

Thousands stranded at airports in Christmas holiday travel nightmare



Dozens of flights have been canceled across the United States on Christmas Eve due to COVID staff shortages with thousands of passengers stuck at the airports and others forced to cancel holiday plans altogether.?

Chicago, December 24 (RHC)-- Dozens of flights have been canceled across the United States on Christmas Eve due to COVID staff shortages with thousands of passengers stuck at the airports and others forced to cancel holiday plans altogether.

“The nationwide spike in Omicron cases this week has had a direct impact on our flight crews and the people who run our operation. As a result, we’ve unfortunately had to cancel some flights and are notifying impacted customers in advance of them coming to the airport,” Chicago-based United Airlines said in a statement.

United did not specify how many flights have been affected by Covid-related issues, but according to media reports, about 120 got canceled, with Delta saying that it has canceled at least 90.

The Atlanta-based Delta Airlines said that prior to this decision its teams “have exhausted all options and resources – including rerouting and substitutions of aircraft and crews to cover scheduled flying.”

This follows a call to U.S. authorities by Delta CEO Ed Bastian, who asked to cut quarantine for fully vaccinated people to five days from the current 10. As a reason for his request, he cited COVID-related staff shortages. Earlier, JetBlue and the trade group Airlines for America addressed the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention with similar requests.

According to an American Automobile Association forecast, more than 109 million people – almost 34% more than in 2020 – “will travel 50 miles or more as they hit the road, board airplanes or take other transportation out of town” between December 23 and January 2nd. Out of these 109 million, 6.4 million are going to travel by air.

Passengers affected by delays and cancellations took to Twitter to express their frustration over the unfortunate start to the holidays. One cancelled passenger on Delta wrote: “My international flight just got canceled 5 hours before I have to leave for the airport. Canceling my family Christmas reunification. The wait to speak to a cust serv rep is 3, 4 hours according to the machine. I need help now. Please!”

<https://www.radiohc.cu/en/noticias/internacionales/280864-thousands-stranded-at-airports-in-christmas-holiday-travel-nightmare>



Radio Habana Cuba