



ASSOCIATION OF FLIGHT ATTENDANTS - CWA, AFL-CIO

6250 N. River Road, Suite 4020, Rosemont, IL 60018

PHONE 847•292•7170 FAX: 847•292•7180 website: www.unitedafa.org

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Ladies and Gentlemen:

Without warning, a company communication on Established Staffing Guidelines announced “new” procedures that violate our contract within just days of its full implementation. Let me be clear: We do not agree with these changes to “enhance staffing.” If the company attempts to move forward with implementing this, we have a dispute and we will fight it through the implementation dispute process. In order to preserve the strength of a potential case, I will not detail the negotiating history here. But, I know this company communication does not reflect what the union and the company agreed to, nor what you voted to approve.

This has been a difficult week. United management did not deliver what was promised. Flight Attendants have had to face incredible change, clumsy or dysfunctional IT interfaces, and errors in the bid award. We are still sifting through the fallout and working to resolve issues. Contract violations are never ok, but especially in this moment it is an outrage that this staffing communication was released this week. I have had enough and I know you have too. I expect the management of this airline to immediately retract this communication on staffing and apologize to Flight Attendants.

If management wants to talk about the realities of staffing, we can certainly do that. We know that the concept of converting us from deadhead to work for so-called ‘enhanced staffing’ has nothing to do with providing better service for passengers or respecting the work we do on the frontlines of our airline. If they truly want “enhanced staffing” they should plan for it and put it in our bids. Flight Attendants should not have to make their poor planning work. We need proper staffing and tools to do our jobs now!

One member wrote to me last night, “I’d like to stand with my union and protect the rights of my fellow flight attendants who have shared their frustrations with the disrespect and disregard we have received from our company. I’m beyond frustrated. I’ve been doing my absolute best to be patient and positive but it’s not working anymore. I just want what’s FAIR...nothing more nothing less. If they promised us one thing, they should keep their end of the bargain.”

I could not agree more. Management should keep their end of the bargain. We have a grievance process to hold them accountable, but solidarity like that shown by the teachers of West Virginia this year is what we need now. We can make change in an instant when we speak out together. Look at how quickly you put the bonus incentive program change in the trash! This company needs to hear you! Speak up to the leaders of this airline and express your outrage with this attempt to circumvent your contract. We need everyone writing to company leadership and speaking up when checking in for your trips. Enough is enough.

There is so much we have to fix and make better. We want this merger to succeed and we want a new United Airlines that we can all be proud of. We can do it when this management knows we are one. No matter the content of the contract violation, this management needs to know we won’t stand for it. Taking a stand on this issue will strengthen our voice in every challenge we face.

Speak up, speak out and stay united, AFA.

In Solidarity,

Ken Diaz, President
United Master Executive Council