

# Debrief

AFA Debrief – October 5, 2022

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## **Flight Attendants Achieve 10 Hours Rest with FAA Final Rule**

United AFA Leadership met with our AFA International officers, the National Officers for the Association of Professional Flight Attendants at American Airlines and Flight Attendants from American, Alaska, Delta, Endeavor, Frontier, Go Jet, Hawaiian and United Airlines, to celebrate our collective success with the announcement that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) had today finalized a rule requiring 10 hours minimum, non-reducible rest for Flight Attendants between duty days – finally implementing a 2018 law that will make aviation safer for over 100,000 Flight Attendants and the passengers in our care. The rule will increase the rest period to 10 irreducible hours when scheduled for a duty period of 14 hours or less. Sara Nelson, president of the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, issued the following statement:

“President Biden delivered today. Five years ago, after decades of action by AFA members, science to back up our alarm on Flight Attendant fatigue, and relentless efforts with lawmakers, we achieved an overwhelming bipartisan vote to equalize minimum rest with commercial airline pilots. The law could not have been more clear, but instead of taking definitive direction from Congress, the Trump administration put our rest on a regulatory road to kill it. President Biden promised to make this a top priority to correct this and today under the leadership of Secretary Buttigieg and Acting FAA Administrator Nolan the rule for 10 hours irreducible rest for Flight Attendants is final.

“Credit first and foremost goes to Flight Attendants on the frontlines who fought so hard for this moment and need this rest more than ever in the most difficult time to work our jobs in the history of aviation. We also have to applaud the champions in Congress who made this possible, starting with then Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) Chairman Norm Mineta who first proposed this minimum rest in 1994 and worked with us to ensure Congress would commission the fatigue studies that gave us the science to fully define this aviation safety loophole so we could close it. Finally, it was the leadership and relentless efforts of T&I Chair Peter DeFazio (D-OR), Senate Commerce Committee Chair Maria Cantwell (D-WA), Aviation Subcommittee Chair Frank LoBiondo (R-NJ), and Aviation Subcommittee Chair Rick Larsen (D-WA) along with so many others on these committees who ushered our rest to law.

“We have been successful in setting these rest standards in several contracts, but this raises the minimum standard for all Flight Attendants and airlines will have to meet that standard in 90 days. It’s about time! As aviation's first responders and last line of defense, it is critical that we are well rested and ready to perform our duties. COVID has only exacerbated the safety gap with long duty days, short nights, and combative conditions on planes,”

"Proper rest is critical for Flight Attendants to do our work as aviation’s first responders. Today was a long time coming, but it is here. We won’t forget how we achieved this major regulatory change for minimum rest. Flight Attendants need this rest to do our jobs. But ‘rest assured,’ we won’t ever rest in our work to ensure the continued safest transportation system in the world for all of the people within it.”

### **Fall 2022p1 CBT Clarification**

It has come to our attention that there is a discrepancy in completion date for the Fall 2022p1 CBTs, published by management. Currently two dates have been published for the required completion of the CBT. Company emails call for the completion to be on October 30<sup>th</sup> by 2359 CST. while we have received reports from Flight Attendants who have indicated they have seen other deadlines in the *Takeoff Learning Network*.



The required Fall 2022 p1 Continuing Qualifications (CQ) CBT's are available through *Takeoff Learning* on Flying Together. **We have confirmed with management today that the deadline for completion of the Fall 2022p1 CBT is 2359 on October 30, 2022.** Please plan accordingly.

**Early Boarding, Your Reports Matter**

Early boarding is not only a contractual violation it is also a safety risk. When boarding begins ahead of the contractually agreed upon time Flight Attendants may be interrupted while performing their safety duties and pre-flight checks or not be present at the boarding door when passengers cross the threshold.

Having the ability to complete safety checks and a crew briefing, without passengers actively boarding, reduces the potential for mistakes made while rushing or being distracted when addressing a customer's needs.

Our Contract provides mutually agreed upon boarding times deemed adequate by AFA and management. Section 6.R.2 of our Contract outlines agreed upon Flight Attendants check-in times, based on each aircraft type. As a reminder- Check-in is not scanning in at the gate. Scanning in of your company ID should only be done when actively boarding the plane not while waiting in advance of boarding. This ensures the FAA minimum crew is on the aircraft prior to customer boarding and avoids any last minute confusion over any missing crew.

***Passenger Boarding:***

<b>B737-700 &amp; A319/320 International and Domestic</b>	<b>B737 800-900 Max International and Domestic</b>	<b>Wide-Body Including B757-200-300</b>
:35 Before Departure	:40 Before Departure	:50 Before Departure

Our role as Flight Attendants is passenger safety and service. We are obligated to comply with all Federal Air Regulations to ensure the safety of passengers in our care. By regulation, we have an obligation to ensure the FAA Minimum Flight Attendant crew complement in on the aircraft for customer boarding. Ours is a commitment to safety – in all things, at all times.



There should be no circumstances where Flight Attendants are ever *pressured* into boarding a flight early or in the absence of the FAA minimum crew complement.

While there may be unusual and very limited circumstances where additional time may be required for boarding (i.e. large number of customers with disabilities requiring wheelchair assistance, etc.), you are not required to board (nor should you) without the full FAA complement. In an unusual instance where additional time is needed to board in order to accommodate the special needs of customers, you should not be pressured to board nor should we unreasonably withhold our concurrence to do so provided we have met all of our safety responsibilities.

- *If you find yourself in a situation where you are being pressured to board early, consider first trying to resolve the issue with the employee(s) from whom you are feeling the pressure.*
- *If you are unable to do so, as we always do, reach out to Employee Assistance/Professional Standards in order to avoid involving management in the situation.*
- *If you find yourself in situations where you are repeatedly asked to board early, we ask that you provide information to your Local Council to ensure AFA is aware and that steps can be taken to address the issue.*

Your reports help your Local Council to monitor early boarding instances and advocate for Contractual boarding time compliance. Click here to file a [LEC Worksheet](#) or contact your Local Council for more information.

### **United Airlines Temporarily Suspends Service at JFK**

Citing a “too-small-to-be-competitive schedule from JFK coupled with the start of the Winter season where more airlines will operate their slots as they resume JFK flying”, on Friday, September 30, 2022 United Airlines announced a decision to temporarily suspend service at John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK) effective with the last inbound flights on October 29, 2022.

United has operated only a handful of flights out of JFK, most notably routes to Los Angeles and San Francisco. Although, the company has been attempting to procure additional take-off and landing slots which would allow for additional service to/from JFK, the company has learned that any process to add additional capacity at JFK “will take some time.”

Earlier this year, the FAA released a statement addressing United’s request stating the slots “cannot be delivered quickly as they must first undergo a thorough approval process.” Additionally, in its press release, the FAA stated that it “must consider airspace capacity and runway capacity to assess how changes would affect flights at nearby airports. Any additional slots at JFK would follow the FAA’s well-established process of awarding them fairly and to increase competition.”

In 2015, United released 24 of its JFK slots to Delta Airlines. At the time, management was focused on shifting nearly all of its New York flights to Newark where it was believed that this shift would have the impact of causing the airline to “run more smoothly.” In its recent statement, United management expressed that “...New York customers deserve more choices, and robust United service to JFK is good for our customers, our employees and our airline” and further indicated that efforts to pursue opportunities at JFK will continue.

We know this news is especially tough for the 100 employees who work at JFK. The company will be offering those employees jobs at nearby stations. It is important that our solidarity and support remain focused for our Union brothers and sisters. Please join the United Master Executive Council in offering support and assistance to the impacted employees, our friends, and flying partners, who are directly impacted by this announcement.

### **Annual Flu Shot Options**

Flu season is coming. It’s important for each of us to consider our personal health circumstances, to consult with our physician in order to determine our personal medical decision to get a flu shot.

In our line of work, we encounter a wide range of people from all walks of life who live in different parts of the world. To help combat this potentially adverse impact



including deadly illness, we recommend everyone consult with their physician to determine if the vaccination for the current flu strain is right for them.

The Center for Disease Control recommends that adults and children older than six (6) months get a flu vaccine by the end of October. Free flu shots are available upon presentation of your health insurance card at CVS, Walgreens, etc. or at one of United's health and wellness resources.

If you do not have medical coverage, you can still receive a flu shot for a low cost at your local pharmacy. It is expected that United will be making flu shot vouchers available from the company website during the early part of October. Take the steps to keep yourself healthy this season.

#### Reminders:

- September 15 – October 15 Hispanic-Latinx Heritage Month
- October – Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- October 25 -26, 2022 – Fall 2022 Regular MEC Meeting in Chicago