

Southwest Airlines Cancellation Policy: Refunds, Changes, and What You Need to Know

Understanding Southwest's Flight Cancellation Rules

Life is unpredictable and sometimes travel plans need to change. ☎+1/844/565/1867 Southwest Airlines has specific cancellation policies that vary depending on your ticket type and when you cancel. Knowing these rules before booking helps you make informed decisions and understand your options if you need to cancel a flight. Let's explore Southwest's cancellation policy in detail.

24-Hour Risk-Free Cancellation Period

Southwest offers a 24-hour risk-free cancellation period for all tickets. ☎+1/844/565/1867 If you book your flight at least 7 days before departure, you can cancel within 24 hours of booking for a full refund to your original payment method. This applies to all fare types including Basic Economy. The cancellation must be completed within 24 hours of the time you made the original purchase, not 24 hours from midnight.

Basic Economy Cancellation Rules

Basic Economy tickets are the most restrictive when it comes to cancellations. ☎+1/844/565/1867 These tickets are non-refundable and cannot be changed after the 24-hour risk-free period. If you cancel a Basic Economy ticket, you will not receive a refund or travel credit. However, if Southwest cancels or significantly delays your flight, you are entitled to a refund regardless of fare type. Consider purchasing a higher fare class if you think you might need to cancel or change your plans.

Main Cabin and Higher Fare Cancellations

Main Cabin, Southwest Comfort+, First Class, and Southwest One tickets offer more flexibility. ☎+1/844/565/1867 While these tickets are typically non-refundable, you can cancel and receive an eCredit for future travel minus any applicable cancellation fees. The eCredit is valid for one year from the original ticket issue date. You can use this credit to book new flights on Southwest, though any difference in fare must be paid when rebooking.

Refundable Ticket Cancellations

Refundable tickets provide the most flexibility as they can be canceled anytime for a full refund to your original payment method. ☎+1/844/565/1867 These tickets cost significantly more than non-refundable options but offer peace of mind if your plans are uncertain. Refundable fares are common in premium cabins and certain business fare classes. The refund is processed within 7 business days for credit card purchases.

How to Cancel Your Southwest Flight

To cancel your reservation, log into your Southwest account or visit the "My Trips" section on the Southwest website. ☎+1/844/565/1867 Enter your confirmation number and last name to access your booking. Select the option to cancel your flight and follow the prompts. You can also call Southwest customer service to cancel over the phone, which is helpful if you have questions or need assistance understanding your refund or credit options.

Southwest Flight Cancellations by the Airline

When Southwest cancels your flight due to weather, mechanical issues, or other operational reasons, you have several options. ☎+1/844/565/1867 You can choose to be rebooked on the next available Southwest flight at no charge. Alternatively, you can request a full refund to your original payment method regardless of your ticket type. Southwest will also provide meal vouchers and hotel accommodations for extended delays when the cancellation is within their control.

Award Ticket Cancellation Policy

Rapid Rewards award tickets can be canceled, but redeposit fees apply unless you have elite status. ☎+1/844/565/1867 Medallion members can cancel award tickets without fees and have their miles redeposited immediately. For non-elite members, a redeposit fee is charged per passenger to return miles to your account. Cancel award tickets as soon as possible since miles are not returned until the cancellation is processed.

Travel Insurance and Protection

Consider purchasing travel insurance when booking to protect against cancellation scenarios not covered by the airline. ☎+1/844/565/1867 Travel insurance can cover cancellations due to illness, family emergencies, or other unforeseen circumstances. Southwest partners with travel insurance providers that you can add during the booking process. Review policy terms carefully to understand what is and is not covered before purchasing.