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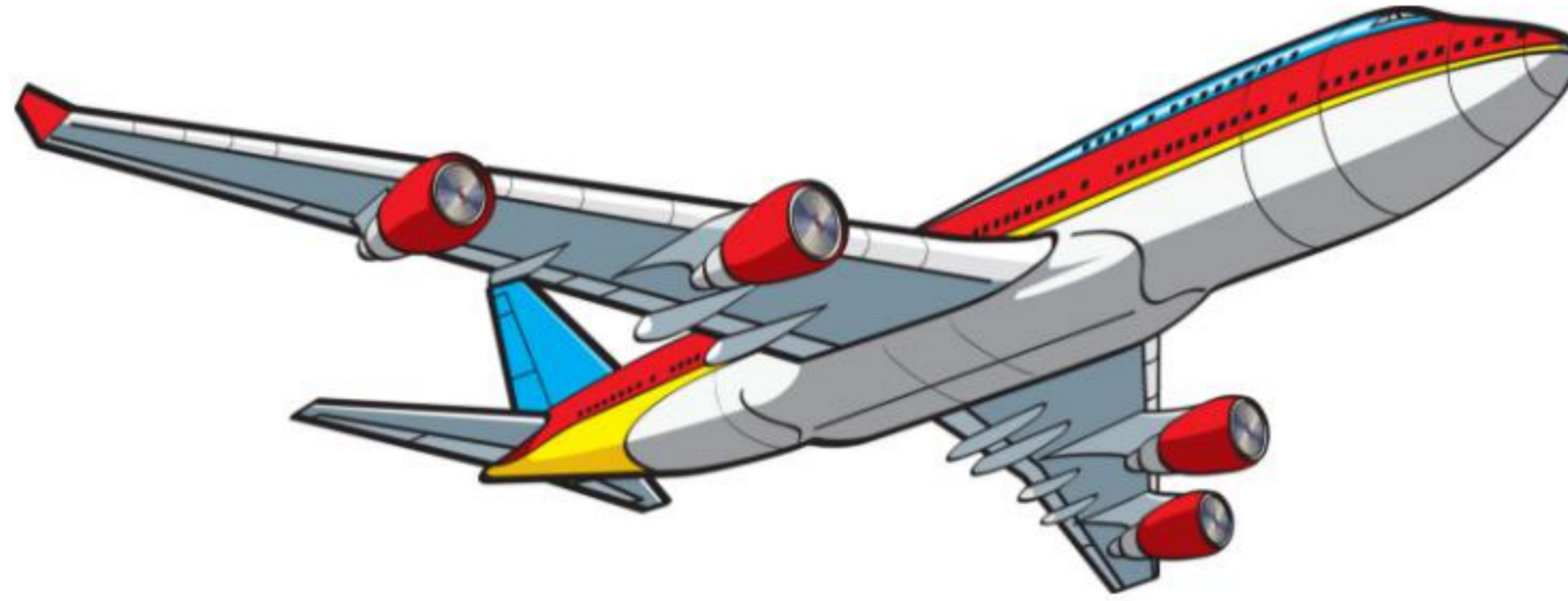
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How to get airlines to compensate for delays & cancellations



What should you do if your flight has been delayed or cancelled without prior intimation? Or you had to miss your connecting flight because your first flight was delayed? Or you are not allowed to board the aircraft for myriad reasons and none of which makes sense to you?

What do you do? Other than breathing fire, shedding tears and taking your frustration out on all and sundry, **Akanksha Anshu, Co-founder & Managing Director, refundme.in** sheds some light on what you should be doing in the event you find yourself in any of the above-mentioned situations. Know your rights and when you are entitled to compensation from the airline.

SQ: Can one claim compensation from the airline for cancelled flights?

Akanksha: The airline is required to inform their passengers two weeks in advance in case the flight is cancelled. If a passenger is notified less than two weeks or up to 24 hrs of booked departure, it's the airline's responsibility to arrange an alternate flight for their passengers or the passengers can claim compensation up to INR 10,000 depending on the duration of the flight. Make sure you keep all the documents handy with your communication with the airline authorities.

SQ: What about delayed flights?

Akanksha: Passengers are not entitled to compensation, but the airline has to provide facilities like meals and refreshments as per the waiting time and hotel accommodation when necessary.

SQ: How about when you are denied boarding?

Akanksha: This is a trend that is growing in India. As a passenger, the airline authority will ask you to give up your seat, voluntarily, in case of overbooking. If you do so in exchange for benefits and the airline will book you on an alternative flight with no compensation to be claimed. If the passenger is denied boarding against their will, compensation can be claimed up to INR 20,000. It's mandatory for you to claim a denied boarding form from the authority to claim your compensation.

SQ: What if the airline refuses to give 'Denied boarding form' or provides the passenger with excuses such as, "we have run out of forms"?

Akanksha: As per the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) rules and regulations, it is mandatory for all airlines to provide passengers who have been denied boarding with the necessary form. If the passengers aren't aware, the airlines will not issue the form, since the form becomes a formal piece of information and will be used as evidence to claim compensation. Which is why it's important to know your rights. Secondly, so far, Air India is the only Airline that has been issuing denial boarding forms in cases of denied boarding

SQ: What if I miss a connecting flight because the first carrier was delayed?

Akanksha: In the event, any passenger is booked on connecting flights, and the first leg of his departure is delayed, the passenger shall be compensated by the airline of the first flight for the first leg, provided that the passenger ultimately arrives at the final destination at least three hours later than the scheduled arrival time.

SQ: Where does one file complaints and claims? Online? At the airport?

Akanksha: DGCA states that every airline is required to station a nodal officer to help the passenger with their grievances. Their email addresses are needed to be mentioned on the airline website. Unfortunately, some nodal officers are just namesake.

SQ: Within how many hours/days should one file a complaint?

Akanksha: Passengers can claim compensation within a year of the incident.

SQ: Are there situations where you are not eligible to file a compensation claim?

Akanksha: Yes. When flight delays and cancellations are caused by extraordinary circumstances – (beyond the control of the airline, the impact of which lead to the cancellation/delay of flight(s), and which could not have been avoided even if all reasonable measures had been taken by the airline. Such extraordinary circumstances may, in particular, occur due to political instability, natural disaster, civil war, insurrection or riot, flood, explosion, government regulation or order affecting the aircraft, strikes and labour disputes causing cessation, slowdown or interruption of work or any other factors that are beyond the control of the airline.

You can also access the rules and regulations set by DGCA [here](#)

Refundme.in with the help of a legal team help passengers in getting their compensation. You can log on to their website and fill in the details. They follow a no win, no fee policy. They charge 25% fee from the compensation paid out.