Alaska Airlines Increases Minimum Check-In Time to 40 Minutes

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SEATTLE, Oct. 29, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- Alaska Airlines is changing its minimum check-in time for customers traveling on most domestic flights from 30 to 40 minutes prior to departure, regardless if a bag is checked or not. The minimum check-in time for international flights remains at 60 minutes.

The policy change is being made so that travelers on Alaska Airlines can expect the same minimum check-in time at almost all airports the carrier serves. The exceptions will be at airports where the check-in cutoff is already 45 minutes, such as Atlanta, Denver, Las Vegas, Newark and Philadelphia. Passengers traveling from Guadalajara have a 90-minute check-in cutoff time.

Alaska Airlines' longstanding boarding policy remains the same — passengers must be available to board at least 30 minutes before the scheduled departure time for all flights.

"Our previous policy sent a mixed message by having different cutoff times, depending on the airport and whether a customer is checking bags," said Jeff Butler, Alaska Airlines' vice president of customer service – airports and cargo. "The new policy will make check-in times the same for everyone, making it easier for passengers to remember the cutoff, regardless of how they are checking in and whether they're checking a bag. A consistent cut-off time should make things easier for customers and employees alike."

The vast majority of Alaska Airlines' passengers already comply with the new check-in time. Starting tomorrow, passengers who miss the cutoff will be treated the same way as customers today — they will be offered a $25 same-day confirmed seat on the next available flight, depending on availability.

As with the previous cut-off time, the 40-minute requirement does not ensure travelers will make it to their departure gate in time for boarding. Busy security lines and heavy passenger traffic may require additional time. The Transportation Security Administration recommends that passengers allow at least one hour for domestic flights and two hours or more for international flights.

Alaska Airlines' customers can check in using the carrier's app for iPhone or Android, on the Web or at an airport kiosk.

Alaska Airlines, a subsidiary of Alaska Air Group (NYSE: ALK), together with its partner regional airlines, serves 95 cities through an expansive network in Alaska, the Lower 48, Hawaii, Canada and Mexico. Alaska Airlines has ranked "Highest in Customer Satisfaction Among Traditional Network Carriers" in the J.D. Power and Associates North America Airline Satisfaction StudySM for six consecutive years from 2008 to 2013. For reservations, visit www.alaskaair.com. For more news and information, visit the Alaska Airlines Newsroom at www.alaskaair.com/newsroom.

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