

Debrief

AFA Debrief – July 30, 2021

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CQ Due Month Re-bid Reminder

As was detailed in our [July 20, 2021 edition](#) of the AFA Debrief newsletter, as the company works to rebalance their CQ training liability and to ensure they can manage the total number of training seats needed in any given month, management has determined that some Flight Attendants may need to re-bid their CQ due month.

Driven largely by the events of the COVID-19 pandemic which drove record numbers of Flight Attendants into requalification training prior to their return to flight duty, management has determined that certain Flight Attendants at some locations will need to re-bid in order to ensure training can be completed timely.

Only affected Flight Attendants will receive a targeted e-mail communication with specific instructions for re-bidding via their company e-mail. If you are not affected, you will not be sent an e-mail and no action will be required.

Please refer to the [AFA Debrief news article on July 20, 2021](#) for more information.

Dependent Verification Process Update

As was reported in our [July 23, 2021 edition of AFA Debrief](#), the company has undertaken a Dependent Eligibility Verification Process that will require a response from those employees notified they are required to provide documentation by August 26, 2021.

Response to the company's audit has been robust and employees are able to return to the YBR website to confirm that the verification process has been completed. However, we are told there remains several individuals who have not yet responded to the Eligibility Verification process.

To ensure all employees are informed on the status of the request, those who have not responded or those who have yet to fully complete the verification process must still provide documents, a targeted e-mail communication is being generated to employees. The e-mail follow-up notice will be sent to your preferred e-mail address of record. If you have not advised the company of a personal e-mail address, any subsequent reminder notifications will be sent to your united.com e-mail address.

As a reminder, **responses are due by August 26, 2021**. Those who fail to verify their spouse/domestic partner by the deadline, will have their coverage dropped September 30, 2021, with no coverage beginning October 1, 2021. If you have been advised of the need to verify your dependents, we encourage you to start the process early to ensure uninterrupted benefits coverage beyond the end of September.

Delayed Delivery of Replacement Badges at Bases Across the System

United management advised employees today they are experiencing issues related to the issuance of crew badges. Some Flight Attendants whose badges are imminently expiring are not being captured in the company's employee record system and being identified as requiring a new badge.

Currently, the bases are receiving badge shipments about 10-15 days from the end of the month in which the badge expires. If you have a badge that

expires at the end of the current month and have not received notification from the base to retrieve your badge by the 20th, please contact your base.

Additionally, there may be times when your badge has not yet expired but you are being asked to pick up a new badge. While not typical, this is happening because the badge you are currently holding has been deactivated in the system. Please pick up your new badge as directed by your base.

Journey of Remembrance to National Flight 93 Memorial Park on September 11, 2021

On September 11, 2021, we are planning a journey of remembrance to the National Flight 93 Memorial Park. In fact, there are several efforts underway to facilitate attendance at these services.

As we have done for many years, we will attend the September 11th Memorial Observance Ceremony that will be held within the confines of the Flight 93 Memorial Park where there will be opportunities for us to remember those who lost their lives that fateful day during the memorial services that will be held on that date.

There are limited opportunities for participation in large part because many of the hotels in the area are already booked at capacity. Entrance to the park is limited that day and is by permit only. We will have a very limited opportunity to include additional participants in the remembrance events for that day.

If you are interested in attending the Memorial Park and the Remembrance Services on Saturday, September 11th, please notify your Local Council Office. We will begin putting together a list of those interested in attending and we will make every effort to include as many people as possible in the event.

Crew Member Self Defense Training Program (CMSDT)

As we've been reporting over the past several weeks, we have never seen the level of unruly behavior from passengers on the aircraft as we have over the past several weeks.

AFA has been a staunch advocate for requiring passengers to comply with directions given by Flight Attendants, for reducing the sale of alcohol on the aircraft and at engaging management to discuss the changing environment in the areas of the terminal adjacent to departure gates where "to go" alcohol has never been more readily available. We've enlisted the assistance of the Federal Aviation Administration and the TSA to ensure the messaging to the general public leaves no question as to the expectation when traveling as a passenger on the aircraft and while transiting public airports.

Despite these efforts, we continue to receive reports of unruly passenger behavior and Flight Attendants continue to express their concern for their safety as well as that of the passengers entrusted to their care.

As Flight Attendants, we are first responders in these situations and the unique nature of these situations make it necessary that we call upon our ability to protect ourselves, our flying partners, our passengers and, when necessary, even the aircraft.

Our training drives situational awareness and, as a result, Flight Attendants are prepared and one step ahead of the game. Working in the aircraft cabin at 35,000 feet and the nature of potential conflict in that environment is unique and often misunderstood by those who aren't accustomed to working in that environment where, when least expected, we can be called upon to support and protect each other.

It's been a while since we've brought to the forefront the unique training opportunities made available by the TSA Office of Law Enforcement/Federal Air Marshal Service. As Flight Attendants, we can be prepared in these situations by attending the Crew Member Self Defense Training Program.

The Crew Member Self Defense Training (CMSDT) program is available to all actively employed or temporarily furloughed U.S. carrier Flight

Attendants. The program is delivered at more than twenty sites throughout the United States and those who wish to take advantage of this opportunity may attend a one-day “hands-on” training at one of the participating training sites. CMSDT is provided at no cost and Flight Attendants are welcome to attend the training as often as desired.

Contact the CMSDT Program by the following link at the [TSA Website](#) with questions about the program or how to register.

In addition, we have a link to training information available in the [Safety Section of our website](#). Access our website under the “Safety” tab, click on “Training” and in the “Resources” Box click on “TSA: Crew Member Self Defense Training Program”. Currently scheduled class dates and locations are listed here. Additional dates and locations will be posted as they become available.

Get Connected! Sign up for all Union Communications

As we reported following the conclusion of last week’s Summer Regular Meeting of the United Master Executive Council, AFA leadership unanimously adopted a [Resolution for Beginning Direct Bargaining](#) consistent with the terms of our Contract.

As we begin gearing up for our upcoming Negotiations, it is imperative that all United Flight Attendants have the most up to date information regarding developments in our industry, current AFA messages, Contractual Education articles, Legislative Action Alerts and Membership Engagement messages associated with our Flight Attendant career. As we move along in the process, understanding developments in Negotiations and the important role each of us will play in the process will be communicated through our Negotiations Updates.

In addition to taking the time to remain informed, each of us can help by encouraging other flying partners to also sign up to receive official Union communication. And, for us to collectively succeed in achieving our priorities in bargaining, we must all remain in touch, informed, and engaged. It’s important that we are all on the same page for Negotiations.

Signing up to receive both editions of these sources of official Union information is uncomplicated:

- Visit www.unitedafa.org to sign up for Debrief, our newsletter pertaining to latest AFA message.
- Our Contract 2021 website (www.contract2021.org/sign-up) provides the links to sign-up for *Negotiation News*, our newsletter pertaining to all things in the Negotiations arena.

It's important to note that if you believe you have already signed up with your email address and have not received a current Debrief or Negotiations Newsletter, we encourage you to sign up again.

We want to ensure we emphasize, *we do not use, nor will our systems accept, our corporate e-mail* (united.com addresses) for official Union communications.

By signing up today you will receive timely, relevant, and information that is important to our work life. An informed and engaged Membership is key to our collective success!

Catering Operations Changes Ahead

Earlier this year, in response to the ongoing crisis brought about by the COVID pandemic, United began a process of re-examining all aspects of the business of our company. We learned this included United's catering operations. More specifically, United announced they would be exploring the option to transition catering operations to other "third party vendors".

Of course, not only because our work is directly impacted by those dedicated workers who cater our aircraft, but also because of our concern for our fellow employees, we've had a keen interest in the outcome of this review. We are learning management has concluded their review, which took place over the past 6-7 months, and has decided they will work with three outside vendors to operate United's five Flight Kitchens and oversee Menu Designs and Administrative functions. These companies include Gate Gourmet, Newrest and Sky Café. The transition will begin during

October and the full transition is expected to be completed by mid-November.

Of significant importance, all frontline employees in United's Flight Kitchens who are in good standing with the company will receive a job offer from one of the three vendors. In addition, these vendors are interested in hiring management and administrative employees also in good standing following an interview process.

We expect we'll be hearing more about this transition as we approach October. As of now, we do know the following location specific information:

- **Gate Gourmet** will be responsible for Menu Design, Administration and Flight Kitchens at DEN, EWR and HNL.
- **Sky Café** will be responsible for Flight Kitchen operations at CLE sourcing menus from local kitchens and restaurants.
- **Newrest** will be our new partner in Houston, and it is expected the company will use their experience operating in 58 countries to build out a world-class Houston Flight Kitchen operation.

We'll be staying in close contact with management to ensure we're clear about how these changes will directly affect the work we do on the aircraft. As additional information on these transitions become available, we'll be sure to share it with you.

Blue Cross/Blue Shield Settlement Related to Licensing Agreements

We are receiving several inquiries on the Blue Cross Blue Shield Antitrust Litigation where a settlement was reached on behalf of individuals and companies that purchased health insurance provided or administered by a Blue Cross Blue Shield Company.

Last October, Blue Cross and Blue Shield Companies reached a class action settlement with subscribers related to licensing agreements within the Blue Cross and Blue Shield System.

Through the settlement, Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies have agreed to make monetary payments to certain groups and individuals and implement eventual changes to the way they operate. The following individuals and groups may be considered a "Damages Class Member" and be eligible to submit a claim for payment:

- An individual subscriber who purchased health insurance directly from a Blue Cross and Blue Shield company between February 7, 2008, and October 16, 2020;
- A fully insured group account (including enrolled employees) of a Blue Cross and Blue Shield company between February 7, 2008, and October 16, 2020; or
- A self-funded group account (including enrolled employees) of a Blue Cross and Blue Shield company between September 1, 2015, and October 16, 2020.

Dependents, beneficiaries, and non-employees are not eligible to receive payment. Also excluded from payment are government accounts, Medicare accounts of any kind, BCBSA and Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies themselves, including any of their parent or subsidiary entities (and their covered or enrolled current or former employees), the judge presiding over this matter, and any members of his judicial staff, to the extent such staff were covered by a Commercial Health Benefit Product not purchased by a government account during the Settlement Class Period.

- BCBS reached the "Class Notice" stage of the settlement approval process and has taken the following actions:
 - Members of the Damages Class – which includes individuals, groups, and their employees – are receiving notification by email and mail about the settlement.
 - This includes notification that they may be eligible for a payment because of the settlement.
 - Settlement details will be shared through class notice, TV, radio, print and online advertising – publicity is standard in a settlement like this.
 - All of this is intended to direct people to resources where they can learn more about the settlement, including their rights under the

settlement, how and where they can submit claims for payment, opt out of the settlement*, object to the settlement.

The settlement website – www.BCBSsettlement.com - has a robust section of questions and answers and it is anticipated this resource will assist you in obtaining information.

If you have questions beyond the information provided, you should reach out to JND Legal Administration at the settlement website, www.BCBSsettlement.com or by telephone at 1-888-681-1142 or via e-mail to info@BCBSsettlement.com

*It should be noted that the last day by which to opt out of the settlement was July 28, 2021.