



Richard M. Daley, Mayor



Rosemarie S. Andolino, Commissioner

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# News Release

## **CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF AVIATION (CDA) ASSISTS INTERNATIONAL PASSENGERS FROM EIGHT FLIGHTS DIVERTED DUE TO EAST COAST SNOW STORMS**

CHICAGO –The Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) is accommodating more than 1,700 travelers on eight international flights that were diverted today to O’Hare due to severe winter weather conditions affecting East Coast airports.

“We are working with these international airlines to assist passengers at O’Hare who have been affected by flight cancellations and diversions from airports along the East Coast,” said Chicago Department of Aviation Commissioner Rosemarie S. Andolino. “We want to provide the best experience possible for travelers during their unexpected layover. We are extending the City’s warm hospitality and hope that they can enjoy all the City has to offer while they are here.”

The CDA worked closely with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to find gates for the aircraft and with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to facilitate getting those passengers through the customs process.

The CDA Customer Service team is mobilized to provide information about accommodations, transportation and entertainment at area hotels and venues in Chicago. Staff and volunteers from Travelers Aid, which helps passengers in crisis situations, are also assisting travelers and families with information.

In addition, the CDA is monitoring the higher volume of travelers on Airport Transit System (ATS) due to canceled or diverted flights. Additional ATS cars will be added to the trains as needed to avoid delays for passenger with connecting flights between terminals.

The CDA is also offering assistance to passengers whose flights from O’Hare and Midway International Airports to the East Coast have been canceled, as it always does in inclement weather situations.

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Both O'Hare and Midway will initiate the Passenger Assistance Program upon the request of airlines. The Program provides cots, blankets and traveler amenity kits for passengers who choose to remain overnight at the airports. The CDA also requests some concessions at both airports to remain open later when the Program is initiated.

At Midway, Airport Ambassadors are providing passengers with options for accommodations in the immediate area of the airport.

Today, airlines have canceled more than 200 in/outbound flights at O'Hare and approximately 25 in/outbound flights at Midway, mostly due to weather affecting East Coast airports.

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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.

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