

Passenger Rights Expert Weighs-in on What the Proposed DOT Compensation Rules Mean for Travelers

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New DOT Proposal to Mandate
Compensation for Airline Delays Could
Be a Game-Changer for U.S. Travelers

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) has unveiled a groundbreaking proposal aimed at protecting air passengers from the frustrations of lengthy delays. The new rule, announced last week, would require airlines to provide between \$200-\$300 cash compensation for domestic delays, rebook passengers on the next available flight, and cover essential expenses, such as meals, accommodations, and transportation, if the disruption is caused by the carrier.



Passengers wait for a delayed flight

This move aligns the United States with global passenger protection standards seen in regions like the European Union, which have long mandated compensation for flight disruptions.

Anthony Radchenko, CEO of [AirAdvisor](#), a leading company in helping air travelers secure compensation for flight disruptions, weighed in on the potential impact of the proposal:

"The U.S. has lagged behind the EU, Brazil, and Canada, which have had regulations in place protecting passengers from flight disruptions. With compensation rules in place, I think we will see a lot more airline punctuality."

"Already, there is a noticeable difference flying on a U.S. airline compared to an airline from the UK or Europe and these new rules could help eliminate that disparity. Even if the US passes a weakened version of the current proposal, it's still a step in the right direction."

Radchenko notes that such a policy would encourage better operational practices within the airline industry saying,
“Regulations in Europe have had a positive impact on passengers’ experience with air travel. It has definitely reduced the number of delays over three hours and cancellations.”

He adds that,

“Airlines are going to fight this regulation, but based on what’s happened in Canada, it’s safe to say they will try to claim safety issues to get out of paying compensation, even if the issues aren’t really safety-related.”

Regarding potential hikes in ticket prices:

“A few low-cost carriers have added a surcharge to their tickets to help offset potential compensation payouts, but it’s very small -- around \$2 per ticket. For legacy airlines, the surcharge would be even less noticeable. I doubt people would mind paying a few extra dollars if it meant their flights were more likely to be on time.”

Key Points of the Proposed Rule

Under the proposed DOT regulation, airlines would be required to:

Provide cash compensation \$200-\$300 for domestic delays, \$375-\$525 for six-hour delays, and \$750-\$775 for nine-hour delays.

Rebook passengers on the next available flight at no extra cost.

Cover out-of-pocket expenses, including meals, accommodations, and transportation during extended delays.

What This Means for Travelers

The proposal would give passengers a way to recoup the costs associated with flight disruptions and the inconvenience and stress that it can cause.

The DOT’s proposal is currently open for public comment, and travelers are encouraged to make their voices heard in support of stronger passenger protections.

About AirAdvisor

AirAdvisor has been a trusted advocate for air passengers since 2017, helping them claim compensation for flight delays, cancellations, and other flight disruptions. With expertise in airline policies and legal frameworks, AirAdvisor has assisted thousands of travelers worldwide in recovering compensation quickly and efficiently.

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