

Southwest's Update on 5G and Next Steps

On Wednesday, [Bob Jordan](#) shared an update with Southwest Employees regarding the expansion of 5G cellular service:

As you may have seen on Tuesday afternoon, the industry received encouraging announcements from the cellular telephone companies stating they would reduce their 5G footprint and delay turning on 5G service near a collection of U.S. airports. This late-breaking development is welcome news. The adjustment allows the FAA more time to evaluate potential 5G interference data and work with our industry to identify strategies for long-term solutions that lessen operational impacts.

Due to this change in course by the telecommunications industry, the FAA and Boeing must issue new guidance allowing operations within some of the previously restricted 5G airport environments. We are working diligently to implement the revised 5G guidance for airports and aircraft as it's issued. In the meantime, we are operating our Wednesday, and perhaps Thursday, schedules in accordance with the previously established restrictions. The good news is that, due to favorable weather conditions, we anticipate very minimal impact on our operation.

So, what's next? The U.S. airline industry has been tracking the planned expansion of 5G for more than three years and continually expressing concerns about the need to collaborate to fully understand and avoid possible operational impacts. However, it wasn't until just recently that the telecom industry released all of the data necessary for aircraft manufacturers to perform safety tests. This means the right parties haven't had the time needed to study potential 5G interference with aircraft equipment and to develop extensive mitigation plans that would prevent disruptions.

Now, my hope is that this pause in 5G expansion grants the FAA more time to evaluate the data for specific airports and runways so that 5G cellular service and airline operations can safely coexist, as it shouldn't be a one-or-the-other proposition. In fact, other countries have deployed 5G successfully, with no reported events of interference; however, multiple mitigations were put in place that did not exist for the rollout in the United States. Most importantly, we need a coordinated, reasonable approach to the 5G expansion at the highest levels—one that keeps the burden off the flying public and airline employees.

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[Southwest Airlines Co.](#) operates one of the world's most admired and awarded airlines, offering its one-of-a-kind value and Hospitality at 119 airports across 12 countries. Southwest took flight in 1971 to democratize the sky through friendly, reliable, and low-cost air travel and now carries more air travelers flying nonstop within the United States than any other airline(fn. 1). By empowering its more than 73,000(fn. 2) People to deliver unparalleled Hospitality, the maverick airline cherishes a passionate loyalty among more than 134 million Customers carried in 2025. Southwest leverages a unique legacy and mission to serve communities around the world including harnessing the power of its People and Purpose to put communities at the Heart of its success. Learn more by visiting [Southwest.com/citizenship](#).

1. Based on U.S. Dept. of Transportation quarterly Airline Origin & Destination Survey as of Q4 2025
2. Fulltime-equivalent active Employees as of March 31, 2026

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