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Chaos as FAA grounds all flights

US travel schedule should recover by Sunday; cause determined

By Will Weissert, Josh Funk and Hallie Golden
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Airlines canceled thousands of flights across the U.S. on Saturday as they worked to recover from the longest nationwide ground stop in 25 years a day earlier that left passengers scrambling for seats and disrupted travel around the world.

The U.S. air travel schedule should be back to normal by the end of Sunday, Bryan Bedford, administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, said Saturday. He said airlines "will still have delays and cancellations" Saturday but promised that the "worst is behind us."

New technology being added to the nation's air traffic control system overloaded antiquated equipment and caused "intermittent" communications and radar gaps, leading to the ground stop that lasted more than four hours Friday, Trump administration officials said.

Secretary of Transportation Sean Duffy said a contractor had been working on replacing a section of the system's old copper wire with new fiber wire, and that work somehow caused the system overload. Duffy said officials were investigating whether contractor "incompetence" or a faulty wire was the cause.

"Our contractor didn't meet the moment," Duffy said.

The nationwide stop was the first since January 2023, when another key Federal Aviation Administration computer system that sends notices to pilots malfunctioned, and the second since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

In a moment that perhaps only further underscored the Transportation Department's struggling systems, Duffy's news conference Saturday morning began with audio troubles that forced last-minute microphone swaps.

Andrew Charlton, an aviation consultant, said Friday's stoppage affected about a quarter of the 45,000 flights in the U.S. each day.

"The knock-on effect of that is incredible," said Charlton, managing director of Aviation Advocacy. "The aircraft doesn't just fly from A to B and back to B and then stop. It then moves onto C and then over to E and around and around and around. It is, of course, exacerbated if you're talking about long-haul flights, international flights over the Atlantic or over the Pacific."

Thousands of flights delayed and canceled

At airports, passengers stared at screens showing delays or rushed to find buses or trains to their destinations.

Emily Brown and her 14-year-old daughter waited more than four hours Friday at the Dallas

Turn to FLIGHTS, Page 8A



MIKE STEWART / Associated Press

Aircraft are seen parked at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International airport on Friday after the Federal Aviation Administration grounded all air traffic for hours due to "extraordinary circumstances" in communications issues.

ICE detainee beat odds to get bond



JULIE ANDERSON / Daily Courier

Adan Cortes (center), is joined by his children Alex (right), 19, Adan, 15 and Angelique, 5, as they talk about their family life. He was recently released on $52,000 bond after being detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Lawyer for Central Point man says bonds are rare and when granted, may be too expensive for most to pay

By Emma Maple
of the Daily Courier

A local landscaper who has been in the United States for 19 years was detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement in Tacoma for three and a half months before a judge allowed him to be released to his family in Central Point on $52,000 bond — a move his lawyer described as "both a huge win and blow."

Under the Trump administration's immigration crackdown, the chance of being granted bond while a civil immigration case is pending has become "really, really slim," according to Alicia Vial Beesley, a lawyer for Adan Cortes and founder of Vida Legal Services.

"It seems like they've almost been told, 'Just deny everything,'" she said. In the rare case where bond is granted, as Cortes' case illustrates, the amount is often so high that families struggle to pay it.

Being granted bond could be easier in other geographical areas, Vial Beesley said. In the Northwest ICE Processing Center in Tacoma where most people from Washington and Oregon are held and where Cortes spent his detention, judges seem to have been warned they will get fired if they approve too many immigration cases, "bond or otherwise," she said.

According to a New York Times investigation published in April, the Trump administration has dismissed more than 13% of the immigration judges who were in place when Trump took office in 2025, and has pressured others with disciplinary action if they do not enforce strict deportation agendas. It also told judges to stop granting bond or bond hearings when immigrants crossed the border illegally, extending people's detention for months even if they don't have a criminal record.

The Justice Department's previous strategy was to grant bond to people who were not deemed a public safety threat or flight risk. Since the policy change, a significant percentage of people have chosen to leave the country rather than stay locked up, according to the Times.

Adan Cortes, 42, has one criminal conviction in the state of Oregon — a 2018 charge for DUII, according to a search of his name in state court records and his family.

After Cortes, a landscaper by trade, was detained in June, he said it was difficult to find a lawyer who would attempt to get him out on bond. Many of the lawyers his family consulted told him that "'You should go, there's no chance for you to be released,'" he said.

Cortes and his family interviewed six or seven lawyers, spending about $7,000 on consultations, before Beesley agreed to take his case and fight for bond, he said. He also has a separate lawyer who is representing him in his civil immigration proceedings.

Turn to BOND, Page 8A

Medford, team agree to scuttle baseball stadium

By Emma Maple
of the Daily Courier

City officials and the minor league baseball team the Emeralds announced Friday that they have jointly agreed not to build a stadium in downtown Medford, the day after a City Council meeting raised concerns about what it would cost residents.

"After considering council's feedback and the work that would be needed to advance the project within the required timeline, both parties determined not to move forward," the city said in a statement. "The Emeralds will instead focus their efforts on keeping the team in Eugene."

Thursday night, the Medford City Council held a study session where city officials heard how much a stadium would cost to build in Hawthorne Park based on preliminary design work, how much the Emeralds would be willing to contribute toward a new stadium, and how the city might make up the difference.

The City Council could not vote on the project at a study session and initially planned to discuss it — and vote whether

Turn to STADIUM, Page 5A

Former Rogue Regional NICU doctors sue Asante

By Chrissy Ewald
of the Daily Courier

Nine doctors who worked in the neonatal intensive care unit at Asante Rogue Regional Medical Center in Medford are suing Asante for $31.5 million over claims of retaliation and discrimination connected to the termination of their contracts earlier this year.

The lawsuit was filed in Jackson County Circuit Court on Thursday.

A representative for Asante, which operates hospitals in Grants Pass, Medford and Ashland, said Asante is aware of the lawsuit and "strongly" disagrees with the "unfounded allegations."

"We will defend against these claims through the appropriate legal process," said the representative, Desirae Myers. "Because the litigation is pending, we will not comment further on this legal matter."

According to the lawsuit, nine neonatologists — physicians who specialize in taking

Turn to DOCTORS, Page 8A

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More rain
SUNDAY HIGH **54°**
MONDAY HIGH **51°**
5-day forecast on Page 2A

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