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U.S. Airlines to Add New Gender Option for Non-Binary Travelers

Some of the industry's largest trade groups have agreed on best-practice booking options.

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Advocates say more states need to offer IDs with an "X" as a gender. T.M. Detwiler

In the fall of 2018, we reported on the **outdated gender norms** people encounter when buying plane tickets. After going through the booking process for three major U.S. airlines—Delta, American, and United—as well as international carriers like British Airways, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, and **Singapore Airlines** to see what gender identification options are available, we found that there were no non-binary options in *any* of these airlines' booking processes. Now, it seems that change is (finally) on the way—for **some airlines**, at least.

American, Delta, United, Southwest, and Alaska airlines will all add a gender option for “unspecified” or “undisclosed” passengers booking tickets, in addition to the “male” and “female” selections, according to *USA Today*. The move comes after two of the air travel industry's largest trade groups—Airlines for America (A4A) and the International Air Transport Association (IATA), which represents carriers worldwide—set best-practice booking options for travelers carrying “non-binary IDs.”

AFA told [The Daily Beast](#) that member airlines are “committed to making these changes to their reservation processes to account for non-binary IDs while ensuring continued compliance with U.S. and foreign government requirements that passenger data match the identification used for travel.” AFA will officially roll out its new guidelines in June, but airlines will be responsible for updating their own booking platforms.

In a statement to *Traveler*, United said it had worked with the Human Rights Campaign for its guidelines. “As part of our commitment to inclusion, we want to ensure all of our customers feel comfortable and welcome no matter how they self-identify, which is why we will begin offering our customers the ability to select the gender with which they most closely identify during the booking process. Beginning in the coming weeks, customers will be able to identify themselves as M(ale), F(emale), U(undisclosed), or X(unspecified), corresponding to what is indicated on their passports or I.D. Also, customers who do not identify with a gender will have the option of selecting 'Mx.' as a title. We are excited to share this next step as we continue to break down barriers to promote inclusion.”

Delta wouldn't give a timeline, but committed to offering the option, saying, “As part of Delta’s ongoing efforts to accommodate the needs of diverse customers throughout our business, we are planning to offer a non-binary gender option during the booking process.” Southwest said it is “currently investigating solutions and the technical requirements needed to provide our customers non-binary gender marker options during the booking process” and that they “look forward to having more details to share in the future.” Alaska Airlines, meanwhile, said “As part of our values of having a culture of inclusion for all, we are planning to implement a non-binary gender option for guests to select in the booking process.”

At present, [U.S. passports](#) only offer binary genders, though other countries—including Denmark, Germany, New Zealand, Australia, and Canada—offer a third gender option. As for licenses? Currently, only five U.S. states and Washington, D.C. allow citizens to get licenses with an “X” as a gender: Oregon, California, Colorado, Arkansas, and Minnesota. Because of the lack of non-binary booking options currently available from the drop-down menu, several fliers told [The Daily Beast](#) that they most commonly choose the sex they were assigned at birth or the gender listed on [another form of ID](#).

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