

Local woman stranded in Cabo Verde for days because of Coronavirus concerns

"Many people have told me to reach out to you about this matter. Two of my friends and I have been in Cabo Verde (an island of the West Coast of Africa) for 2 weeks now.

After Trump spoke about closing the border with European countries we started to panic because our flight had an hour and a half layover in Portugal. Our flight was with SATA Azores Airlines. To reassure our flight would be okay we spoke to their agency out here in Praia, Cape Verde.

The woman at the agency reassured us that our flight will be fine and would not be getting canceled. So our stress and nerves calmed down because we thought we would be heading home on March 16th. Once March 16th arrived we headed to the airport around 9:00am, our flight was at 12:50 pm. We see hundreds of people waiting in lines with their luggage.

From overhearing people talking the word was that all flights got canceled until March 31st. We did not get an email, a text, an alert on their app...NOTHING. There were no workers walking around explaining what was happening and instead it was hundreds of people confused and worried.

There was one person at the SATA desk at the Praia airport for hundreds of people who just figured out their flight was canceled once they arrived at the airport from workers who help travelers with their luggage. After waiting 2-3 hours at the airport we decided to head to the SATA agency which was awful.

THEY DIDN'T HELP US AT ALL.

They said no refunds and they refused to help us look for other flights available, the women working kept smiling as if she took us as a joke. We were getting nowhere at the agency so we decided to head to the US Embassy out here and they were just as useless.

We had to wait 2 hours because they were on a lunch break and we searched for them for about 20 minutes just for them to tell us they can't do anything to help us. They said we need to look into flights and tell family to send money. We then, by ourselves, secured our tickets with Cabo Verde Airlines who was doing a direct flight to Boston early Saturday morning on March 21st.

They guaranteed our flight home. Come Thursday, March 18th, I got a call from my hotel that another airline called TAP would be canceling all their flights after today and other airlines may be doing the same... still no email or alert from SATA or Cabo Verde airline.

We rushed to the airport to stand in line for 3-4 hours to find out Cape Verde closed their borders but the Prime Minister stated U.S Citizens can fly home. As we are at the airport I get an email from the U.S Embassy to go directly to the SATA agency because there is word there will be a direct flight to Boston tonight.

We followed the Embassy's directions and headed to the agency. The woman who gave us a hard time before was there and reassured us that there will definitely be a flight tonight directing to Boston for U.S Citizens but the time was still unsure.

We packed all our stuff and headed to the airport for hours just for them to tell us there was no flight. They said our flight will be Friday, March 20 at 2:45 pm. This morning we called and now they are saying Boston won't approve them to land. Cape Verde is not a European country and has NO cases of

Coronavirus. We don't know what else to do.

We just want to be home with our family. I made a Facebook live last night explaining all of this. Please help us get the word out! We need prayers!

Thank you,
Brianna Tavares"