



AUSTRIAN TEMPORARILY TERMINATES REGULAR FLIGHT OPERATIONS AS OF WEDNESDAY

News / Airlines



Austrian Airlines decided to temporarily terminate all regular flight operations starting Wednesday night, March 18, 2020. This move is in response to entry bans being imposed across the globe and a rapid decline in demand for air travel. The last flight for the time being departing from Chicago with the flight number OS 066 will land in Vienna on March 19, 2020 in the morning hours. Up until then flight operations will be scaled back in a controlled and structured manner in order to bring all passengers, crews and aircraft home if possible. Initially, Austrian Airlines will cancel all flights up until March 28, 2020. Passengers who have booked a flight during the time will be rebooked on other airlines if possible.

If necessary, for example in cases of a need for evacuation and other relief or emergency flights, Austria's red-white-red flag carrier will keep one long-haul aircraft and one medium-haul jet ready for operation. The relief flights will be carried out in close cooperation with the Austrian Federal Government. "As Austria's national carrier, we are aware of our responsibility and will cooperate with the government and try to bring home as many Austrians as possible", says Austrian Airlines CEO Alexis von Hoensbroech. In the coming days the airline will increasingly carry out evacuation flights and rely upon the offering of

the Lufthansa Group for rebooking passengers.

In general, Austrian Airlines passengers on cancelled flights will be rebooked

Passengers on flights planned within the next 48 hours and cancelled in response to the current situation will be automatically rebooked. Austrian Airlines asks passengers with such a flight to check the status of their rebooking on austrian.com under "My Bookings" within the next 48 hours. Customers who have provided a telephone number or e-mail address as well as members of the frequent flyer program Miles & More will be automatically informed about changes in the flight schedule by SMS or email. It is not necessary to contact the Austrian Airlines Service Hotline.

Flights scheduled later than 48 hours in the future will be directly rebooked by the Austrian Airlines Service Center. In this case, customers who have listed their telephone numbers or e-mail addresses at the time of booking will be informed about the status change of their flights. The Austrian Airlines Service Hotline at +43 5 1766 1000 is available to answer all questions relating to flight bookings. However, longer waiting times are to be expected due to the high volume of inquiries.

Passengers can help relieve the pressure on the hotline!

Austrian Airlines kindly asks passengers whose planned flights are not scheduled during the next seven days to refrain from contacting the service hotline in the days ahead. In this way, they will give the service employees the possibility to first deal with passengers who would normally be departing in the next week. These passengers will also be rebooked and correspondingly informed as needed.

As was announced last week, Austrian Airlines offers an expanded opportunity for passengers to rebook their flights on a goodwill basis. Tickets with a departure date before April 30, 2020 which were booked up until March 12, 2020 will be kept in abeyance and remain valid for the time being. Passengers will then have the chance up until June 1, 2020 to select a new travel date and, if need be, to choose another destination. In order to take advantage of this offer, passengers can contact the Austrian Airlines Service Center by telephone or make use of the contact form available on the Austrian Airlines Website at www.austrian.com. Passengers who booked a flight before March 16, 2020 with a scheduled departure after March 18, 2020 will either be rebooked on another Lufthansa Group airline.

Austrian Airlines CCO Andreas Otto asks all customers to be patient. "Our employees are doing their best to process requests as quickly as possible. However, there are longer waiting times as a result of the high volume of inquiries. For this reason, I am kindly asking that you display patience. Rest assured that nobody will be let down here. All customer inquiries will be handled by us", he states.

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Stranded Austrians can contact the Federal Ministry of European and International Affairs

Austrian Airlines is in contact with the Austrian Federal Ministry of European and International Affairs to clarify issues relating to the operation of additional evacuation flights to bring back Austrians who are abroad. For this reason, Austrian Airlines asks all Austrians who are stranded in other countries and who want to return home to get in touch with the hotline of the Federal Ministry of European and International Affairs at +43 1 90115 4411.

Short-time work for Austrian Airlines employees

On March 6, 2020, Austrian Airlines submitted an application for short-time work for the entire company. At present, it is negotiating an agreement with the Works Council in order to adapt to the

new situation. Relevant details are planned to be presented in the course of this week.

Austrian Airlines is preparing for a relaunch after the crisis

In the meantime, Austrian Airlines is preparing to relaunch operations after the crisis. The airline is taking a flexible approach towards restarting the business “so that we can be ready to go as soon as possible once demand recovers”, CEO Alexis von Hoensbroech explains, “This is not a ‘goodbye’, it’s a ‘servus’ and ‘see you later’.”

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