

Ministry of Civil Aviation Notifies Draft Passenger Charter Defining Rights for air Passengers for Public Consultation

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Sh. Jayant Sinha, Minister of State for Civil Aviation, today informed that the Draft Passenger Charter defining rights for air passengers is being notified today for public consultation. He was addressing the media on the various initiatives launched by the Ministry of Civil Aviation to ensure a hassle-free air travel experience.

The following initiatives are proposed:

1. Passenger Charter: A Draft Passenger Charter defining rights for air passengers is being notified today for public consultation that will contribute to a hassle-free air travel experience.

If the airline is found to be at fault, passengers will be entitled to the following benefits:

- **Delays and Cancellations:** When flight is expected to be delayed for more than 4 hrs from the published scheduled time departure or previously revised departure time (communicated more than 24 hours prior to original scheduled departure time), airlines to offer an option of full refund of ticket to the passenger. When delay is more than 24 hrs from published scheduled time of departure and involves flight to fly on the next day i.e. beyond 0000 hours, passenger to be offered free-of-charge hotel accommodation (including transfers). Airlines to compensate passengers for missing connecting flights: If delay more than 3 hours: INR 5,000. If delay between 4 and 12 hours: INR 10,000. If delay more than 12 hours: INR 20,000. When the flight is stationed on the tarmac for more than 60 minutes, **sufficient and free-of-charge hot snacks and beverages** are to be provided to the passengers, and b) when the flight is stationed on the tarmac for more than 90 minutes plus no possibility of departure in next 30 minutes, **passengers must be de-boarded**. In case of flight cancellation and when passenger is informed of the flight cancellation less than two weeks before and up to 24 hrs of the scheduled departure time, the airline must offer an alternate flight allowing the passenger to depart within two hours of the booked scheduled departure time **or refund the ticket, as acceptable to the passenger**, and b) in case the passenger is not informed up to 24 hours of the scheduled departure time, the airlines **must refund the full value of the air ticket**.
- **Compensation: Passenger dies or undergoes bodily injuries onboard an aircraft:** Limit of liability to be paid by the airline must be same for both international and domestic passengers. **Baggage lost, delayed, or damaged:** a) Limit of liability to be paid by the airline to be the same for both international and domestic passengers, and b) the minimum compensation will be as follows: Rs. 3,000 per kg for loss of baggage, Rs. 1,000 per kg for delay and Rs. 1,000 per kg for damage of baggage.
- **Cancellation:** In case of ticket cancellation, airline not to levy any additional charge for correction in name of the same person **when name correction is required up to three characters only** and when error in the name spelling is pointed out by the passenger to the

airline within 24 hours of making a reservation Cancellation charges must be **printed prominently** in the ticket itself in a **minimum font size of 12** and not as fine print. This information must also be provided as part of the reservation and ticket documentation. **Under no circumstance** will the airline (including the online or offline agent) levy cancellation charges that total more than the basic fare plus fuel surcharge Passenger allowed **Lock-in option for 24 hours** (after booking ticket) in which the passenger can cancel or amend the ticket without any additional charges.

- **Facilities:** Airlines to have **seats that are designated as acceptable for persons with disabilities free of charge**, which will remain blocked until close to the time of departure All airports must provide the following **medical facilities** at the airport: Medical doctor – available at all hours the airport is operational, Ambulance, minimum medical support (including oxygen cylinders and defibrillators), trained medical personnel, Standard Operating Procedures to care for medical emergencies for both inbound and outbound passengers Airports must provide **meet-and-greet facilities** for all passengers Airports must provide **toilets** outside departure and arrival terminals Airports/ airlines must provide **minimum one Helpdesk** for passengers Airports must provide passengers with **free 30-minutes Wi-Fi services** Airports **must provide affordable F&B outlets**
- All the above rights are over and above the ones that exist currently. The consultation process or public consultation will be open for 30 days from today and we expect to notify changes in 2 months. We will actively seek inputs from all stakeholders.

2. DigiYatra: An industry-led initiative coordinated by the Ministry of Civil Aviation in line with the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's Digital India vision to transform the nation into a digitally empowered society, DigiYatra aims to transform the flying experience for passengers and position Indian Aviation amongst the most innovative aviation networks in the world. The passenger will have choice to opt for the facility. Key features are:

- **Digitize air-travel experience:** Use of digital technology for enhanced and seamless passenger experience all the way from ticket booking to airport entry check, security check and aircraft boarding
- **Single-point verification:** Passengers enrol in to DigiYatra program through AirSewa, and a DigiYatra verified passenger gets hassle free entry at airport through E-Gates. The ID verification will be done by the BCAS-approved Government ID. At the entry gate a single token for the passenger is created.
- **Value-added services:** like ground transportation, special services at airport, in-flight, etc. and many other value added services for passengers in future will also be delivered through the DigiYatra programme.
- **Enhanced security:** The programme also enhances security while providing convenience to the passenger
- **Technical Standards formulated:** Ministry of Civil Aviation has finalized the technical standards for DigiYatra which will be published shortly. Airports such as Bangalore, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Varanasi and Vijayawada will roll out this programme in phases by January 2019.

3. AirSewa app: AirSewa app brings together all the stakeholders on a common platform to ensure timely and effective handling of customer grievances and to disseminate real-time data.

- **AirSewa v1.5** to be launched by July 2018
- **Registered Traveller Program** - Registration of DigiYatra ID
- **Redesigned Mobile App and Web application** for AirSewa including UI/UX refresh to make

it service friendly

- **Social Media Login enabled** that allows users of Facebook and Google to access AirSewa
- **Grievance Reporting on Social Media platformssuch** as Twitter and Facebook using AirSewa
- **Comprehensive FAQs and Chat-bot interface**
- **Updated Flight Status** and Flight Schedule Information
- **Information on facilities** and services available across all airports in India
- **Ability to update the airport information content** and publish approved content to Mobile and Web app

4. Wi-Fi Connectivity in Flights:

- Both domestic and international airlines are allowed to offer internet services and mobile services on-board an aircraft in Indian airspace provided certain security requirements are met: Internet services can be provided from the moment a plane takes off and personal electronic devices (PED) have to be put on flight modeMobile services can be allowed only when an aircraft is over an altitude of 3,000 metres
- All approvals have been recently provided and now interested stakeholders need to apply for licenses and regulatory clearances.

These initiatives have emerged after comprehensive discussions with all stakeholders and players.Improving the passenger air travel experience is a vitally important goal for the Ministry of Civil Aviation. In combination, these initiatives seek to provide safe, comfortable and delightful air travel experience to the passengers

RJ/SB

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