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Re: Have Your Say: Air Passenger Protection

I like to note 2 areas of improvement as the government continues the conversation regarding improving Air Passenger Protection.

1. As a frequent traveller, and now with a baby, I have noticed there is not a lot of information out there about travelling with babies/ young children. The airlines also have not provided clear guidelines. Couple of points needing improvement / clarity:
 - a. When people purchase a seat for infants under 2 (I am aware they can be held by parents if under 2, no seats needed – but let's say I want to have more space on a flight) – is it mandatory to have a car seat installed? Or do I have the right to use it as an empty seat space to give myself more room when travelling with a baby? This point is not clear and I believe was the cause of at least one incident where a family travelling with baby without a car seat was bumped from the flight.
 - b. It is also not clear how to book a ticket when the child is over 2 years old, can buy their own seat – can they sit in the seat on their own or require a car seat. And also if they refuse to sit properly , is it against the regulations for one of the parents to hold the child during landing/take off as if they were still under 2 year old. This point is not clear.
 - c. It is also not clear what happens when a child is travelling during a period when they are under 2 during departure but over 2 when they return on a flight – what type of airfare do you buy? This may not matter for domestic flights but for international flights, buying a round trip ticket is much cheaper than two single route tickets.
2. The new regulations should focus on how airlines handle families traveling with young children / babies. These passengers typically need more time / efforts to prepare for a trip and are most susceptible to changes because traveling with babies/young children is not the same as one business person travelling on their own. Same with elderlies. The airlines should compensate based on the circumstance – for example, asking a 30 year old business person to wait a few hours at the airport lounge may be OK, but could be very challenging for a family with two children under age of 2 as they have other needs such as napping and access to suitable baby / food etc.

3. Not related to airlines , but just a note that many Canadian airports do not have a separate line for priority custom / immigration clearance although airlines do tend to board these people first.