

## **Email excerpts to Go Public from Porter Airlines**

We are extremely sympathetic about the circumstances related to Douglas and Nancy's trip, and regret that it was not able to take place as planned.

It is a difficult, but useful reminder to all travellers about the importance of, and their responsibility for, accurately documenting and verifying all trip information. Unfortunately, this didn't happen here until the passengers arrived at the airport, making it difficult, if not impossible, to address before the flight's departure.

This trip was a codeshare booking made through an online travel agency. While Porter and Air Transat were both operating carriers, the ticket was issued as an Air Transat itinerary. This means that Air Transat "owns" the ticket and the agency must facilitate any changes through that carrier.

We recognize that human errors occur, so Porter does have a policy allowing for name changes within certain parameters. The policy, however, is only applicable to Porter reservations, not flights marketed or operated by another carrier. Travel agencies agree to these terms, so the agency or customer would have been directed to Air Transat for a resolution in this case. Most airlines have similar policies.

While it may be possible to change "three characters" in a passenger's name, it is also an oversimplification to imply that this can be done at any time, by anyone, under any circumstances. Short-form names or nicknames are unacceptable for air travel documentation purposes. "Notes" that another airline may make on a file are typically only available within that organization for their agents' information. They do not translate across systems for others to view.

There are potential repercussions for airlines who transport passengers without matching documentation. This includes fines and regulatory penalties. Passengers are also at risk of being denied entry to a country by officials or being stranded at points along their journey should they not be allowed to board connecting flights. We are not permitted to board a passenger whose name on their boarding pass does not match their travel document.

Douglas wasn't able to book a new Porter ticket because the flight was full and no inventory was available in the system to purchase, notwithstanding that he didn't actually travel. A purchase cannot be facilitated in this situation and Porter doesn't have the ability to cancel a booking made by a third party for another airline.

To reiterate, this was an Air Transat booking made via a third party. All flights were marketed by Air Transat and issued by them. The travel agent was required to advise the passenger of boarding and entry requirements, including the importance of ensuring the name on their reservation matches their travel documents. The passengers would have also likely agreed to these terms in completing the purchase.

As this was not a Porter reservation, Porter correctly directed the passenger to their travel agent and to Air Transat, so they could intervene on their booking. Porter is unable to board a passenger when the name on their travel document does not match the reservation.

Again, we are extremely sympathetic to Douglas and Nancy's situation. Unfortunately, circumstances that may appear to have simple resolutions are often complex and may have other implications. We will do our best to resolve problems, but travellers have ultimate responsibility for ensuring that they have valid and matching documentation.

We hope that all of the above is taken into consideration should you proceed with the story and, if so, that it is presented as a broader learning opportunity.

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Systems are designed to share specific information and fields relevant to bookings. There is no open access between airlines for security reasons. Free form text or notes are not standard fields that meet this requirement.

Technical capabilities are not the issue in this case. The fundamental problem lies in the fact that the passenger name was incorrectly entered by the person making the booking. Procedures are already in place to rectify these situations, as previously outlined, but the proper steps must be followed with enough time to do so.

Notwithstanding conversations that took place or intentions to update the booking, this never reflected in our system and prevented boarding from occurring. This is obviously not what anyone wanted to happen, but we were limited in our ability to facilitate the change based on the factors at play.

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