGiant AIR	6,621,329	10,295	0.16
2	HAWAIIAN AIRLINES	6,192,423	23,435	0.38
3	FRONTIER AIRLINES	9,852,249	41,499	0.42
4	ENDEAVOR AIR	9,030,888	45,049	0.50
5	SPIRIT AIRLINES	12,976,167	64,831	0.50
6	SOUTHWEST AIRLINES	121,394,275	655,053	0.54
7	DELTA AIR LINES	74,402,459	410,361	0.55
8	SKYWEST AIRLINES	28,805,305	160,894	0.56
9	HORIZON AIR	4,371,724	27,846	0.64
10	UNITED AIRLINES	49,459,806	320,596	0.65
11	JETBLUE AIRWAYS	15,350,805	104,132	0.68
12	PSA AIRLINES	11,270,720	76,508	0.68
13	MESA AIRLINES	5,136,738	35,424	0.69
14	ALASKA AIRLINES	20,738,655	156,561	0.75
15	ENVOY AIR	9,199,711	76,205	0.83
16	REPUBLIC AIRWAYS	8,644,672	74,734	0.86
17	AMERICAN AIRLINES	67,091,578	633,843	0.94
TOTAL		460,539,504	2,917,266	0.63

AIR TRAVEL CONSUMER REPORT

TABLE 6B. OVERALL NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF FLIGHT CANCELLATIONS: RANKING OF U.S. REPORTING MARKETING CARRIERS (YTD)

RANK	CARRIER ¹	JANUARY - DECEMBER 2022			JANUARY - DECEMBER 2021		
		FLIGHT OPERATIONS SCHEDULED	FLIGHT OPERATIONS CANCELLED	PERCENT OF OPERATIONS CANCELLED	FLIGHT OPERATIONS SCHEDULED	FLIGHT OPERATIONS CANCELLED	PERCENT OF OPERATIONS CANCELLED
1	HAWAIIAN AIRLINES - HAWAIIAN AIRLINES - BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	73,865 73,865 -	680 680 -	0.92 0.92 -	60,654 60,542 112	264 264 0	0.44 0.44 0.00
2	DELTA AIR LINES NETWORK - DELTA AIR LINES - BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	1,448,920 893,172 555,748	29,035 14,317 14,718	2.00 1.60 2.65	1,357,322 747,998 609,324	7,866 3,631 4,235	0.58 0.49 0.70
3	ALASKA AIRLINES NETWORK - ALASKA AIRLINES - BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	382,544 228,384 154,160	8,274 6,218 2,056	2.16 2.72 1.33	359,458 188,955 170,503	6,010 3,217 2,793	1.67 1.70 1.64
4	UNITED AIRLINES NETWORK - UNITED AIRLINES - BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	1,263,956 626,473 637,483	34,221 11,886 22,335	2.71 1.90 3.50	1,148,340 446,837 701,503	25,203 6,107 19,096	2.19 1.37 2.72
5	AMERICAN AIRLINES NETWORK - AMERICAN AIRLINES - BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	1,759,257 874,145 885,112	49,416 25,894 23,522	2.81 2.96 2.66	1,674,371 736,399 937,972	33,452 16,478 16,974	2.00 2.24 1.81
6	FRONTIER AIRLINES	155,482	4,455	2.87	137,142	1,929	1.41
7	SPIRIT AIRLINES	232,400	6,973	3.00	191,361	5,661	2.96
8	SOUTHWEST AIRLINES	1,307,149	42,655	3.26	1,064,640	23,505	2.21
9	ALLEGiant AIR	116,877	4,110	3.52	115,881	3,829	3.30
10	JETBLUE AIRWAYS	273,058	10,219	3.74	202,702	3,299	1.63
	TOTAL	7,013,508	190,038	2.71	6,311,871	111,018	1.76

¹ All U.S. airlines with at least half of one percent of total domestic scheduled-service passenger revenues plus any branded codeshare partners.

Note: For simplicity, statistics are displayed to one decimal place. Actual ranking order is calculated to nine decimal places.

AIR TRAVEL CONSUMER REPORT

TABLE 6C. OVERALL NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF FLIGHT CANCELLATIONS: RANKING OF U.S. REPORTING OPERATING CARRIERS (YTD)

RANK	CARRIER ¹	JANUARY - DECEMBER 2022			JANUARY - DECEMBER 2021		
		FLIGHT OPERATIONS SCHEDULED	FLIGHT OPERATIONS CANCELLED	PERCENT OF OPERATIONS CANCELLED	FLIGHT OPERATIONS SCHEDULED	FLIGHT OPERATIONS CANCELLED	PERCENT OF OPERATIONS CANCELLED
1	HAWAIIAN AIRLINES	73,865	680	0.92	60,542	264	0.44
2	DELTA AIR LINES	893,172	14,317	1.60	747,998	3,631	0.49
3	HORIZON AIR	88,791	1,512	1.70	111,628	2,096	1.88
4	SKYWEST AIRLINES	733,576	13,331	1.82	753,417	13,412	1.78
5	UNITED AIRLINES	626,473	11,886	1.90	446,837	6,107	1.37
6	ENVOY AIR	248,059	5,550	2.24	255,710	5,700	2.23
7	ALASKA AIRLINES	228,384	6,218	2.72	188,955	3,217	1.70
8	FRONTIER AIRLINES	155,482	4,455	2.87	137,142	1,929	1.41
9	AMERICAN AIRLINES	874,145	25,894	2.96	736,399	16,478	2.24
10	SPIRIT AIRLINES	232,400	6,973	3.00	191,361	5,661	2.96
11	PSA AIRLINES	214,450	6,612	3.08	222,611	2,278	1.02
12	SOUTHWEST AIRLINES	1,307,149	42,655	3.26	1,064,640	23,505	2.21
13	MESA AIRLINES	114,779	3,810	3.32	159,809	4,818	3.01
14	ALLEGiant AIR	116,877	4,110	3.52	115,881	3,829	3.30
15	ENDEAVOR AIR	231,941	8,202	3.54	266,702	986	0.37
16	JETBLUE AIRWAYS	273,058	10,219	3.74	202,702	3,299	1.63
17	REPUBLIC AIRWAYS	316,524	14,862	4.70	333,063	5,850	1.76
	TOTAL	6,729,125	181,286	2.69	5,995,397	103,060	1.72

¹ All U.S. airlines with at least half of one percent of total domestic scheduled-service passenger revenue

Note: For simplicity, statistics are displayed to one decimal place. Actual ranking order is calculated to nine decimal places.

AIR TRAVEL CONSUMER REPORT

TABLE 1C. OVERALL PERCENTAGE OF REPORTED FLIGHT OPERATIONS ARRIVING ON-TIME: RANKING OF U.S. REPORTING MARKETING CARRIERS (YTD)

RANK	CARRIER ¹	JANUARY - DECEMBER 2022		JANUARY - DECEMBER 2021	
		FLIGHT OPERATIONS SCHEDULED	PERCENT OF ON-TIME ARRIVALS	FLIGHT OPERATIONS SCHEDULED	PERCENT OF ON-TIME ARRIVALS
1	DELTA AIR LINES NETWORK - DELTA AIR LINES - BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	1,448,920 893,172 555,748	82.14 82.53 81.51	1,357,322 747,998 609,324	88.22 87.85 88.67
2	ALASKA AIRLINES NETWORK - ALASKA AIRLINES - BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	382,544 228,384 154,160	79.06 77.28 81.70	359,458 188,955 170,503	83.17 81.22 85.32
3	UNITED AIRLINES NETWORK - UNITED AIRLINES - BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	1,263,956 626,473 637,483	78.74 79.01 78.47	1,148,340 446,837 701,503	79.81 81.34 78.83
4	AMERICAN AIRLINES NETWORK - AMERICAN AIRLINES - BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	1,759,257 874,145 885,112	77.15 74.94 79.33	1,674,371 736,399 937,972	81.58 80.53 82.40
5	HAWAIIAN AIRLINES - HAWAIIAN AIRLINES - BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	73,865 73,865 -	75.77 75.77 -	60,654 60,542 112	90.14 90.15 89.29
6	SOUTHWEST AIRLINES	1,307,149	73.18	1,064,640	75.78
7	SPIRIT AIRLINES	232,400	72.96	191,361	76.74
8	FRONTIER AIRLINES	155,482	66.10	137,142	76.64
9	JETBLUE AIRWAYS	273,058	64.63	202,702	72.31
10	ALLEGiant AIR	116,877	63.39	115,881	68.26
	TOTAL	7,013,508	76.72	6,311,871	81.08

¹ All U.S. airlines with at least half of one percent of total domestic scheduled-service passenger revenues plus any branded codeshare partners.

Note: For simplicity, statistics are displayed to one decimal place. Actual ranking order is calculated to nine decimal places.

AIR TRAVEL CONSUMER REPORT

TABLE 1D. OVERALL PERCENTAGE OF REPORTED FLIGHT OPERATIONS ARRIVING ON-TIME: RANKING OF U.S. REPORTING OPERATING CARRIERS (YTD)

RANK	CARRIER ¹	JANUARY - DECEMBER 2022		JANUARY - DECEMBER 2021	
		FLIGHT OPERATIONS SCHEDULED	PERCENT OF ON-TIME ARRIVALS	FLIGHT OPERATIONS SCHEDULED	PERCENT OF ON-TIME ARRIVALS
1	DELTA AIR LINES	893,172	82.53	747,998	87.85
2	HORIZON AIR	88,791	81.79	111,628	85.26
3	SKYWEST AIRLINES	733,576	81.61	753,417	82.45
4	ENVOY AIR	248,059	80.65	255,710	82.32
5	ENDEAVOR AIR	231,941	80.53	266,702	90.98
6	UNITED AIRLINES	626,473	79.01	446,837	81.34
7	PSA AIRLINES	214,450	77.96	222,611	84.52
8	MESA AIRLINES	114,779	77.43	159,809	77.14
9	ALASKA AIRLINES	228,384	77.28	188,955	81.22
10	REPUBLIC AIRWAYS	316,524	76.42	333,063	84.35
11	HAWAIIAN AIRLINES	73,865	75.77	60,542	90.15
12	AMERICAN AIRLINES	874,145	74.94	736,399	80.53
13	SOUTHWEST AIRLINES	1,307,149	73.18	1,064,640	75.78
14	SPIRIT AIRLINES	232,400	72.96	191,361	76.74
15	FRONTIER AIRLINES	155,482	66.10	137,142	76.64
16	JETBLUE AIRWAYS	273,058	64.63	202,702	72.31
17	ALLEGiant AIR	116,877	63.39	115,881	68.26
	TOTAL	6,729,125	76.61	5,995,397	81.19

¹ All U.S. airlines with at least half of one percent of total domestic scheduled-service passenger revenues.

Note: For simplicity, statistics are displayed to one decimal place. Actual ranking order is calculated to nine decimal places.

AIR TRAVEL CONSUMER REPORT

TABLE 7. CAUSES OF DELAY, BY REPORTING MARKETING CARRIER

DECEMBER 2022

CARRIER	TOTAL RECORDS	ON TIME	% ON TIME	CANCELLED	% CANCELLED	DIVERTED	% DIVERTED	AIR CARRIER DELAY	% AIR CARRIER DELAY	EXTREME WEATHER DELAY	% EXTREME WEATHER DELAY	NATIONAL AVIATION SYSTEM DELAY	% NATIONAL AVIATION SYSTEM DELAY	SECURITY DELAY	% SECURITY DELAY	LATE ARRIVING AIRCRAFT DELAY	% LATE ARRIVING AIRCRAFT DELAY
ALASKA AIRLINES NETWORK	30401	18405	60.54	2321	7.63	173	0.57	2541	8.36	564	1.86	2881	9.48	57	0.19	3460	11.38
- ALASKA AIRLINES	20079	11464	57.09	1735	8.64	125	0.62	1708	8.51	291	1.45	2369	11.80	51	0.25	2336	11.63
- BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	10322	6941	67.24	586	5.68	48	0.47	833	8.07	273	2.64	512	4.96	6	0.06	1124	10.89
ALLEGiant AIR	10421	5963	57.22	550	5.28	50	0.48	898	8.62	207	1.99	1146	11.00	10	0.10	1598	15.33
AMERICAN AIRLINES NETWORK	138398	102057	73.74	2534	1.83	363	0.26	10373	7.50	2025	1.46	8191	5.92	109	0.08	12747	9.21
- AMERICAN AIRLINES	76149	54111	71.06	1174	1.54	174	0.23	6378	8.38	824	1.08	4806	6.31	67	0.09	8614	11.31
- BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	62249	47946	77.02	1360	2.18	189	0.30	3995	6.42	1200	1.93	3385	5.44	42	0.07	4133	6.64
DELTA AIR LINES NETWORK	114831	89046	77.55	3299	2.87	215	0.19	9680	8.43	1999	1.74	5522	4.81	22	0.02	5047	4.40
- DELTA AIR LINES	75771	59104	78.00	1851	2.44	128	0.17	6099	8.05	674	0.89	3882	5.12	13	0.02	4021	5.31
- BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	39060	29942	76.66	1448	3.71	87	0.22	3581	9.17	1325	3.39	1640	4.20	10	0.03	1026	2.63
FRONTIER AIRLINES	13895	7858	56.55	665	4.79	26	0.19	1818	13.08	114	0.82	1439	10.36	0	0.00	1975	14.21
HAWAIIAN AIRLINES	6642	3862	58.15	231	3.48	19	0.29	1092	16.44	154	2.32	156	2.35	7	0.11	1122	16.89
JETBLUE AIRWAYS	23881	14125	59.15	465	1.95	61	0.26	3770	15.79	74	0.31	2376	9.95	23	0.10	2987	12.51
SOUTHWEST AIRLINES	116229	70580	60.72	17000	14.63	170	0.15	10995	9.46	257	0.22	4600	3.96	77	0.07	12550	10.80
SPIRIT AIRLINES	21236	13795	64.96	994	4.68	11	0.05	2161	10.18	176	0.83	2434	11.46	62	0.29	1603	7.55
UNITED AIRLINES NETWORK	102387	73482	71.77	3128	3.06	278	0.27	9974	9.74	984	0.96	5866	5.73	17	0.02	8659	8.46
- UNITED AIRLINES	58417	41499	71.04	1420	2.43	117	0.20	5667	9.70	363	0.62	3858	6.60	3	0.01	5491	9.40
- BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	43970	31983	72.74	1708	3.88	161	0.37	4307	9.80	620	1.41	2009	4.57	14	0.03	3168	7.20
TOTAL	578,321	399,173	69.02	31,187	5.39	1,366	0.24	53,301	9.22	6,553	1.13	34,611	5.98	383	0.07	51,747	8.95

* Causes of Delay:

- Air Carrier Delay: The cause of the cancellation or delay was due to circumstances within the airline's control (e.g. maintenance or crew problems, etc.).
 - Extreme Weather Delay: Significant meteorological conditions (actual or forecasted) that, in the judgment of the carrier, delays or prevents the operation of a flight.
 - National Aviation System Delay: Delays and cancellations attributable to the national aviation system refer to a broad set of conditions -- non-extreme weather conditions, airport operations, heavy traffic volume, air traffic control, etc.
 - Security Delay: Delays caused by evacuation of terminal or concourse, re-boarding of aircraft because of security breach, inoperative screening equipment and long lines more than 29 minutes at screening areas.
 - Late Arriving Aircraft Delay: Previous flight with same aircraft arrived late which caused the present flight to depart late.
- A "cancelled" flight is a flight that was not operated but was in the carrier's computer reservation system within 7 days of the scheduled departure. A "diverted" flight is a flight which is operated from the scheduled origin point to a point other than the scheduled destination point in the carrier's published schedule.

Note: Individual causes of delay numbers may not add to totals, because of rounding.

* All U.S. airlines with at least half of one percent of total domestic scheduled-service passenger revenues plus any branded codeshare partners.

Several of the top 10 airlines have marketing/codeshare partners. Those airlines are named separately in much of the data released by DOT.

American Airlines Branded Codeshare Partners	Alaska Airlines Branded Codeshare Partners	Delta Air Lines Branded Codeshare Partners	United Airlines Branded Codeshare Partners
Envoy Air	Horizon Air	Endeavor Air	Air Wisconsin Airlines
Mesa Airlines	SkyWest Airlines	Republic Airways	Commutair
Piedmont Airlines		SkyWest Airlines	GoJet Airlines
PSA Airlines			Mesa Airlines
Republic Airways			Republic Airways
SkyWest Airlines			SkyWest Airlines