



**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OFFICE OF AVIATION ENFORCEMENT AND PROCEEDINGS
WASHINGTON, DC**

This message was e-mailed to major airlines and aviation associations on September 21, 2001. It concerns the aftermath of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001.

Since the terrorist hijackings and events of September 11, we have seen several reports of airlines apparently removing passengers from flights because the passengers appeared to be Middle Eastern and/or Muslim. We caution airlines not to target or otherwise discriminate against passengers based on their race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, or based on passengers' names or modes of dress that could be indicative of such classification. Various Federal statutes prohibit air carriers from subjecting a person in air transportation to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, or ancestry. At DOT, we are and will continue to be vigilant in ensuring that the airport security procedures, mandated by FAA and implemented by the airlines, are not unlawfully discriminatory.

We strongly encourage each airline to take steps to ensure that its employees understand that, not only is it wrong, but it is also illegal to discriminate against people based on their race, ethnicity, or religion. Recently, the President and Chief Operating Officer of Delta Airlines sent a letter to all of the airline's employees worldwide requesting tolerance of all people and cultures, and explaining that its employees must comply fully with civil rights laws. A copy of this letter is attached.

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Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings
Office of the General Counsel
U.S. Department of Transportation

[Delta letter](#)

Sent to:

Alaska Airlines

America West Airlines

American Airlines

American Trans Air

Continental Airlines

Delta Air Lines

Northwest Airlines

Southwest Airlines

Trans World Airlines

United Airlines

US Airways

Air Transport Association

International Air Transport Association

Regional Airline Association

Air Carrier Association of America