

MUSKEGON COUNTY AIRPORT

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MUSKEGON
AIRPORT

FAQ GUIDE

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The Many Good Reasons to **FLY MUSKEGON**

If you're flying in or out of West Michigan, Muskegon's airport offers a unique jet service that can save time and money. This convenient airport's quick 25 minute flights to one of the world's most connected airport, Chicago O'Hare, is a reliable choice.

Denver Air Connection serves nineteen communities across the country. At Chicago O'Hare there are direct nonstop connections to 280 destinations. Over the past two years, Denver Air has won over many passengers who previously flew out of competing airports.

Because the schedule of this pilot owned carrier flying popular Embraer twin jets is not under the control of a larger airline, cancellations are rare. Small enough to feature good passenger service, it is also big enough to get you where you need to go via O'Hare connections.

At a time when it can be hard to book or rebook on the sold out flights of competitors, Denver Air is great for last

minute travel. Seats are consistently available and far less expensive than competitors. This is why the carrier has doubled its passenger traffic in West Michigan over the past year.

Like a good charter carrier, Denver Air operates its own schedule, sets its own fares and operates its own maintenance base in Muskegon for planes flying in the eastern and midwest region. Passengers boarding in Muskegon can get to the gate, check in and go through security in minutes.

Unlike its small prop jet predecessor Denver Air operates 50 seat passenger jets that are flown by many regional carriers. These aircraft are built to handle winter weather. Muskegon's airport benefits from a Denver Air's regional maintenance base. Experienced mechanics can quickly take care of any challenges with parts from the local Aerovision warehouse. Passengers don't have to wait for another plane to fly in from Denver.



Customers here can often reach their connecting gate faster than Chicago residents who make the drive to O'Hare and end up in long security lines. Even better, there is no need to get up in the middle of the night to drive to competing airports for early morning flights or spend a night in an out of town hotel.

While other airports offer direct flights to many destinations, the reality is that traffic and weather delays, plus the \$168 a week minimum cost of parking in cities like Grand Rapids (Muskegon Airport parking is free) can easily add two to three hours to your travel time. For a host of other reasons a connection out of Muskegon is the right choice.

If you are flying in or out of West Michigan for the first time here are reasons to consider connecting via Denver Air in Chicago.





TIME

The reality of air travel today is that it often takes more time to drive to and from a hub airport than it does to connect. For example the drive time from West Michigan to Chicago or Detroit can be four to five hours when you add in meal stops, traffic delays, parking and shuttling to the terminal.

For example if you land at O'Hare and pick up a rental car it can easily take an hour to get to the rental car counter, stand in line and check out. The drive with stops, depending on traffic and weather, can easily be another four hours. Even the closer Grand Rapids airport has disadvantages. The entire process of deplaning, picking up baggage, paying for a rent car (or picking up your own car) can take much longer than the flight itself. Arrive in Muskegon and you can deplane and be on your way to your final destination in minutes. You will not be stuck in a long line waiting to pick up a car.

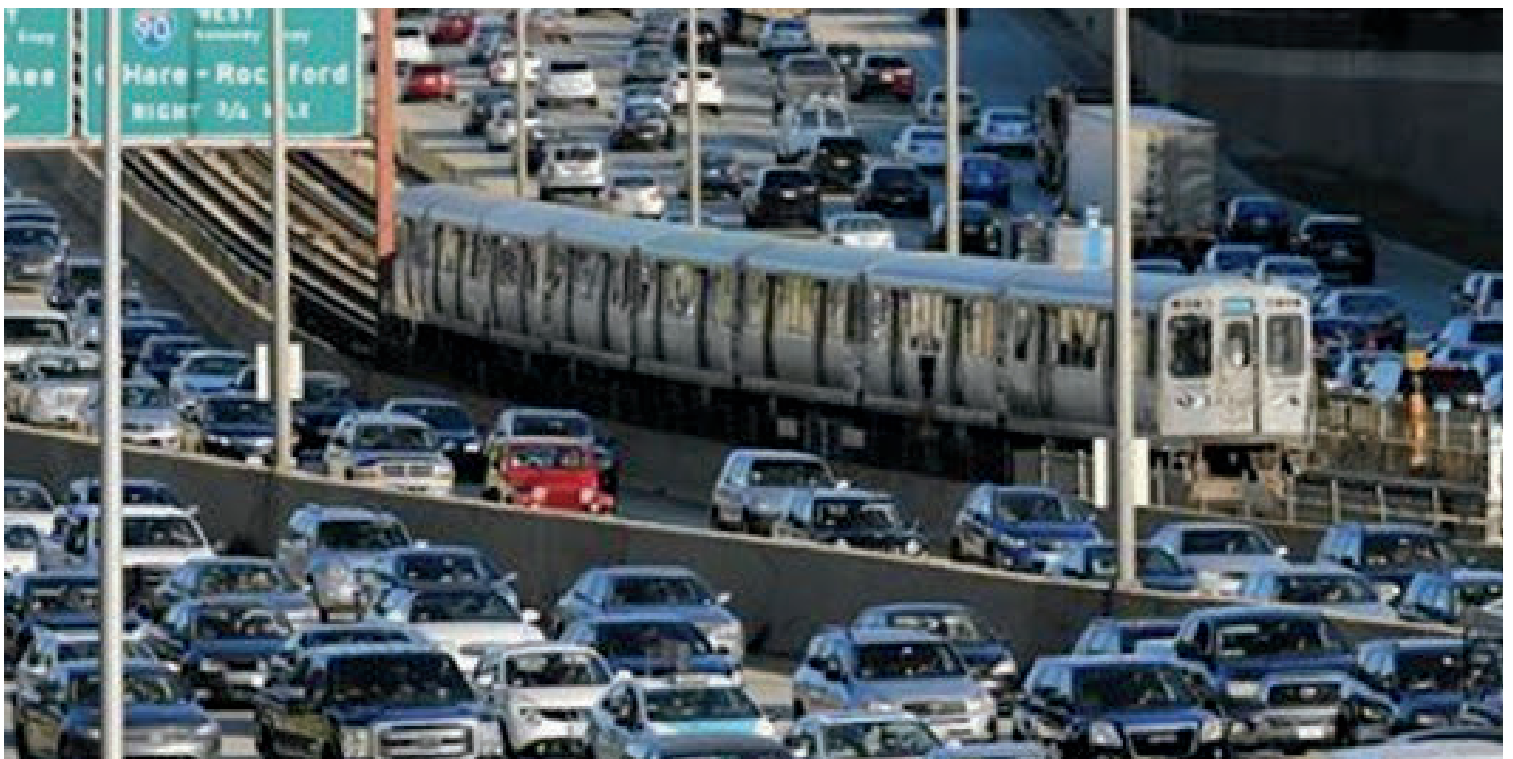
MONEY

Missed connections are a reality with any airport. Because major airline flights are often sold out, missing a connection may mean that the next available flight has no space available. There is another big if. Many flights operated to and from Grand Rapids are seasonal and only fly a couple times a week. This means that if your flight is cancelled the next available flight might not be available for two or three days. Even worse, that next flight could be sold out. To get to your destination you could be stuck with paying a much higher last minute fare on another carrier, assuming there are seats left. This happens more often than you might imagine.



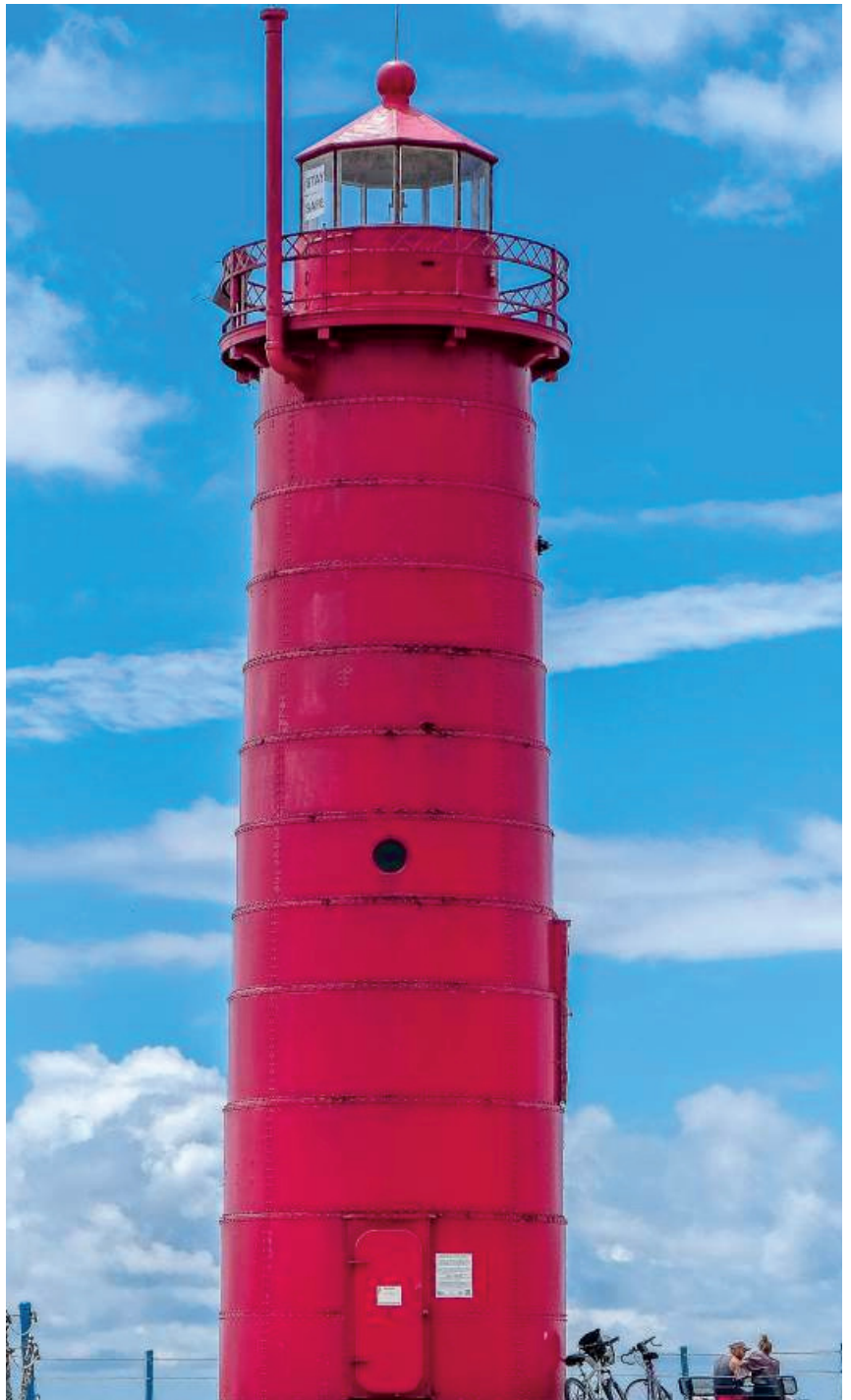
SAFETY

A safe trip is about much more than the airline. Icy parking lots, bumper to bumper traffic and long walks from the garage to the gate, plus long security lines, are a reality at many airports. If you are traveling with someone who has a mobility issue or small children, this trek, especially in bad weather, can be a hassle. None of this is an issue in Muskegon where you can go from the parking lot to the terminal in a minute or two. Equally important, by checking in at Muskegon, you don't have to run the gauntlet at O'Hare. There is no need to drag luggage a long way to the counter and then deal with a long security line. As a connecting passenger you deplane and head to your O'Hare gate without having to go through security a second time for domestic flights.



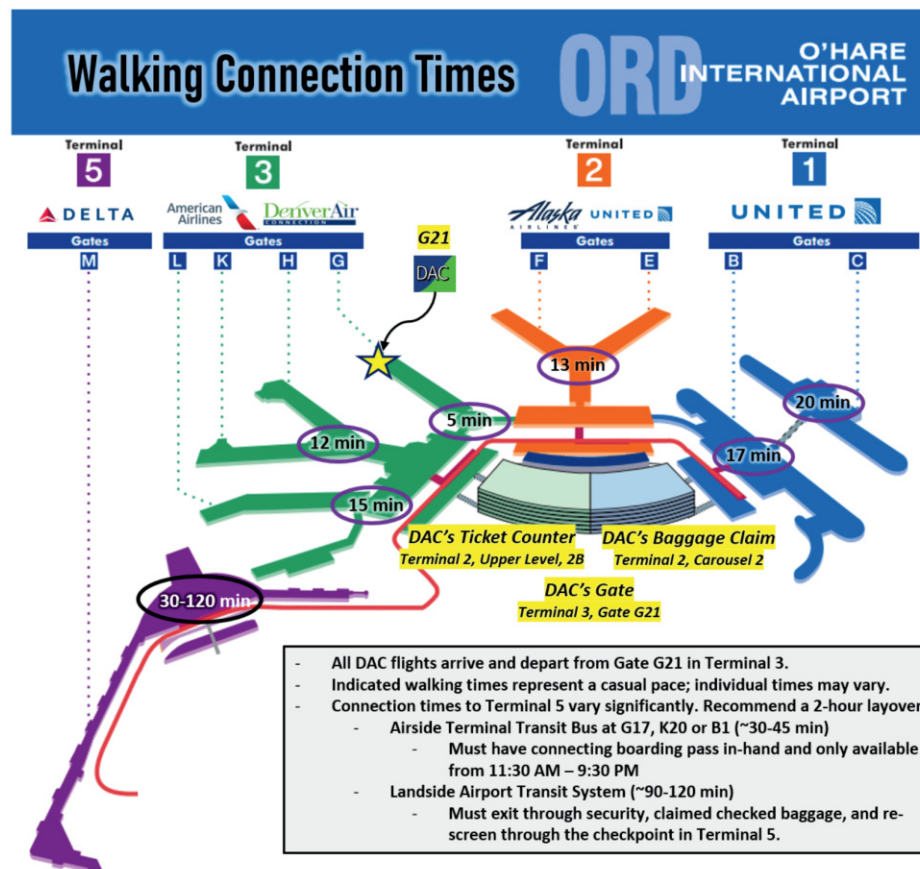
ARRIVAL IN MUSKEGON

In many cases Muskegon's recently upgraded airport is the fastest way to get to major West Michigan destinations including the west side of Grand Rapids. The airport is close to two major interstates that offer easy connections to Grand Haven, Spring Lake, Holland, Saugatuck, Whitehall/Montague, Hart, Fremont, Nawaygo, Ludington, Manistee and many other cities.



ARRIVAL IN CHICAGO

Denver Air Connection arrives in Terminal 3, dominated by American. There are also United and Jet Blue gates here. In addition to easy connections to United and American for domestic and international flights there is a reliable shuttle to terminal 5. Many Delta and international flights operate here. The shuttle departs every 20 minutes from the G concourse beginning at 11 a.m. There is no need for a long terminal walk or transfer by the airport rail system that takes you outside security. FYI a number of international airlines also operate out of Terminal 3. Keep in mind that some United gates can be a hike. For this reason you should allow two hours for an O'Hare connection. Since Denver Air arrives at 8:20 a.m. you'll still be able to have your choice of many morning connections.



G CONCOURSE



The gate in this convenient terminal where Denver Air arrives and departs is close to the upstairs Rotunda area that is a great place to relax. There's a yoga room here, a USO lounge and a Mother's room where moms can nurse, use a breast pump or care for small children.

The Biggest Advantage of **DENVER AIR IN MUSKEGON:**



Because Muskegon is a small airport with outstanding snow plowing, flights consistently depart on time as long as O'Hare is not experiencing major weather issues that can impact travel anywhere. Unlike other airports, flights are not cancelled arbitrarily because a major airline suddenly needs a plane for another route. Denver Air operations are not under the thumb of big carriers than can pull a flight to cover a gap in their system.



What Else Do I Need To Know **ABOUT WEATHER**



Denver Air is a cold weather airline that trains its pilots on mountain routes in the Rockies. By booking your ticket for a connecting flight through the websites of American, United or Delta, you are eligible for rebooking on a later connection if there is a delay. The breadth of the O'Hare hub means you can also switch to a nearby destination if your intended airport is closed due to weather. This contrasts sharply with airlines such as Allegiant that typically operate a single daily flight to their destinations two or three times a week





While discount airlines may appear to be cheaper, the math often favors Muskegon's free parking scenario. On a two week trip begin by adding at least \$336 to your cost to cover the parking charge you'd pay at a competing airport. Denver Air's bag fee is \$20 vs. \$45 for the competition. In addition to the cost of driving, there is also the added cost of a hotel night if you have an early morning departure from Grand Rapids. In some cases buying a Denver Air ticket to Chicago and then purchasing another ticket from Chicago to foreign destinations can potentially save money over connecting via a flight originating in Grand Rapids. Sometimes you can save money on a domestic trip by purchasing a Denver Air ticket and a second ticket on the connecting carrier. If you do this it's best to travel with a carryon, not checked luggage.



GROUND TRANSIT

You can connect to many midwestern cities via the O'Hare shuttle terminal or Amtrak in Chicago. Typically this will save you hundreds of dollars over airfare to cities such as Milwaukee, Madison, Rockford, Indianapolis, Green Bay, etc. Taking the plane to the train makes sense if you don't want to leave your car in Holland for the 6:50 a.m. daily Amtrak departure to Chicago. On last minute trips these savings can easily be \$300 or more. There is also a 45 minute connection to downtown Chicago via CTA where you can hook into the Metra network that serves many suburban communities and Kenosha, Wisconsin. These two local rail lines plus cabs or rideshares make the Chicago area easily accessible from O'Hare.





BEST WAY TO BOOK

If you are flying to Chicago book direct via the Denver Air website. If you are connecting on American, United or Delta book direct through those airlines. If you are flying another carrier you will need to book on Denver Air and that airline. Assume nothing if you book via a third party reservation site. Always double check with the airline itself that you actually have a reservation. The only way you actually know you are really on the plane is to check directly with the connecting carrier. Never assume a third party booking is the cheapest way to go. Add ons to low fares, especially for baggage, can make some sites risky. Be especially wary of obscure third party sites you have never heard of. The internet is loaded with fake sites where phone agents will pretend to be working with the airline. If you're not sure that they are legitimate check with Denver Air directly to confirm that their too good to be true deals are valid. Trustpilot.com is a good place to check travel sites with a bad track record.

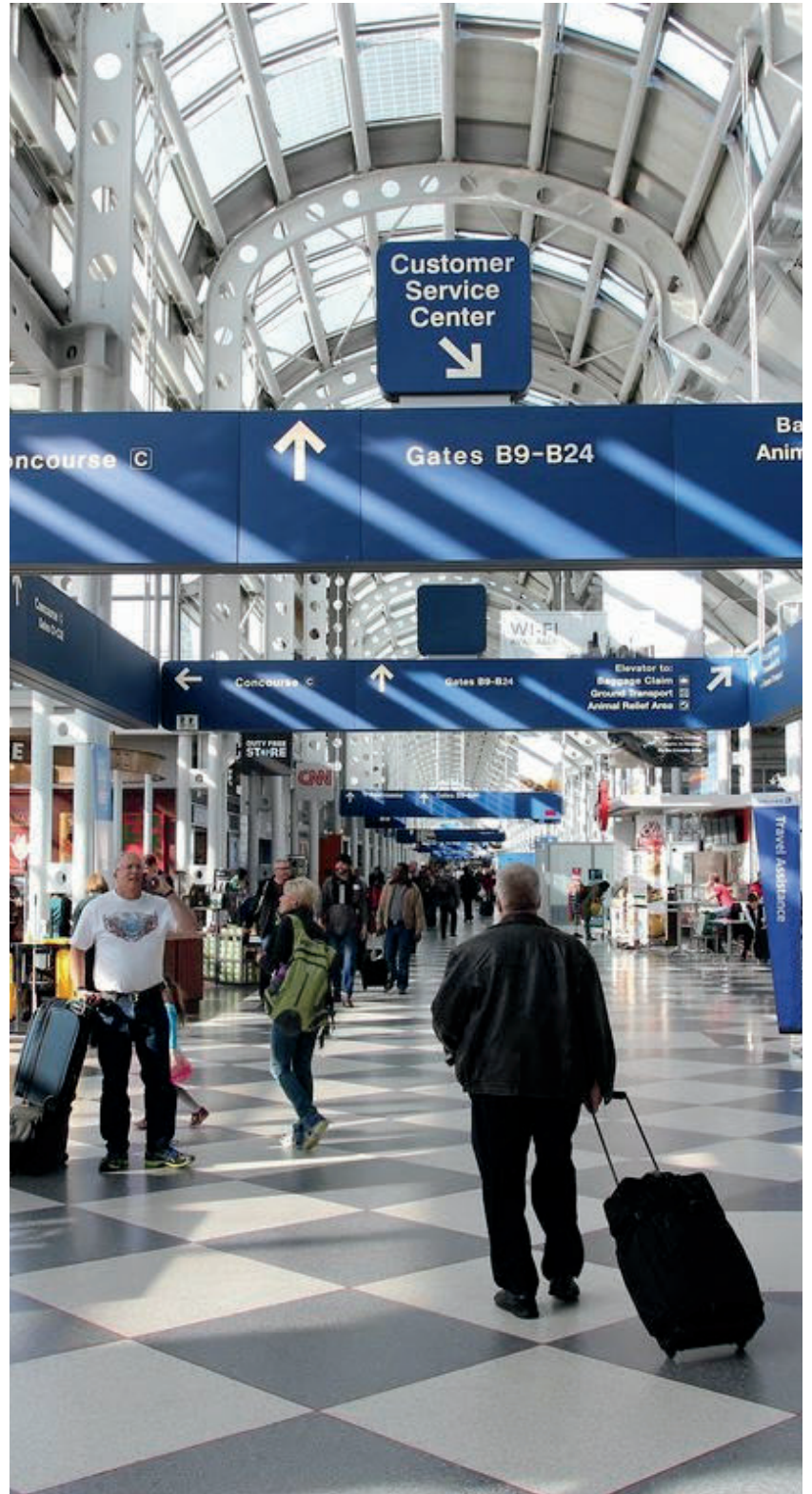
Does Denver Air **BUMP** **PASSENGERS?**



No. A reservation means you will get a seat and the flight is not oversold. This is important, especially for a last minute trip when you are in a hurry and don't want to drive to another airport. Of course all airlines charge more for last minute bookings. The catch is that if you are going to Chicago last minute fares on Denver Air are often half what the competition charges from another airport, even more when you add in the cost of parking, ground travel time and a hotel.

Is There a Downside to Flying **OUT OF MUSKEGON**

Yes and no. There is no question that if you use a competing airport there are flights that may appear to be cheaper, especially if you are not going to park. Of course it's nice to know you are on a nonstop and don't have to make a connection. However those advantages are quickly outweighed by the fact that O'Hare doesn't just offer connections to major hubs or fly to a smaller markets seasonally a couple of times a week. While an early morning flight out of a competing airport may get you to a hub earlier than a connection through Muskegon you may need to overnight at another airport to make an early flight. Better snowplowing also gives Muskegon an advantage over other airports in the winter when you want to avoid black ice on the road.



HERE'S THE CATCH

Yes a competing airport may have a promising fare to some major hubs. This is a far cry from O'Hare which has direct flights to 280 destinations, roughly 250 more than the nearest competing airport. This means no matter where you are headed you'll be able to fly direct to the closest regional airport, not a hub that can be hours away. You can avoid the hassle and expense of renting a car and making a long drive to your destination or pay for expensive ground transportation. If you arrive late you may have to spend money on a hotel room before driving from the hub to your final destination the next day. This is especially important when bad weather makes driving a challenge. If your ticketed destination airport has a problem weather wise you can switch to a neighboring city thanks to O'Hares vast network. Also, if you need to change your flight time, O'Hare gives you more flexibility.



OK, I GET IT. **BUT THERE MUST BE TIMES WHEN FLYING OUT OF ANOTHER AIRPORT MAKES SENSE.**

It depends. Flying out of Muskegon means accepting the fact that O'Hare is a city onto itself. Avoid close connecting times. Unless you book a wheelchair, it can be a long walk to some gates and getting to the rental car counter can take awhile via the airport train. To deal with all of this challenges please consider these suggestions.

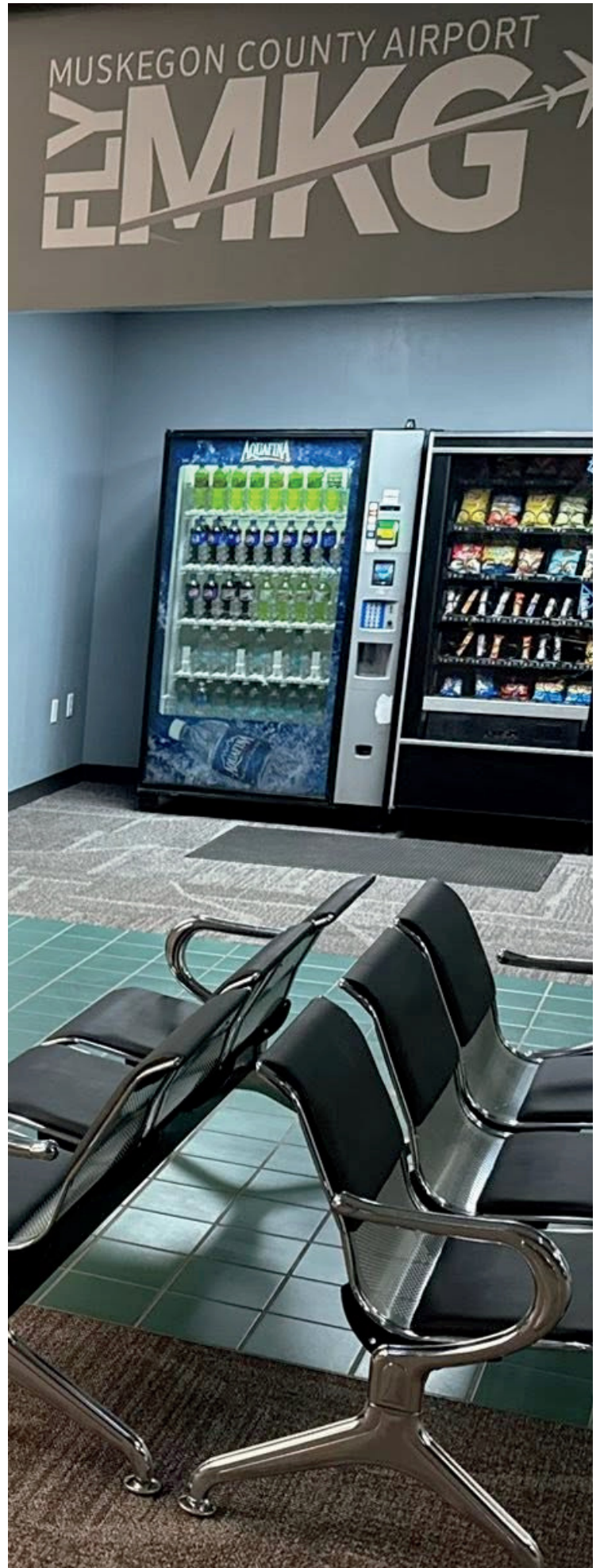
1. Rental cars tend to be expensive at O'Hare. One way rentals are especially pricey and not available during some peak travel periods. Try to avoid them. CTA is an easy way to get to downtown transit hubs including METRA, the Southshore Line (serving northern Indiana), Amtrak and bus lines.
2. On international flights a three hour connecting time is a good idea. When flying from Chicago to Muskegon always arrive as early as possible.
3. If you are headed to O'Hare from Chicago during peak travel times take the CTA blue line train, about 45 minutes from downtown. Driving can be very slow at any time of day. That means arriving at O'Hare two hours before flight time to deal with security.





4. Customer service at Denver Air is quick and reliable. It's always a good idea to call ahead if you have questions about baggage, etc. You will not be stuck on hold. Their app is also good.

5. If you are traveling on Denver Air and connecting to a domestic flight you can check your large bag through to your final domestic destination. This is not true for international flights. If you check a suitcase on Denver Air and are flying internationally you will have to pick it up at O'Hare baggage claim, check in a second time and go through security at O'Hare. To avoid this problem travel with a carry on that is typically limited to 22 by 14 by 9 inches. You can pick this bag up on the Denver Air jetway in Chicago and then stow it in the overhead bin on your connecting flight. Of course you are also allowed one smaller bag or personal item.



If you have more questions about Denver Air Connection or flying Muskegon visit: <https://denverairconnection.com/> or call 866-373-8513. Remember this is an airline where you won't be put on long holds and the Muskegon Airport team is always available to answer your questions via this [link](#), flymuskegon.com.

P.S. We highly recommend the Muskegon Airport restaurant, Lee Lee's Crosswinds Cafe. Give them a call at 231 766-7140 to order takeout or stop by daily from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Please check back on this site for updates on the many advantages of flying from West Michigan's Muskegon Airport to Chicago. Sign up for the airline's frequent flyer program that gives you a free flight after just six trips and keeps you notified on special discounts.

