



DHS/TSA Press Event for the 2021 Summer Travel Season
National Air Carrier Association President and CEO George Novak
Remarks as prepared

Secretary Mayorkas, Acting Administrator LaJoye, distinguished industry colleagues, members of the media, thank you for holding this event to highlight the upcoming summer travel season as we head into Memorial Day weekend.

To the traveling public...welcome back...it has felt like a long time coming. From our airlines ranging from our Ultra-Low Cost Carriers – who are leading the industry’s recovery – to our charter carriers, as well as all of our employees, we are looking forward to having you and your families back. As we have during the pandemic, we’re continuing our work to ensure the safest and most secure travel experience possible in close consultation with our partners at the CDC, TSA, DHS, and FAA. Our airline employees continue to conduct extensive efforts to ensure the cabin is sanitized and ready for your arrival. Advanced air filtration systems on-board all our aircraft in the industry have been proven to drastically reduce the spread of airborne pathogens including COVID-19.

Thanks to these efforts, we’re getting close to pre-pandemic levels of domestic and international travel. So, if you have not traveled in a while, there are a few key things we would like you to keep in mind:

- 1) **Masks** are still required within airports and while traveling on airlines. As vaccination levels continue to rise, we hope to be mask-free sometime in the near future, but until then, remember that the mask requirement is still in place.
- 2) **Travel will look a bit different than before.** We’re now used to seeing plexiglass shields, hand sanitizer and physical distancing in retail establishments and you also can expect them in the travel environment. All of these measures incorporate a risk-based, layered approach to reducing the transmission of COVID-19.
- 3) **Remember Crowds?** As more people are seeking to travel to vacation destinations and see friends and loved ones, there are going to be a lot more people in the travel environment this summer, so we ask for your patience and preparation as we all emerge from the grip of this pandemic.

I also wish to highlight the significant uptick in disruptive passengers onboard aircraft which have shockingly included instances of physical assaults against flight crews on the aircraft. The FAA and the industry have instituted a “zero-tolerance” policy in prosecuting any individual that does not follow flight crew instructions or becomes physically abusive. We support the FAA 100% in this effort. Our flight crews are there for the safety and security of everyone on the aircraft. They are protecting you, your families and your fellow passengers. We must all show them the proper respect and understanding as we resume traveling.

Mr. Secretary, the National Air Carrier Association thanks you for this opportunity to share our message with the traveling public and we look forward to seeing everyone in the skies. We can’t wait.