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5 Reasons **Paine** Field Flights Are a Boon for Families

Skip Sea-Tac and head to our new local airline departure point

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Puget Sound-area families, along with every other commercial airline passenger in the region, have long had only one option for a departure point. It's busy [Seattle-Tacoma International Airport](#), with 28 passenger airlines serving 87 non-stop domestic destinations and 23 international cities.

But flying in and out of Sea-Tac isn't always easy, especially if you live in the north end of the region and have to cross Seattle to get there. Add to that crowds at security, parking hassles, busy terminals and (gasp) whiny or impatient kids, and travel becomes, well, a pain.

Snohomish County's [Paine Field Airport](#) (PAE) was built in 1936. The manufacturing center for Boeing's widebody aircraft and home of the [Future of Flight Aviation Center](#), [Paine Field](#) is about to become the new kid on the passenger

airline block.

The first Alaska Airlines flights will take off from **Paine** Field's new passenger terminal on Monday, Feb. 11, with United Airlines adding service March 31.

So, can **Paine** Field take (some of) the pain out of air travel for Puget Sound-area families? Here are some **Paine** points in its favor.

1. Small and cozy

Sea-Tac is the nation's ninth busiest airport. It offers 600 daily departures from three terminals with a total of five concourses and 69 gates.

Paine Field, with its mid-century design featuring a stone fireplace and wooden ceiling, is practically a living room by comparison. With a single passenger terminal and 24 daily flights leaving from two gates, you won't have to worry about finding your gate or losing your toddler in the crowd.

2. Comfort food

With presumably shorter lines and virtually no distance between security and the gates, airport food may not be as big a part of the flying experience at [Paine](#) Field as at larger airports. But kids and families will still be happy to know that [Beecher's Handmade Cheese](#) will operate the terminal's food concessions, offering kid favorites like grilled-to-order sandwiches, hot soups and mac and cheese. Parents will also be pleased by their wine bar and [Caffe Vita](#) coffee kiosk.

3. Cheap seats

While Alaska Airlines' initial offering of flights starting at \$39 was a limited-time promotion, prices out of [Paine](#) Field appear to be competitive with Sea-Tac, even though smaller airports often cost more to fly out of than major hubs. An unscientific sampling of fares resulted in comparable rates from both local airports. A

trip to Las Vegas in February was \$40 cheaper from Sea-Tac; Alaska's "saver fares" for spring break in San Diego were \$10 cheaper out of [Paine Field](#).

4. Popular destinations

If you're looking for non-stop flights to the East Coast or international destinations, Sea-Tac is still your only choice. [Paine Field](#) only offers departures to airports in the Western states. But among its nine destination cities are four of Sea-Tac's five most popular U.S. destinations. [Alaska Airlines](#) will run flights from [Paine Field](#) to Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Orange County, Phoenix, Portland, San Diego, San Francisco and San Jose. [United](#) will fly non-stop to Denver and San Francisco. For all of these cities, many of which are connecting points for reaching destinations further afield, both Sea-Tac and [Paine Field](#) offer multiple flights each day.

5. Traffic and parking

Next to getting through security, traffic and parking are probably the biggest pain point in flying. Whether getting to **Paine** Field will be easier than getting to Sea-Tac will depend on where you live. The FAA's environmental assessment found that the new traffic to **Paine** Field would not significantly alter existing traffic conditions. So if Everett is easier — or equally easy — to reach than Sea-Tac is for you now, **Paine** Field may save you a chunk of travel time.

Republic Parking has won the contract to provide parking services at **Paine** Field, and has promised conveniences like pay-by-phone. They are planning for about 1,100 parking spaces at the airport. Parking details such as daily and hourly rates and distance from the terminal have not yet been announced.

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