



# FlyersRights.org

## Stranded Passenger Survival Guide

**Hotline: 877-FLYERS6  
(359-3776)**

<http://www.flyersrights.org>

FlyersRights.org is a non-profit grass roots organization of fed up airline passengers, over 33,000 strong. It has spearheaded a national campaign to get passengers the rights they need and deserve- especially in stranding situations. For more information on how to become a member, sign our petition or to make a contribution, go to our web site at [www.flyersrights.org](http://www.flyersrights.org).

Here are some suggestions if you are stranded on an airliner on the tarmac for more than two hours and want to get off:

- If there is a medical or security emergency on board, call 911 and the airline.
- Take photographs or video of everything that is happening around you.
- Call the **FlyersRights** stranded passenger hotline **1-877-FLYERS-6**. Tell us what is happening including your airline, flight number, airport
- location, how long you have been on the tarmac, and any special or emergency conditions.
- Go to [www.flyersrights.org](http://www.flyersrights.org) and click on Emergency Kit. You can download the Emergency Kit and the We Gotta Get Outta this Plane song to your iPod to play later.
- Once you have been on the tarmac for three hours, start a petition with signatures and email addresses from other passengers. Go for a majority.
- Give the petition to the head flight attendant to deliver to the captain, retain a copy and get the names of the flight crew.
- If they refuse to take you to the terminal and continue to hold you “hostage” and you and some other passengers are musically inclined, you can sing the “We Gotta Get Outta This Plane” song (to the tune of We Gotta Get Outta this Place) as a non-threatening protest.
- Do not get angry; never threaten the flight crew or other passengers. Always be respectful and polite to the flight crew and have witnesses to your conversations with them. Always comply with the directions of the flight crew even

PETITION TO THE CAPTAIN OF:

Flight: \_\_\_\_\_

Airline: \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

We, the undersigned passengers, request that we be returned to the terminal, as we have been held for over 3 hours on this aircraft on the ground at \_\_\_\_\_ airport and are now being held against our will.

Name Seat No. Email Address/Phone

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
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21. \_\_\_\_\_
22. \_\_\_\_\_
23. \_\_\_\_\_
24. \_\_\_\_\_
16. \_\_\_\_\_
26. \_\_\_\_\_
27. \_\_\_\_\_
28. \_\_\_\_\_

## **When a Flight is Cancelled or Excessively Delayed**

You may be able to take your ticket to another airline and request transportation on that airline's flight to your destination. Unfortunately, this once-common practice is not as widespread as it once was.

Online resources are your best friend in this case. First check to see if you've already been rebooked. If not, advocate for yourself by rebooking as quickly as possible!

### **Bumping Rights**

Airlines must give all passengers with reservations whose arrival is timely but are denied boarding involuntarily, a written statement describing their rights.

Under federal regulations you are entitled to an on-the-spot payment of denied boarding compensation as follows:

- Less than 1 hour delay to your destination - none.
- 1-2 hour delay (or 1-4 hours for international) – double the one-way fare up to \$650.
- Over 2 hours (or over 4 hours international) –400% of fare up to \$1,300
- For European carriers or travel, excessive delay, compensation up to \$900. See the EU web site, [http://europa.eu/legislation\\_summaries/transport/air\\_transport/124235\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/transport/air_transport/124235_en.htm)

You may always keep your original ticket and use it on another flight. If you choose to make your own arrangements, you can request an "involuntary refund" for the ticket for the flight from which you were bumped. The denied boarding compensation is essentially a payment for your inconvenience.

The airline is required to seek volunteers before bumping passengers involuntarily, and should require

any standbys or employee free riders to exit the aircraft.

### **Mishandled or Lost Baggage**

Airlines must refund any fee charged to transport a bag, if it is lost.

Contracts of carriage say airlines are not responsible for high-value items such as cameras, jewelry and electronics. Carry high-value items, medication, and any other must-have items in your carry-on.

You can request your bag be off loaded if you exit the aircraft before it takes off or if you are missing a connection. However, if your baggage goes to your destination without you, you should call the airline baggage office at the destination airport to have it secured.

If your bag is delayed, the airline is required to deliver it to your hotel or residence promptly when it arrives at your destination airport. Always fill out a missing bag report before leaving the airport and keep a copy. Ask how much you can spend to purchase immediate, must-have items to tide you over.

If your bag is declared officially lost, you will have to submit a claim. Missing the deadline for filing it could invalidate your claim altogether. If your flight was a connection involving two carriers, the final carrier is normally the one responsible for processing your claim even if it appears that the first airline lost the bag. Airlines don't automatically pay the full amount of every claim they receive. They will use the information on your form to estimate the value of your lost belongings and will consider the depreciated value of your possessions, not their original price or the replacement costs. If you don't keep extensive records, you can expect to argue with the airline over the value of your goods. It may take an airline anywhere from six weeks to three months to pay you for your lost luggage.

Always be sure that you have ID on your bags in more than one location in case your airline tag is removed. Place a copy of your itinerary in each bag.

If your bags are delayed, lost or damaged on a domestic trip, the airline can invoke a ceiling of \$3,000 per passenger on the amount of money they'll pay you. If your luggage and its contents are worth more than the liability limit, you may want to purchase "excess valuation," if available, from the airline as you check in. This is not insurance, but it will increase the carrier's potential liability. The airline may refuse to sell excess valuation on some items that are especially valuable or breakable, such as antiques, musical instruments, and jewelry. Again, put those in your carry-on.

### **Important Contact Information**

**Flyersrights Hotline: 877-FLYERS6 (877-359-3776)**

### **Media Outlets to call in case of Stranding:**

Joe Sharkey @ New York Times: 973-748-2132  
Alan Levin @ USA Today Aviation Reporter: 202-906-8181  
Terry Maxon @ Dallas Morning News: 214-977-8750  
John Hughes @ Bloomberg: 202-624-1819

### **Government Contact Information:**

DOT Aviation Consumer Complaints Phone: 202-366-2220  
DOT Aviation Consumer Complaints Email Address: [airconsumer@dot.gov](mailto:airconsumer@dot.gov)  
Congressional switchboard: 202-224-3121