



2022 Travel Guide for Participants Traveling Independently

Booking Travel

- **What information will I need to know before booking a flight for my child?**

Before booking travel, make certain you know the following information:

1. The airline carrier's policies regarding your child's age, including its unaccompanied minor policies
2. The designated times the Davidson Summer staff will be available to meet your child at the airport:

STARS:

- On arrival day (Sunday, June 19): flights arriving between 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
- On departure day (Thursday, June 23): You will need to contact our team at STARS@davidsongifted.org for departure staffing times.

REACH:

- On arrival day (Monday, June 27th): flights arriving between 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
- On departure day (Wednesday, July 6th): flights departing between 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

THINK:

- On arrival day (Saturday, July 9th): flights arriving between 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
- On departure day (Saturday, July 30th): flights departing between 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

Please keep in mind that our staff is required by airlines to stay with "unaccompanied minors" until their flights leaves, so departing flights for unaccompanied minors must leave within the designated timeframe.

- **What does it mean to be an "unaccompanied minor?"**

Airlines designate children who are required to be supervised by the airline when traveling without a parent or guardian as "unaccompanied minors." There are often extra fees and specific policies for unaccompanied minors. Also, there are different procedures on the day of travel. Airlines may also have policies limiting which flights unaccompanied minors may take.

- **At what ages do airlines require children to travel as unaccompanied minors?**

We have included a summary of unaccompanied minor policies offered by some major carriers (see below). Age requirements frequently change. Please check with your selected airline carrier to ensure the information below is up to date:

- [Alaska Airlines](#) – mandatory coverage for ages 12 and under, optional for 13-17
- [Allegiant Airlines](#) – unaccompanied minors prohibited under 15, regular travel for 15-17
- [American Airlines](#) – mandatory coverage for ages 14 and under, optional for 15-17
- [Delta Airlines](#) – mandatory coverage for ages 14 and under, optional for 15-17
- [Frontier Airlines](#) – unaccompanied minors prohibited under 15, regular travel for 15-17

- [JetBlue](#) – mandatory coverage for ages 13 and under, optional for 14
- [Southwest Airlines](#)- mandatory coverage for ages 11 and under, regular travel for 12-17
- [United](#) – mandatory coverage for ages 14 and under, optional 15-17
- [Volaris Airlines](#) – mandatory coverage for ages 11 and under, optional for 12-17

- **How much and when do I pay the airline's unaccompanied minor fee?**

While this varies greatly from airline to airline, many charge about \$100 for one-way direct flights for unaccompanied minors and the costs can go up if there are connecting flights. Some airlines will require payment in advance, others will ask for payment at the time of check in. If payment is required at check-in, please ensure your participant has a means of paying for their departure flight unaccompanied minor fee.

- **Do you recommend purchasing travel insurance?**

Yes, we recommend purchasing travel insurance through your airline. It may help save costs if you unexpectedly have to cancel/change travel plans. Please contact your airline directly if you have any questions about the insurance they offer.

- **Can I book a flight for a participant who will be an unaccompanied minor through a third-party site such as Expedia or Orbitz?**

While third-party vendors can book flights for unaccompanied minors, we highly recommend verifying that the flight you are booking aligns with the specific airlines' unaccompanied minor policies. This can be especially important as past participants have run into trouble with:

- Booking final flights of the day out of Reno or if their connecting flight is the final flight of the day out of the connecting airport. Some airlines have policies prohibiting unaccompanied minors from being on these flights in case of delays or cancellations and will not allow the child on the flight.
- Caps on the number of unaccompanied minors allowed on each flight. For example, in the past Jet Blue has allowed only three unaccompanied minors per flight, but due to third party booking, four participants flying to our program were booked.

- **The airline wants the name of the Davidson Summer staff member who will pick up my unaccompanied minor at the airport. How do I get that information?**

Most airlines do not require this information at the time of purchase but instead ask for it closer to the travel date. We will send an email to families with participants traveling as unaccompanied minors a few weeks prior to their start date. If the airline asks for the contact information of the person picking up your child at their destination when you are booking the flight, please contact us at Summer@davidsongifted.org.

- **Is it possible for my child to arrive a day early or depart a day late?**

Unfortunately, we cannot accommodate participants arriving or departing our programs on days other than arrival and departure day.

Shuttle Service

- **Once a flight is booked, what is the next step in the process?**

The next step after making travel reservations is to fill out the Travel Form in your online portal account. On this form you will indicate that your child will be utilizing the “Davidson Shuttle” and is traveling independently. If your child is designated as an Unaccompanied Minor, you will select the “Unaccompanied Minor Davidson Shuttle” option. You will complete the form by paying the following applicable fees:

Davidson Shuttle Fee (one-way): \$30

Unaccompanied Minor Davidson Shuttle (one-way): \$80

Lastly, you will complete the Air Travel Information form to provide us with the details on your child’s flight information (airline, flight number, etc.)

- **How does the shuttle to and from camp work?**

Due to limited space, the airport shuttle is available to transport participants traveling independently only.

We typically have two shuttles leaving from the airport to camp at two different times. Thus, participants may be waiting for some time between their flight arrival time and when the shuttle leaves for camp. Davidson Summer staff will supervise waiting participants and accompany them on the shuttle to the university. We recommend sending your child(ren) with snacks or money to make food purchases at the airport as the first program meal will be at 5:00 p.m. on arrival day.

Preparing to Travel

- **How can I confirm you have received my child’s travel arrangements?**

After all Arrival and Departure forms are submitted, we will contact all families with children traveling independently via email a few weeks prior to the program start date with travel details and information. If you would like to confirm any travel details prior to hearing from us, please email Summer@davidsongifted.org.

- **Whom do I contact if I need to make travel changes or if the airline made changes to my child’s flight?**

Prior to making any changes to your child’s travel, please contact our team at Summer@davidsongifted.org. If the airline has made changes to your child’s flight information, please let us know as soon as possible.

- **On arrival day, how will my child find the Davidson Summer staff at the airport?**

Participants who are designated as unaccompanied minors by the airline will be met at their gate and signed for by a Davidson Summer staff member. We will provide you with this staff member’s contact information prior to camp via email.

For participants not designated as unaccompanied minors, but who are traveling alone, Davidson Summer staff members will be waiting directly outside of the terminal area at the bottom of the escalators.

Staff members will be wearing “Davidson Summer Programs” t-shirts and holding a sign with the Davidson Summer logo. Our staff will also make sure you receive a call from your child so you know your child arrived safely.

- **My child is required to travel as an unaccompanied minor. What can we expect when we go to the airport for their departure flight to Reno?**

Most airlines will require unaccompanied minors and their parent/guardian to check-in at their airline’s ticket counter. There is often a required form to fill out asking for the child’s information, parent/guardian’s contact information, and the contact information of the Davidson Summer staff member who will meet the child at their gate in the Reno airport. This form will stay with the child throughout their travels. Most airlines will give the child a lanyard or badge they will be required to wear throughout their flight which designates them as an unaccompanied minor.

After check-in, the parent/guardian will be required to accompany their child through security to their gate and wait at the gate until the flight departs. During check-in, the parent/guardian will receive a “security” or “escort” pass allowing them to accompany their child to their gate. Once through security, check-in with the airline’s customer service member at the gate and ask when the child will be allowed to board.

- **For my child’s departure flight from Reno, what can I do to ensure everything goes smoothly?**

Ensure your child knows the correct contact information for the parent/guardian who will be meeting them at their arrival gate. Also, please ensure your child is able to pay for any unaccompanied minor or baggage fees that have not yet been paid and purchase food from the airport if they have a long or connecting flight and may need snacks.

- **What happens if my child’s flight is delayed or canceled the day of travel?**

If on the day of travel your child’s flight is delayed or canceled coming to Reno, please contact our team as soon as possible via the emergency phone number provided to you in program’s newsletters and communications.

If your child’s flight is delayed or canceled going home from camp, our team will contact you as soon as possible if we become aware of the change first. Alternatively, if you become aware of changes prior to the flight (e.g. a flight is canceled the morning of an afternoon flight) please contact our team via the emergency phone number as soon as possible and before booking any other flights.