

# How do bereavement flights work, and how do you book one?

## Key facts

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- Air Canada, Delta, Alaska, WestJet and Hawaiian (interisland only) still publish a bereavement fare (Air Canada, Delta Air Lines, Alaska Airlines, WestJet, Hawaiian Airlines, checked 2026-09-19).
- American Airlines and Southwest Airlines say directly they do not offer bereavement or emergency fares (American Airlines, Southwest Airlines, checked 2026-09-19).
- United Airlines discontinued its bereavement discount on March 14, 2014, and now handles a family death through case-by-case customer service exceptions (AFAR, checked 2026-09-19).
- Air Canada requires travel to occur within 10 days of booking and no more than 60 days out, and it wants supporting proof emailed within 7 days of your return (Air Canada, checked 2026-09-19).
- Delta requires travel to begin within 7 days of the death or imminent death, and the fare can only be booked by phone or through the Fly Delta app, not on delta.com (Delta Air Lines, checked 2026-09-19).
- A separate federal rule applies to any airline ticket, bereavement or not: one bought 7 or more days before departure can be held or canceled free for 24 hours (US Department of Transportation, checked 2026-09-19).
- Industry reporting puts typical bereavement fare savings around 5 to 25 percent off the lowest available fare, not the deepest discount on the route (AFAR, checked 2026-09-19).

## Step-by-step checklist

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- ☐ Confirm your relationship fits that airline's own definition of immediate family
- ☐ Check whether your airline currently publishes a bereavement fare, using the table above
- ☐ Call the reservations line; none of these fares can be booked online
- ☐ Have the funeral home's, hospital's or hospice's name, address and phone number ready
- ☐ Ask the agent to compare the bereavement fare against the lowest published fare
- ☐ Send any required documentation by the deadline, such as Air Canada's 7-day-after-return email window
- ☐ Keep a copy of your confirmation and any documents sent, in case of a dispute