

What people in this job do

Check-in agents check passengers onto flights and ferry crossings, take their tickets and luggage, and give them boarding passes. If they work in an airport, they may also meet and dispatch aircraft.

Check-in agents do some of the following, depending on whether they work at an airport or a ferry terminal:

- check passengers on to flights and ferries
- check in and direct vehicles on to ferries
- check passengers' passports and hand out customs documents
- check international passengers are allowed to enter the countries they are travelling through
- check customers' baggage complies with dangerous goods restrictions
- weigh baggage and collect payment for overweight items
- print and attach baggage tags
- give passengers their boarding passes and any other information they require
- organise for passengers' seats to be changed or special meals to be provided
- find out if there are any passengers on incoming aircraft who have special requirements, such as unaccompanied minors, and look after them when the flight lands
- meet aircraft and make sure all passengers disembark
- prepare flights for departure by liaising with flight attendants, caterers and cleaners
- check boarding passes
- provide customer support during flight and sailing disruptions
- trace lost baggage
- work in airline customer club rooms.

Personal requirements

Check-in agents need to have:

- knowledge of airport or ferry terminal procedures, including security or dangerous goods procedures
- knowledge of basic aircraft or ferry layout
- knowledge of different destinations
- excellent customer service skills
- communication skills and the ability to speak clearly to make announcements over public address (PA) systems
- keyboarding and computer skills
- knowledge of how to access information such as immigration rules and luggage allowances
- decision-making skills.

Foreign language skills may also be useful.

Check-in agents need to be:

- friendly and patient
- discreet and diplomatic, with very good communication skills
- able to show empathy for nervous passengers

- calm and able to work well under pressure
- adaptable, quick-thinking and efficient.

Check-in agents need to be reasonably fit, healthy and strong, as they may have to lift heavy bags and spend long periods on their feet. They also need to have good hearing.

How to get into this job

There are no specific requirements to become a check-in agent, as skills are gained on the job. Airport check-in agents need to pass a medical exam and gain an airport security clearance.

Secondary education: Three years of secondary school education is preferred and useful subjects include English, maths, computer studies and languages.

Pay and job outlook

Check-in agents at airports start on between \$13 and \$17 an hour, depending on their experience and the company they work for. A skilled check-in agent who has done extra training while working, and has about five years' experience could earn up to \$24 an hour. Check-in agents may also receive paid overtime, allowances for meals and travel, and discounted travel. Depending on where they work, check-in agents at ferry terminals may earn \$30,000 a year and progress to \$35,000, or start on \$15 an hour and move up to \$16, with extra pay for working early mornings, evenings and weekends. Other perks may include free car parks and discounted travel.

The outlook for airline check-in agents is good, as the number of people travelling continues to grow. There are about 1,500 airline check-in agents, with about 200 more needed each year, partly due to turnover and partly due to increases in people travelling. Opportunities for check-in agents at ferry terminals are not as common, as there are fewer than 100 full-time positions in the country.

Related jobs

Flight Attendant, Ticket Seller Cashier, Travel Agent, Usher

Further contacts

Aviation, Tourism and Travel Training Organisation (ATTTO)
WELLINGTON, (04) 499 6570, info@attto.org.nz,
www.attto.org.nz/

Check-in Agent

Māngai Kanohi Kitea

Other names for this job

Airport Ground Staff, Customer Services Agent (Airport), Customer Services Officer (Airport), Ferry Terminal Check-in Clerk, Terminal Worker (Airport), Travel Services Clerk