



Josh Kaul
Wisconsin Attorney General

P.O. Box 7857
Madison, WI 53707-7857

NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Attorney General Kaul Announces Airline Passenger Protection Partnership between Wisconsin and U.S. DOT

MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Josh Kaul announced a new partnership with the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) to review and resolve consumer complaints against airlines and ticket agents. The agreement streamlines how the attorney general and U.S. DOT will work together to review consumer complaints and identify violations of federal aviation consumer protection requirements.

This action comes at a time when complaints about flight disruptions, lack of refunds and lost or delayed baggage continue to be core passenger concerns.

Kaul praised the new coordinated effort that will provide better protection to millions of U.S. airline passengers.

“Airlines and ticket agents conducting business in Wisconsin must do so honestly and treat consumers fairly,” said Attorney General Kaul. “This partnership will help ensure that airline passengers are effectively protected against deceptive practices.”

“This partnership will further protect Wisconsin consumers,” added Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Secretary Randy Romanski. “Travelers can be assured that this much-needed collaboration between state and federal agencies is here to help if needed.”

The new process for addressing consumer complaints against air travel companies, outlined in a memorandum of understanding between the Wisconsin Attorney General's Office, DATCP and the U.S. DOT, reinforces state and federal commitments to protect the rights of the travelers. Wisconsin is one of 25 states or territories that either signed an MOU with the U.S. DOT or expressed an interest in executing such an agreement.

"We take our mission to protect consumers seriously, and today's launch of the Airline Passenger Protection Partnership is an important milestone in that effort," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg. "By partnering with a bipartisan group of state attorneys general, the U.S. Department of Transportation has expanded our ability to hold airlines and ticket agents accountable and protect passengers from unfair or deceptive practices."

Federal law places the central responsibility for protecting airline consumers with the U.S. DOT. Under this historic agreement, the attorney general's office will be authorized to investigate consumer complaints against air carriers, ticket agents and other air travel companies supervised by the U.S. DOT. The attorney general's office and DATCP will work with consumers and companies to resolve complaints, and if necessary, will refer complaints to the U.S. DOT's Office of Aviation Consumer Protection (OACP). The OACP will prioritize their review, include attorney general's office staff on letters of inquiry to those companies based on those referrals and consult with the attorney general's office before determining next steps.

The U.S. DOT will also provide technical assistance and training to staff in the attorney general's office and will meet at least once a year with the attorney general's office to assess ongoing efforts and to update Wisconsin on any actions taken in response to state-referred complaints.

The MOU will last for two years, and Wisconsin and the U.S. DOT may agree to extend it at two-year intervals after the agreement ends.

In 2022, Kaul urged the federal government to strengthen protections for airline passengers and [asked Congress to authorize state attorneys general](#) enforcement of federal consumer protection laws governing the airline industry.

Other states that have signed an MOU with the U.S. DOT include the attorneys general from California, Colorado, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Nevada, New York, New Hampshire, North Carolina,

the Northern Mariana Islands, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and the U.S. Virgin Islands.