



Reserve Preferencing Training Course

Strategy Considerations

Reserves may place both Standing and Daily preferences on file in order to indicate the type of trip they would like to be assigned to for the next day during the 1930 assignment process. These preferences, determined by you, are individually specific, but in this document, we review different “preferencing” strategies that will improve your experience with the Reserve Preferencing System. While there are many easy ways to preference into a specific trip you want to fly, there are equally as many ways that you can “over-preference” out of all the available trips. To avoid this, keep in mind the following considerations:

- **All criteria in your preference must match an assignment (pairing or Standby) that was captured in the Open Time snapshot that is taken each day at 1500 HDT in order to be awarded.**
- **Just because you can select a preference doesn’t mean that you necessarily should, nor does it guarantee a trip will be awarded.** For example, the system permits Flight Attendants to express an interest in the SNA co-terminal. However, because this is not an active co-terminal with any pairings originating from it, specifying this preference will limit what you will be awarded by the system in the evaluation of your preferences.

Co-Terminal

Only active co-terminal flying will be awarded. While SNA, MDW, and OAK are Contractual defined co-terminals for LAX, ORD, and SFO respectively, these are not *active* co-terminal locations. Specifying these as preferences will essentially invalidate any preference in which they are included because it is a criterion that will not match any open assignments.

Within the Reserve Preferencing System, current active co-terminals can be expressed as a preference to include ALL active co-terminal locations, as well as the domicile to which those co-terminals are attached. For example, IAD based Flight Attendants on Reserve status can express a preference to fly from BWI, DCA or IAD while EWR based Flight Attendants on Reserve status can express preferences for LGA or EWR.

Note: *When selecting more than one (1) criterion, it is important to recognize that specifying co-terminal flying has its limitations. For example, to specify a desire to fly from the LGA co-terminal while, in the same preference request, indicating a desire to fly international, will result in that preference not being awarded. Also, this criterion only considers open co-terminal **pairings**, and does not include co-terminal Standbys. Standby requests should be made separately.*

Earliest Check-In

This is an excellent example of a diverse preference request that can be used to accomplish more than one objective. This preference request is beneficial to those Flight Attendants who prefer to have later check-in times. At the same time, this selection can also be used to increase the likelihood of getting any pairing for those individuals who are looking to fly as much as possible. If you are among those wishing to fly as much as possible, creating a standing preference that contains **only** one criterion for any check-in after 0500 will accomplish this because this preference will essentially match any open pairing from 0500 to midnight.

Note: *Contract Section 8.H.5. provides open positions with check-in times between 0001 and 0459, inclusive, will be assigned to Ready Reserves and will not be assigned by the Reserve Preferencing system. Also, this criterion only considers open **pairings**, and not Standbys. Standby requests should be made separately.*

Equipment Type

The system provides the option to select any aircraft fleet type (not model) currently assigned to and flown by mainline United. For example, while it is possible to specify the A319/320 aircraft fleet type, it is not possible to express a preference for *only* the A319 model. Any A319/320 preference would include a consideration of all pairings containing A319 and A320 aircraft. There is also no option to *avoid* a specific type of aircraft.

Note: *All segments within a given pairing are included in the consideration of this preference request and the presence of a single segment on the specific aircraft fleet type, including deadhead segments, is considered a match and will be awarded.*

International/Domestic

This provides Flight Attendants with the ability to preference either Domestic or International flying. This preference is particularly important at those locations having both Domestic and International flying assigned.

Note: *Locations assigned only domestic flying (CLE, LAS, MCO, PHX, and SAN) should not preference international flying as this **will not match any open pairing**. As a result, the preference will not be awarded.*

*Locations and sub-bases assigned only international flying (FRA, HKG, LHR, NRT, any International Purser sub-base and most Language sub-bases) should not preference domestic flying as this **will not match any open pairing**. As a result, the preference will not be awarded.*

Latest Arrival

This is the arrival time of the scheduled return to your home domicile and is based on the scheduled arrival time of the last flight in the pairing and does not include debriefing time. For those Flight Attendants wishing to capture as many trips as possible, selecting a latest arrival time of 23:59 will ensure consideration of all available pairings for which you are legal for during your Reserve block.

Note: *Latest arrival does not include Contractual debriefing times either when working or deadheading on the final segment of the pairing back to your home domicile.*

Layover City

This provides Flight Attendants with the ability to preference a specific layover location. In order to be considered a match, there must be a legal rest at that location in order for it to be considered. (This is to ensure that “passing through” a station is not considered a “layover.”) While the system will permit you to enter any three-letter airport code, only layovers in pairings captured in the Open Time snapshot for your base/sub-base will be considered as a match. The system will accept only one layover location per preference (remember, you can add multiple preference requests). An important consideration requires recognition that there may be several open pairings that match your layover request. For example, sometimes at LHR there are layovers scheduled for EWR some of which are 2-day pairings while others are 3-day pairings. When using this preference, we recommend combining this with either check-in or arrival time criteria to ensure you are being awarded the layover for which you are interested. Another way to accomplish the award of a layover location is to preference a specific pairing.

Pairing

This criterion is primarily used when expressing a Daily Preference in large part because it is rare to see the exact same pairing number operating all month long and rarely in the same market from month to month.

When using this criterion, you must indicate that you are willing to waive the 1-in-7 and 35-in-7 legalities in order to be awarded the desired pairing. When waiving these legalities, you are doing so only for the assignment of this specific pairing and this waiver of legalities has no impact on future scheduling. In most circumstances Flight Attendants will not truly be waiving, however the system will always require acknowledgement of the waiver when using this criterion.

Pairing Length

This preference is used to indicate an interest in pairings based on its length, as expressed in the number of days. It is important to understand that this preference will not override the number of days of availability a Reserve has within the Reserve block for the date(s) being assigned. For example, a preference for only 1-day trips by a Reserve who is available for 4 days will not be awarded a 1-day pairing *if there are legal and available Reserves with shorter availability blocks*. However, if there are no legal or available 1-day, 2-day or 3-day Reserves you could be awarded the 1-day pairing if other 4-day Reserves do not preference this option. This is a good preference to have on file if you really prefer to fly a certain length trip. However, all other assignment rules are in play and this preference will not “trump” days of availability.

Note: *This preference will not be used to consider the day-length associated with Standby assignments.*

Position

This provides Flight Attendants with the ability to preference Purser, Non-Purser or FA01-FA06 positions. Up to two (2) selections may be included in a single preference request.

Note: *General population Reserves preferencing the Purser position in this criterion will only match open domestic Purser positions (FM01P). International Purser positions (FM01L) will only be assigned to Reserves in the International Purser sub-base by the Reserve Preferencing System.*

Standby

For Standby preferences it is important to note that you must be available for the number of days for which the Standby position has been designated by Crew Scheduling. For example, if the 0900 Standby position has been designated for assignment to a 3-day Reserve, 1- and 2-day Reserves will not be assigned the Standby period. Further, a 4-day Reserve may be assigned the position in those circumstances where there are no legal or available 3-day Reserves. It is also important to note that for a Standby preference to be valid, it should be the only criterion selected. If you were to incorrect preference Standby with any other criteria, the preference will be considered invalid. It is for this reason the secondary drop-down menus for Co-Terminal and Check-in Time exist within this criterion.

Note: *A Standby preference must be a stand-alone request and should be the only criterion selected within a single preference request. There are secondary drop-down menus within the Standby criterion that allow you to express co-terminal and check-in time preferences for Standby. Combining Standby with any other criteria outside those contained within the Standby criterion in the same request will render the preference invalid.*

Combining Preferences

Within each preference request there can be as many as six (6) different criteria. However, it is important to note that the more criteria preferred, the fewer pairing matches will occur and the less likely it is that one of your preferences will be awarded. **It is very easy to preference yourself out of any matches.** It is also important to note that by not matching a trip with a preference you can, and in many instances will, still be assigned by the system. While the system has been designed to provide Flight Attendants with the ability to preference what they want to fly, at the end of the process, to the extent possible, the underlying objective of the system will ensure all open assignments are covered.

Reserves in Special Qualification Sub-Bases

As a Reserve in a special qualification sub-base (International Purser or Language), it is important to remember that the Reserve Preferencing System will only consider you for assignment to open positions in your designated sub-base. It may be unnecessary (and in some cases, inhibitive) to use certain criteria when preferencing.

For example, as an International Purser Reserve, the system will only assign you to open International Purser positions. For this reason, it is not necessary to use “International/Domestic” or “Position” since both of these criteria are pre-determined by the flying in the sub-base. In fact, inadvertently selecting “domestic” or “FA01” would result in an invalid preference request and would not be matched to any open assignments.

Similarly, as a Reserve in one of the Language sub-bases, the system will only assign you to open positions in the language sub-base of the Reserve line you were awarded for the bid month, regardless of secondary language qualifications. In other words, if you are qualified in both French and Italian but have been awarded a French language Reserve line for the bid month, preferencing a layover in Rome (“FCO”) would result in an invalid preference request and would not be matched to any open assignments. You should also use caution when using the “Position” criterion since Language positions are typically all “FA01.” The work positions for designated Language Flight Attendants are most often determined by the pairing number, and as such, the “Pairing” criterion should instead be used in this case.

Considerations When preferencing:

- **Double check your Criteria.** Ensure the criteria you include in each request match the possible assignments at your location and/or sub-base so they are not rendered invalid.
- **Be careful not to “over-preference.”** You may include up to six (6) criteria in each request, but keep in mind, more criteria will narrow the possible matches. Since you are able to input up to ten (10) separate requests, if it appears you will likely be assigned for the next day, it may be a good idea to broaden your requests (i.e., use fewer criteria) as you go for the best chance of a preference match.
- **“Standby” is a stand-alone request.** When selected, it should be the only criterion within a single request. Use the secondary drop-down menus within the Standby criterion to indicate a co-terminal and/or check-in time preference for Standby.
- **Make sure all requests are submitted.** Always ensure that all your preference requests have been successfully submitted by verifying there are no asterisks (*) next to the request numbers in the Request drop-down before logging out of the system.