



METROPOLITAN AIRPORTS COMMISSION

News Release

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First wave of spring break travel arrives at MSP Airport this week Airlines add more flights to meet demand to warm, sunny destinations



The spring break travel season means terminal lobbies will be the busiest early in the morning, between 4 a.m. and 8 a.m.
Courtesy of the Metropolitan Airports Commission

MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL, Minn. — As the Upper Midwest digs out from an early March snowstorm, the winter travel season is making room for spring break travelers and more flights to warm and sunny destinations.

The first and perhaps biggest wave of spring travelers will arrive at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP) this week. Over a stretch of four consecutive days beginning Thursday, March 6, more than 192,000 passengers are expected to go through MSP security checkpoints. Daily checkpoint volumes for two of those days are expected to surpass more than 49,000 people. These projected passenger volumes are in addition to connecting and arriving passengers at MSP.

The next biggest peak for departing travelers will be over the four-day period beginning Thursday, March 20, with a forecast of approximately 47,000 people going through security daily. In general, MSP will see passenger volumes increase as much as 20% compared to those in February. The busiest ticketing lobby times at both terminals will be in the mornings, between 4 a.m. and 8 a.m., with smaller peaks in the afternoon.

“The spring break travel season is out of the gate early this year, with higher-than-normal daily passenger volumes expected well into April,” said Brian Ryks, CEO of the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC), which owns and operates MSP. “We’ve had extensive coordination with our team, our airlines, federal partners, and others to bolster staffing levels and help us assist travelers passing through MSP in the coming weeks.”

Airline flights are also increasing with the transition to spring. Average daily departures from MSP will peak at 432 during March compared to 396 in February. MSP has a long list of warm-weather nonstop destinations popular with spring break travelers. This includes 12 destinations in Florida, eight in Mexico, six in California, three in Arizona, and a dozen more throughout Central America and the Caribbean. A map of every destination with nonstop service in March can be found via [MSP’s interactive direct route map](#) at mspairport.com.

New this year for spring break travelers:

- The Terminal 2 TSA PreCheck security lane has moved to Checkpoint 2.
- The [Terminal 2 Express Lane](#) is now open as an alternative pick-up and drop-off area to the terminal curb location. The free Express Lane is located in the Purple Ramp, with a covered loading zone on the second level offering quick access to the terminal via a sky bridge.

Other helpful tips for spring break travel:

- Travelers are encouraged to arrive at the airport at least two hours in advance of a domestic departure or three hours prior to an international departure.
- [Book parking reservations online now](#) to guarantee a spot and receive the lowest daily rates. Bookings must be made at least 12 hours before scheduled arrival time.
- [MSP Reserve](#) offers passengers a spot and set time in the security line for free. Availability is limited and offered at select times.
- Travelers in Terminal 1 should look for the shortest wait time on security checkpoint boards at both ends of the ticketing lobby. Passengers can access all gates from either checkpoint, but the North Checkpoint often has shorter wait times.

- Drivers can use either level at Terminal 1 to drop off or pick up passengers.
- [MSP's cell phone lots on Post Road](#) offer drivers a free place to wait until their passenger is ready to be picked up. Drivers should remain parked until their arriving party contacts them by phone before heading to the terminal pick-up zones.
- Travelers should review the latest TSA security screening information and tips [including identification requirements and regulated items for carry-on and checked baggage](#).
- For international travelers, the U.S. Department of State offers the free [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) so it can contact U.S. citizens in case of emergency and give timely alerts about travel, health and safety information for their destination country.

About The Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC)

The Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) owns and operates one of the nation's largest airport systems, including [Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport \(MSP\)](#) 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.

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