

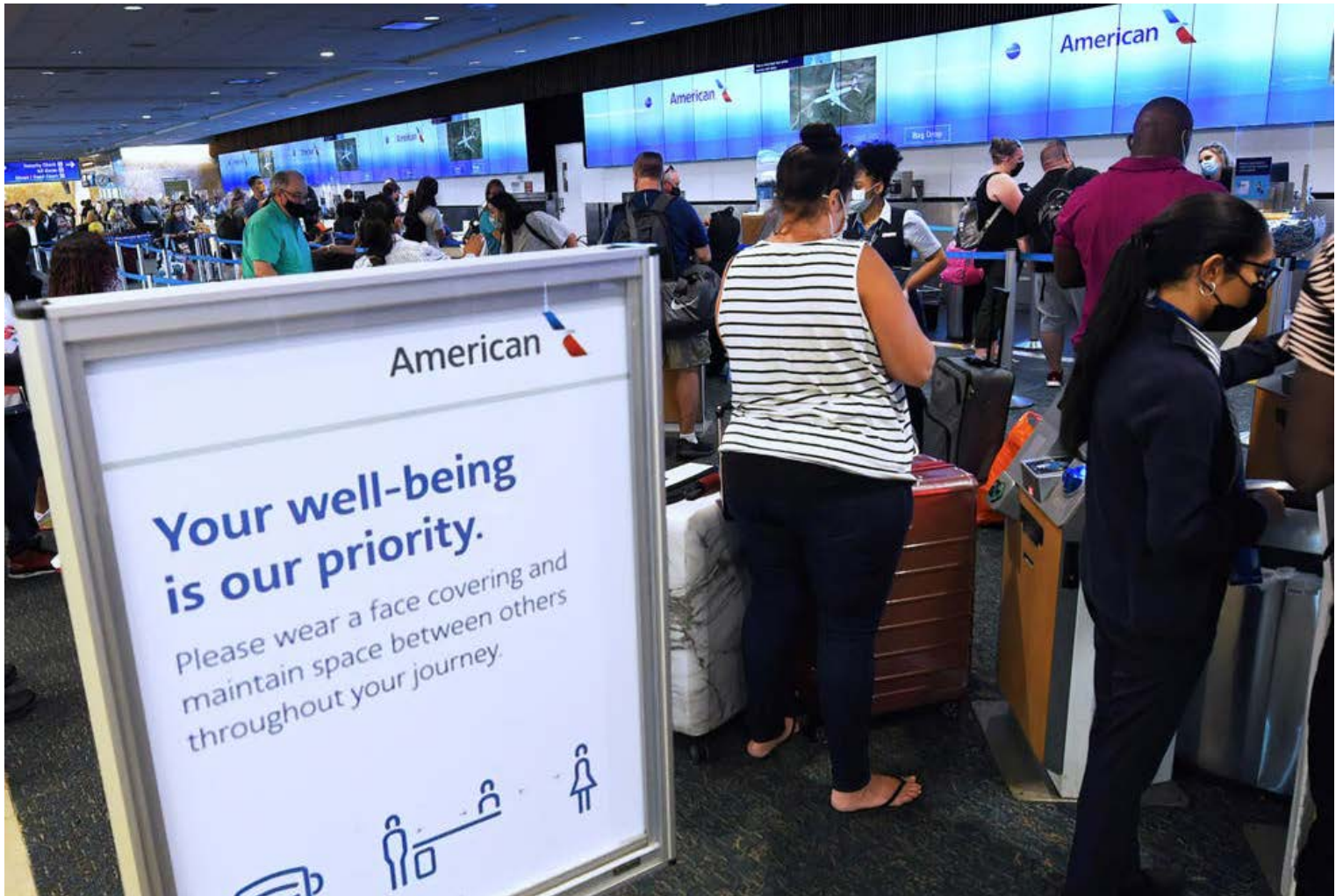
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# US airlines may start weighing passengers

Passengers could be asked to step on the scales at the boarding gate, as federal aviation authority gets ahead of obesity figures

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Airline passengers in the United States may be weighed at boarding gates, according to a report.

Aircraft are required to ensure a safe weight before taking off and factor in averages for passengers and crew, as well as cargo and fuel.

According to a [circular advisory](#) from the [Federal Aviation Administration](#) attracting attention in recent days, [airlines](#) could be asked to start updating average airline passenger weight to account for increases in the average weight of American adults.

An airline blog, [View from the Wing](#), wrote that “the FAA realises that passenger weight can vary by route and airlines may want to document this difference.”

“Standard weights may not be appropriate for smaller planes, with smaller sample size and greater likelihood of variance from average.”

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The weighing of passengers, according to the FAA, would set "standard average passenger weights" for crew members, baggage and passengers every 36 months.

*AirInsight*, also reporting on the FAA advisory added that surveying would be random and voluntary, with passengers able to refuse.

"Regardless of the sampling method used, an operator has the option of surveying each passenger and bag aboard the aircraft and should give a passenger the right to decline to participate in any passenger or weight survey," the FAA advisory wrote.

"If a passenger declines to participate, the operator should select the next passenger based on the operator's random selection method rather than select the next passenger in a line."

Average weights for male adults will be increased to 190 lbs in the summer and 195 lbs in the winter – up 12 per cent from 170 lbs and 175 lbs, according to *AirInsight's* analysis.

A further increase is also coming for female passengers, from 145 lbs to 179 lbs in the summer and from 150 lbs to 184 lbs in the winter.

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It is unclear when weighing airline passengers could begin, although the FAA circular was first issued on 9 May 2019, before it caught the attention of *AirInsight* and *View from the Wing*.

In a statement to *The Independent*, the FAA said it "issued an Advisory Circular in May 2019 that stressed the importance that airline weight and balance programs accurately reflect current passenger weights."

"Operators are evaluating their programs to comply with this guidance. While weighing customers at the gate is an option, most operators will likely rely on updated methods for estimating passenger weights."

According to the [US National Center for Health Statistics](#), 42 per cent of adults above 20 years of age are obese — increasing from 30 per cent in 2000.

Airline travel in the Covid pandemic caused a collapse in passengers numbers and

carbon emissions, with *Carbon Monitor* reporting a 48 per cent drop in emissions on figures from 2019. Although the industry is beginning to restart, especially in the US.

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