

Debrief

AFA Debrief – July 16, 2021

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White and Purple Flag Declarations

Management recently designated White Flag Days in DEN, IAH and ORD. As part of the negotiations that led to the Collective Agreement under which we all work, management and the Union reached agreement on ways to incentivize Flight Attendants to assist in covering flying during periods when resources are tight.

White Flag is declared when management identifies coverage concerns *for specific days, at specific locations* where coverage might be tight.

Purple Flag is declared when management identifies coverage concerns *for specific pairings, at specific locations* where coverage might be tight.

Once Scheduling declares White (or Purple) Flag, Flight Attendants straight picking up one of these pairings from CCS OPEN TIME can qualify for white (purple) flag compensation as set forth in our Contract. White (purple) flag trips can be picked up through the Electronic Bulletin Board. There is no need to contact Crew Scheduling to pick up these trips. You must be in position and operate the pairing or, if cancelled, be reassigned in order to receive pay protection at the white (purple) flag rate.

All out of base pick up rules apply. White (purple) Flag pay is for all hours flown and credited for the pairing.

We've seen great progress in the resumption of our domestic network flying which is now more robust than it has been at anytime since the pandemic began. This increased flying, in combination with the weather concerns that affect summer flying, together create possible scenarios where additional staffing is needed and supply outpaces demand of available coverage resources.

AFA continues to advocate for schedule flexibility and has asked management to take a look at revising coverage levels, where possible, to facilitate Flight Attendant trading into periods where demand is high and resources are strained. This advocacy for overall schedule flexibility is a critical component of our Contract that we expect will continue as we move into the summer because, in our view, doing so creates the environment where these trades prove to be mutually beneficial to Flight Attendants as well as the operation.

Addition of the B737 MAX 8 Aircraft to United's Fleet

The first B737 MAX 8 (37E) aircraft will join United's fleet of aircraft on July 16, 2021 initially operating from IAH to LAS. We all have experience with the Boeing 737 family of aircraft and while the B737 MAX 8 will feel familiar, there will be some differences. This aircraft has a capacity of 166 passengers, 16 in First Class and 150 in Economy. The layout of the emergency equipment mimics the 73Q.

Some aircraft features/differences to note include:

- Seatback entertainment and a power outlet in each seat.
- High-speed Wi-Fi.
- LED lighting with pre-set lighting scenarios for boarding/deplaning, meal service, etc.
- Large overhead bins with a dynamic lift assist.
- Ability for passengers to use Bluetooth headsets with seatback monitors. However, earbuds will still be available for distribution by Flight Attendants, upon request.
- The galley layout is familiar, but chillers have been added in the aft galley.
- PRAMS Announcements are available in the Flight Attendant service unit.

If you find yourself scheduled to work this new version of the 737, ensure that you familiarize yourself with the aircraft first using the resources available on your Link device. Before your first flights, give yourself a few extra minutes for a “hands on” opportunity while completing safety checks. The more familiar we are with equipment locations, operations and new passenger amenities, the higher our level of confidence, which will directly affect our performance while interacting with passengers. Familiarity brings confidence.

As a reminder, there are aircraft-specific Resources in the Content App on your Link and Flying Together.

You may also search for 37E Cabin Systems and Interiors guide, Staffing Sheets, or Provisioning diagram.

Viral Vigilance

As hopeful as we all have been that the impact of the COVID-19 virus is behind us, you’ve likely seen the news that the number of cases of the virus, fueled by the Delta variant, is increasing, especially in places where vaccination rates are low. The high rate of transmissibility of this variant not only makes this the dominant strain but also the greatest threat to our recovery as a nation and an airline.

The spread of this highly contagious variant among the unvaccinated could pose a new public health threat. While occurrences of the Delta variant are now mostly in those who are younger, adults who are unvaccinated assume the risk of a more severe illness. In fact, those who are unvaccinated represent the largest increase in hospitalization and instances of death in recent weeks.

This news, while somber, is offset by the brighter news that the vaccines are effective against this variant. Health officials remain persistent in their message: It's more important than ever to get vaccinated.

Recent initiatives to incentivize Flight Attendants to obtain the vaccine have been well received with 75% of us having uploaded our vaccination cards via the Flying Together website. Efforts continue to be focused on precautions; wearing masks, social distancing and consistent, proper hand hygiene are among the simplest and most straight-forward ways that all of us can work to help end the spread of the COVID-19 virus and this new variant.

My Safety App Launched

This week, United introduced the *My Safety App* to our Link devices as an added tool for our use in completing Irregular Operations Reports (IOR) and Inflight Safety Action Program (ISAP) reports. The app will automatically install on your Link device whenever it has connectivity and should begin to download shortly after unlocking your device.

The *My Safety App* will allow you to file new IOR and ISAP reports, as well as to access past reports you have filed. Flight Attendants will continue to have access to the web-based tool we traditionally used on Flying Together to file safety reports. ASAP.UAL.COM is another more direct link to accessing the safety reporting system via the internet.

An additional feature of the app is the functionality to add pictures to any report, to help fill out any narrative you will provide. Pictures, as they say, are worth a thousand words. Also, in support of AFA's ongoing commitment to safety and the support of our Membership, our MEC Safety, Health & Security Committee will automatically receive a copy of reports submitted via the app.

As with any tool intended to make doing our job easier, we must be aware of how to use it appropriately. This tool is intended to help us, so we need to make sure that our use does not have the unintended consequence of creating another safety issue for ourselves.

For example, the *My Safety App*, regardless of the convenience, should not be used during critical phases of flight. Every report we file is essential in supporting our safety priorities. For this reason, we do not recommend that you file 'in the moment' reports. While we are all aware of the time frames in which reporting must occur, nothing can be more important than taking the time to compose a thoughtful and complete record of the event(s) you are reporting to management.

We recommend that you file your report(s) after the situation is resolved and only once you've had the opportunity to step back from any situation that might be emotionally charged. Give yourself the time to collect your thoughts and let the adrenalin levels in your body subside. Compose your report with clear facts from a non-emotional perspective in order to capture the detailed, essential facts. Your best report submissions will contain facts.

When writing an IOR/ISAP, your comments are more powerful when you clearly identify the "who, what, where and why" in a concise and professional manner. There is a difference between writing a report intended to vent frustrations and writing one to effectively communicate the problem(s) encountered. Effective communication is essential in driving the changes we may collectively seek in our workplace.

Finally, once you've compiled your report, take the time to review what you've put together before you hit the submit button. By doing so, you ensure the report you are about to send to management contains the essential information necessary to address a situation that has either occurred or on which you are writing in your effort to keep others safe in the future.

Cabin Temperature Monitoring – It’s about Safety!

We recently published information about reporting [2HOT2COLD](#) issues on the airplane and the serious dangers an overheated aircraft cabin can pose to the safety and health of both Flight Attendants and the passengers in our care.

A hot aircraft can cause fatigue, dizziness, nausea, and in extreme cases, could escalate to the point of heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Based on our experience, we know immediately when we first board an aircraft to begin our safety checks if the temperature is extreme and if action needs to be taken to adjust it. Zone control should be made aware that the aircraft cabin temperature needs adjustment. If the pilots are on board the aircraft, you should alert them to your concerns. If not, notify the purser who will take the initiative to notify Zone Control in a polite, but firm manner, of their concerns about the cabin temperature. Alternatively, using the newest, available functionality, she/he may use the chat function on the Link device (Flight Info) to communicate this information. In the interest of safety, be certain that zone and the gate agent are made aware, at the earliest opportunity, that you believe the aircraft temperature is unsafe for boarding.

In advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, all aircraft having three hours or less of actual ground time should have the APU running to maximize airflow through the aircraft HEPA filtration systems in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Because of this policy, we expect that the number of instances of overheated aircraft should be limited. However, keep this information in mind as you express your concerns and advocate in the interest of all concerned and use it judiciously in the course of your advocacy.

Summer Regular Meeting of the United Master Executive Council

The Summer Regular Meeting of the United Master Executive Council will take place, in person, July 20-21, 2021. This will be the first time since March of 2020 that all our Elected United AFA leadership will meet in person due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The MEC meeting Agenda is posted in the Meetings section of the [MEC website](#). The meeting is open to Members in good standing and you are encouraged to attend.

To ensure the safety and health of the meeting participants and guests, all non-vaccinated individuals will be required to wear a mask to attend. Fully vaccinated individuals with proof of vaccination will be permitted to attend the session(s) without a mask. Vaccination verification will take place during registration each day before the meeting begins.

The meeting will take place at the Hyatt Rosemont, 6350 N River Rd, Rosemont, IL 60018.

We look forward to welcoming Members from across our system to participate in our Union's Democratic process.

International Purser Recruitment Announcement

United announced this week, due to resumption of service in the International markets, the International Purser program will be expanded to include new entrants. It is anticipated more International Purses will be needed in HNL and LHR.

Most bases have a waitlist of individuals with active International Purser qualifications who can be quickly activated when there is a vacancy due to attrition or increased flying; at LHR and HNL, the waitlist has been depleted.

Requirements for a successful International Purser candidate are outlined in the International Purser job description on Flying Together (Flying Together>Inflight Services>In This Section>International Purser Program. You may also reach the International Purser team by writing to IPurser@united.com.

Please note, management will continue to clear the waitlist and will accept Qualified International Purser transfers into a specific base before activating any new International Purses in that base consistent with the terms of the Letter of Agreement #16 (page 326) in our Contract.

Please contact your Local Council Office for more information.

Clarifying Recent Scope Article

We've received some questions about an article we included in last week's edition of *Debrief* that we want to clarify.

In the July 9th publication, we included the statement:

"When supervisors, COBUS or other employees perform this undisputed Flight Attendant work, it is a violation of our Contract."

For clarity, Flight Attendants assigned to Company Business Assignments (COBUS) are, in fact, Flight Attendants. In those instances where, for example, a COBUS Flight Attendant may be sent to the aircraft to support the operation and assist in pre-boarding, she/he is able to perform Flight Attendant duties during boarding without infringing on the Scope provisions of our Contract.

We have confirmed with management there is no intent to change the traditional use of COBUS Flight Attendants during boarding outside of those provided for in the Contract.

NRPS Travel to New York (EWR/LGA) continues through July 18

As a reminder, United is offering positive space travel to maintain the needs of the operation in direct response to the significant weather events forecasted for the greater New York area.

Eligibility includes Flight Attendants commuting into position at either EWR or LGA to work a pairing between July 12-18, 2021.

To have the positive space travel authorized, a Flight Attendant must create the PNR as "positive space," not "space available". Once the positive space travel is booked, the Flight Attendant will contact F.A.S.T. at 1-800-FLT-LINE (1-800-358-5463), option 4, then option 2. The Flight Attendant will advise the F.A.S.T. representative that you are calling for IRROPS Travel Authorization. The F.A.S.T. representative should authorize your PNR while you are on the call.

Keep in mind, this positive space travel authorization does not place you on must ride status and flights will not be oversold to accommodate your travel.

As with all IRROPS and issues which might arise under the Commuter Program (Section 28), we recommend that you keep records of all phone calls, PNRs, and travel information in the event there are questions about your commute.

For more information, please contact your Local Council.