

Allegiant's DSM base opens Thursday, four nonstop flights added

By Perry Beeman - June 30, 2021



Allegiant Airlines is opening its base in Des Moines. (Photo courtesy of Allegiant Airlines)

Allegiant Airlines will open its long-delayed, \$50 million Des Moines base on Thursday.

The discount carrier now will offer the most nonstop destinations among airlines serving Des Moines International Airport (DSM), airport spokeswoman Kayla Kovarna said.



Kayla Kovarna is communications, marketing and air service manager for Des Moines International Airport. (Photo courtesy of Des Moines International Airport)

Allegiant is immediately adding nonstop flights to Houston, Portland and San Diego. This week, the airline announced it will add seasonal flights to Fort Lauderdale beginning in October.

That means the airline will have 14 nonstop flights, including seasonal offerings. The airline also offers flights to Orlando-Sanford, St. Pete-Clearwater, Punta Gorda, Destin-Fort Walton Beach and Sarasota in Florida, Phoenix-Mesa, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Nashville and Austin.

The Des Moines base will have two Airbus A320 aircraft at first, with a staff of 66. The "high-paying jobs" include pilots, flight attendants, mechanics and ground personnel, the airline reported.

The Des Moines base is the first Allegiant has opened since the beginning of the pandemic early last year.

Allegiant has served Des Moines since 2003. Airline officials have said the Des Moines base will make it easier to add flights at the airport.

"Opening a base of operation at Des Moines International is a historic occasion that will positively impact the lives of Iowans in air service offerings and in supporting the economic vitality of the

region," Kevin Foley, Des Moines Airport Authority executive director, said in a statement. "Iowans continue to prove travel is essential to the quality of life here, and the Airport Authority is committed to growing air service connectivity to meet rising demand."



Kevin Foley is the executive director and general manager of Des Moines International Airport. (Photo courtesy of Des Moines International Airport)

Allegiant officials, who plan to attend a ceremony in Des Moines on Thursday, said they will continue to consider new routes.

The base was [announced in 2019](#) and was scheduled to open on May 14, 2020. Plans were delayed as the pandemic disrupted air travel.

"We are proud to launch base operations at Des Moines International Airport and further enrich our presence as a true hometown airline in the community," Drew Wells, Allegiant's vice president of revenue and planning, said in a statement. "Having locally based crews and aircraft will expand options for new routes and affordable, convenient opportunities for nonstop travel for Iowans, and for visitors to the state — and will fuel our growth in Des Moines well into the future."

In May, Allegiant had 9% of the Des Moines airport's [passenger traffic](#). American Airlines led with 34%.

Perry Beeman

Senior reporter Perry Beeman has nearly 40 years of experience in Iowa journalism and has won national awards for environmental and business writing. He has written for The Des Moines Register and the Business Record, where he also served as managing editor. He also is former editorial director of Grinnell College. He co-authored the recently published book, "The \$80 Billion Gamble," which details the lottery-rigging case of Eddie Tipton.

