

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

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To the Judges:

Any traveler must cope with unpredictability these days. The 26 million people in the U.S. with food allergies live with extra layers of stress. Their plane seats could contain traces of allergens from food eaten by previous passengers that, if not cleaned properly, could harm or even kill them.

One of the remedies for this problem is early boarding to allow the fliers to clean the spaces around their seats themselves. But this solution is fraught, often drawing dirty looks from other passengers suspicious that they are just cutting to the front of the boarding line. These fliers also encounter resistance when informing airline employees of their needs. For this story, Wall Street Journal reporter Jacob Passy found some who, after announcing their allergies, were denied boarding, sometimes in violation of the airline's own policy and federal disability regulations.

Mr. Passy explored how inconsistent the experience can be for fliers with allergies from airline to airline and flight to flight. He heard back from others with allergies thanking him for shining a light on this issue. One reader also recalled having been kicked off a plane as a child because of his allergies, which he said "caused trauma and anxiety for quite some time."

For these reasons, we are proud to nominate this work for the Robert Haru Fisher Award for Travel Health/Safety Coverage.

Sincerely,

Adam Thompson
Travel and Consumer Bureau Chief
The Wall Street Journal

Article

[Travelers With Food Allergies Fight for Early Boarding](#)