



METROPOLITAN AIRPORTS COMMISSION

Media Release

Oct. 13, 2026,

Jeff Lea

MAC Strategic Communications

jeff.lea@mspmac.org

612-725-6147

MEA week to boost fall travel through MSP Airport

Passenger activity projected to increase 16% above average fall levels



Travelers move through the Terminal 1 rotunda at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport. Courtesy: Metropolitan Airports Commission

MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL, Minn. — Fall travel is set to surge at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP) this week as one of the year's busiest travel periods coincides with Minnesota's annual MEA school break, giving families across the state extra days off for fall flights and getaways.

MEA week passenger volumes are expected to increase 16% compared to average activity levels so far this fall.

“This is a celebrated travel time for many Minnesotans — one more getaway before winter,” said Scott Skramstad, director of terminal and landside operations for the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC), which own and operates MSP. “The MAC, airlines and tenants have coordinated in advance to increase staffing levels, especially in our terminal lobbies to better assist travelers and help reduce wait times for check-in and security processes.”

Approximately 50,000 people are forecast to pass through security checkpoints on both Wednesday, Oct. 14 and Thursday, Oct. 15, the two busiest days for the MEA travel period. MEA week will wrap up on Sunday, Oct. 18. The MSP checkpoint forecast for that day is more than 44,000 people.

Early morning and late afternoons will be the busiest periods at MSP terminals. Travelers should generally arrive three hours before international flights and two hours before domestic departures.

On Oct. 15, passengers and their families will be able to visit a temporary Fraser sensory room on the Terminal 1 mezzanine level. The space will offer a calming environment to help reduce the stress and sensory overload that often accompany air travel. Representatives from Fraser, a local nonprofit provider of autism, mental/behavioral health and disability care, will have tables at each end of the Airport Mall in Terminal 1 to offer support or directions to the sensory room. Permanent sensory rooms are planned to open in the next two years as part of the Terminal 2 north expansion and the Terminal 1 Concourse G expansion projects.

MSP will celebrate MEA week with a series of passenger events in both terminals on Oct. 14 and Oct. 15. Activities will include giveaways, face painting, caricature artists, Pet Duets and Cocoa with a Cop.

Other helpful tips for MEA week travel at MSP:

- MSP passengers can reserve a spot in the security line for free through [MSP RESERVE](#). Reservation times vary per terminal, and availability is limited.
- Travelers can [prebook parking](#) online to guarantee a spot and capture the lowest daily rates. Bookings must be made at least 12 hours prior to scheduled arrival time.
- Terminal 1 drivers can use both sides of the upper loop roadway to pick up or drop off passengers.
- Terminal 2 travelers also have an alternative to the primary curbside pick-up and drop-off area. Drivers can access the free Terminal 2 Express Lane through the Purple Ramp. It provides a covered loading zone on the second level with a quick walk to the terminal via a sky bridge.

- To further reduce traffic congestion at curbside pick-up areas, drivers picking up passengers are encouraged to wait in advance at [MSP's free cell phone lots on Post Road](#). Drivers should stay parked until their arriving party contacts them to pick them up at either terminal. Current access to the cell phone lots from 34th Ave S only due to ongoing construction.
- Travelers in Terminal 1 should check the security wait-time boards when they enter the ticketing lobby. Passengers can access all gates from either checkpoint, but the North Checkpoint often has shorter waiting times.
- Get the latest TSA security screening information and tips [including identification requirements and regulated items for carry-on and checked baggage](#).

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.

Minneapolis-St. Paul International • Airlake • Anoka County-Blaine • Crystal • Flying Cloud • Lake Elmo • St. Paul Downtown