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MSP Prepares for More Flights, Passenger Demand this Summer



(Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN – May 24, 2021) The recovery of air service at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP) is getting a huge lift as airlines expand their schedules to meet demand for a highly anticipated summer travel season.

“We are seeing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic begin to unwind with increased vaccination rates, fewer domestic travel restrictions, and growing confidence in the safety of air travel,” said Brian Ryks, CEO of the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC), which operates

MSP. “In response to pent-up demand, airlines are significantly expanding service domestically this summer, with a particular focus on vacation destinations.”

In the leadup to Memorial Day weekend this year, the traditional start to the summer travel season, airlines are operating 176 routes from MSP, a pandemic-era high. This number will increase to 185 by the third week of June. Only 40 MSP routes remain suspended, and that number is expected to go even lower with additional re-starts this summer. Average daily flight departures at MSP will increase to 404 in June and 431 in July, up from 346 in May. That compares to 139 average daily departures one year ago, when the travel industry was feeling some of the worst impacts of the pandemic.

Sun Country Airlines began service to five new domestic routes from MSP earlier this month: Orange County (SNA), Houston Intercontinental (IAH), Raleigh-Durham (RDU), Cincinnati, OH (CVG) and Hartford, CT. Four additional routes are hitting MSP schedules this week, with Sun Country’s new service to Kalispell-Glacier (FCA), Jackson Hole (JAC), Indianapolis (IND) and Fairbanks (FAI).

Delta Air Lines will begin serving two new routes this summer to Providence (PVD) and Portland, ME (PWM) beginning June 5, in addition to restarting 10 other domestic routes in June which were suspended in 2020. Alaska Airlines starts new seasonal service to Anchorage (ANC) on the same day. Southwest Airlines begins year-round service to Austin (AUS) on June 6.

International routes, especially transatlantic service, have been slower to rebound due to COVID-related travel restrictions, but recent announcements show a positive trend. Delta is taking another step in restarting its international network from MSP after resuming Amsterdam service in February. Delta resumed service to Mexico City on May 5 and is scheduled to resume flights to Reykjavik, Iceland on May 27. Delta’s service to Paris and London is scheduled to resume later this summer.

Air France will resume service from MSP to Paris on June 9. Icelandair is scheduled to restart service to Iceland on June 20. Condor’s Frankfurt service is tentatively scheduled to resume in July.

“This summer our terminals will be far busier than we’ve seen since the pandemic began,” said Ryks. “Even though many people have been vaccinated at this point, we are continuing the robust cleaning and sanitization program adopted in response to the pandemic, and federal regulations still require that masks be worn at airports and on aircraft.”

Required face coverings and vigorous cleaning are part of MSP’s multi-layered [Travel Confidently MSP program](#) that supports the health safety of travelers, visitors and airport employees. Additional safety measures include social distancing reminders, the deployment of hundreds of hand sanitizing stations across terminals, and the installation of protective barriers at customer contact points.

MSP offers [prebooked parking](#) that not only guarantees a spot for customers, but also gives them a touchless experience by using a QR code from their online parking confirmation to enter

and exit the ramp. Prebooked customers can save \$7 a day off the drive-up rates for parking reservations between May 28 and May 31.

Passengers have more touchless options in Terminal 1, with food pick-up and delivery that allows customers to order from their phone or mobile device through the [MSP ASAP portal](#). Many MSP restaurants have also employed QR codes for their menus, along with many concession venues accepting more app-based pay services to promote contactless transactions.

Nationwide, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is also preparing for more passengers. It is now screening approximately 1.5 million people daily. The TSA is temporarily allowing larger sizes of hand sanitizer containers in carry-on luggage. Travelers are also permitted to bring individually packed alcohol or anti-bacterial wipes in their carry-on bag.

For the latest TSA security and travel guidance, visit <https://www.tsa.gov/travel>.

The Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) owns and operates one of the nation's largest airport systems, including Minneapolis-St Paul International (MSP) and six general aviation airports. The MAC's airports connect the region to the world and showcase Minnesota's extraordinary culture to millions of passengers from around the globe who arrive or depart through MAC airports each year. Though a public corporation of the state of Minnesota, the organization is not funded by income or property taxes. Instead, the MAC's operations are funded by rents and fees generated by users of its airports. For more information, visit www.metroairports.org.