SAFETY: The Necessary Elements to Return Passengers to the Skies

Safety: Every effort must be taken to ensure that passengers, crews and those working on aircraft are protected from further exposure to the COVID-19 virus. We must work collaboratively with policymakers and aviation stakeholders to ensure the health and safety of every person in our aircraft, airports and other facilities. Robust health-related protocols in our nation's airports and onboard commercial flights (e.g., use of personal protective equipment by crew and passengers and thorough cleaning and disinfection of the aircraft cabin in accordance with CDC guidelines) will restore the confidence needed to more quickly resume a semblance of normal air travel.

Access: Access to air travel – and the resulting consumer spending at hotels, restaurants, resorts and retail establishments – will be a critical element of the economic recovery. We must enable families and individuals to return in large numbers to both business and pleasure destinations.

Flexibility: Airlines must have the flexibility to shift aircraft and routes to meet demand as it ebbs and flows during the recovery. While air service should be guaranteed between as many points as possible, requiring multiple carriers to serve the same points where service greatly exceeds demand wastes fuel and resources, hindering economic recovery.

Economic Viability: Aviation stakeholders must work with the U.S. government to ensure that any new air travel policies related to COVID-19 cannot be so stringent that passengers can't fly easily and affordably, and airlines can't return to profitability and protect jobs. Overly burdensome screening or personal distancing requirements, or policies that greatly restrict the number of passengers in an aircraft, will inhibit air travel to unsustainably low levels. In addition, a return to economic viability for airlines – and other vital sectors of the economy – cannot be achieved if new or higher taxes and fees are imposed on airline passengers to pay for COVID-19-related screening costs, unreasonable economic regulations are issued, or if Congress fails to enact legislation protecting airlines and other impacted businesses from COVID-19-related lawsuits.

Testing: The federal government, with input from aviation stakeholders, must work quickly and methodically to deploy a measured approach to COVID-19 testing in airports that utilizes the latest technologies for both screening (e.g., non-contact temperature scanning and effective antibody testing) and credentialing (biometric or tamper-proof identification systems) for those safe to fly and interact with others.

You: The most critical element in returning to the skies is you. You might be the passenger, flight attendant, pilot or aircraft technician. Or, you could be the family member waiting at the airport for your family member, friend or colleague to arrive. You are the reason we fly. More than anything else, we care about your health and safety and helping you return to better days.

NACA. We fly for you™