



# Contract 2021 Negotiations News

December 5, 2023  
Volume 4  
Issue 11



United Master Executive Council  
Association of Flight Attendants - CWA, AFL-CIO



## Negotiations Update

Since our last update, we have been engaged in discussions on closing out several Sections. During our discussions the week of November 13<sup>th</sup> in Washington, DC, we received a package proposal from management on the following Sections:

Section 23 - Grievances

Section 25 - Uniforms

Section 30 - Union Activities

After receiving the proposals and discussions at the negotiating table, we analyzed management’s proposals and responded later in the session. Our counterproposal expanded the package in an effort to move these negotiations forward. We included the following Sections in our package proposal:

Section 11 Training & General Meetings

Section 17 - Filling of Vacancies

Section 20 - Medical Examinations

Section 21 - Alcohol and Drug Testing

Section 23 - Grievances

Section 25 - Uniforms

Section 30 - Union Activities

(Continued)



## Negotiations Update (continued)

As you know from our updates, there have been numerous discussions on the Sections contained within our package proposal, and these issues need to be moved to close so that we can move on to other Sections. Our package proposals are focused on the items identified as important in the survey results.

During our direct negotiations session in Chicago the week of November 27<sup>th</sup>, management responded to our package proposal. They do not believe that Section 11 should be included since there are significant economic items in our proposal, and accordingly, their response only included Sections 17, 20, 21, 23, 25 and 30.

We disagreed with management’s position on not including Section 11 - Training & General Meetings and responded with a package that addresses all of the Sections (11, 20, 21, 23, 25 & 30).

There is no reason for management not to address these proposals, other than to further delay these negotiations.

They should be working on closing out Sections in a tentative agreement. Management needs to step up and address all of the Flight Attendant issues identified in our package proposal.

Our financial analyst, the Managing Principal at Jalmer Johnson Consulting joined us at the negotiating table. As you will recall, Jalmer Johnson Consulting, LLC ("JJC") provides a full range of analysis and advice to labor unions in the U.S. and around the world on economic, financial, and strategic issues.

Included in this edition of Negotiations News is a summarized version of the analysis we receive quarterly from JJC. This special report called [The Airline Analysis Journal](#) focuses on United Airlines Holdings, Inc. Third Quarter 2023 ("3Q23") financial results on October 17, 2023. This Journal also provides an analysis of United’s performance, and how it compared to that of Delta and American.

We are back in Washington, DC, the week of December 4<sup>th</sup> and will have another direct negotiations session the week of December 11<sup>th</sup> in Chicago.

At the conclusion of our second session in December, that will mark three weeks in a row of talks. We have every expectation that if management takes these talks seriously, the Sections contained in the package proposal could be closed in tentative agreements.

We will continue to push forward with your support and will remain focused on closing Sections and advancing your priorities.

**UPCOMING NEGOTIATING SESSIONS**

- December 4, 2023  
Washington, D.C.
  - Ongoing Exchange of Counterproposals
- December 11, 2023  
Chicago
  - Ongoing Exchange of Counterproposals
- January 8, 2024  
Cleveland, OH
  - Ongoing Exchange of Counterproposals
- January 29, 2024  
Chicago
  - Ongoing Exchange of Counterproposals

## MEC President Letter Announces Filing for Federal Mediation.

On December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, MEC President Ken Diaz announced we would be filing for Federal Mediation through his President Letter:



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

December 1, 2023

Dear Flying Partners,

On September 6th, 2023, the United MEC unanimously passed a resolution to redouble our efforts to secure an industry-leading contract that Flight Attendants can ratify within the coming months, not years. The resolution also reaffirmed our solidarity alongside our negotiating committee and our commitment to do Whatever It Takes.

Since the beginning of the negotiations process, we have seen a strategic assault by management on labor and the detrimental erosion to our quality of life.

Progress has been slow, too slow. Despite our best efforts to secure timeline commitments, management has flat-out refused to agree on any timeline for expedited negotiations. Management would rather negotiate at a pace they set.

As you know from our last issue of On The Line, over the past couple of months, we have been seeking an agreement with management to enter into an Expedited Mediation program with the oversight of the National Mediation Board. Management has refused, instead choosing to further delay these negotiations.

In response to management's utter and complete failure to prioritize the needs of the Flight Attendant work group, we will be filing for Federal Mediation.

Actions speak louder than words. The pace at which management is willing to negotiate speaks volumes about their lack of respect for our contributions to the success and profitability of United Airlines.

When we are at the bargaining table, we are fighting for more than the provisions of a Contract alone. We are fighting to protect the future of our chosen profession.

This is our time. We have come together to determine what our future will be, and you have determined our priorities for these negotiations. We will not allow our profession to be jeopardized.

We must continue to demonstrate our profound displeasure by a show of strength and solidarity. Join us on December 14th system-wide to remind management that WE are the face of United and will not rest until we achieve an industry-leading contract.

In Solidarity,

Ken Diaz, President

United Master Executive Council

AFA-CWA/AFL-CIO

ITF INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS FEDERATION

INFLIGHT SAFETY PROFESSIONALS



peacefully conclude collective bargaining. If, in the Board's expert assessment, mediation will be unsuccessful, the Board will "induce the parties to submit their (dispute) to arbitration."

The mediator establishes when and where the parties will meet and may recess a case from time to time if it is deemed appropriate. There is no time limit for the mediation process although our Solidarity can encourage progress. Mediation continues until an agreement is reached or until the NMB determines that further mediation would be fruitless due to an impasse.

### What is Federal Mediation?

The National Mediation Board (NMB) uses the mediation process to foster agreements and to avoid a resort to self-help whenever possible.

The NMB, whose three members are appointed by the President of the United States, is the federal agency that appoints mediators to assist the parties with productive dialog on their negotiation's issues.

The Railway Labor Act (RLA) imposes a duty on the parties "to make and maintain agreements... and to settle all disputes... to avoid any interruption to commerce or to the operation of any carrier...". The parties should attempt to resolve collective bargaining disputes through direct negotiations. Failing that, either party may involve the Board's services or the Board may involve itself on its own initiative.

The Board will employ a variety of methods, including but not limited to: traditional mediation, interest-based problem solving, or facilitation to

## Understanding Your AFA Proposal For Ground Time Pay

*What is Ground Time? It's simple.*

In your AFA proposal, Ground Time is scheduled or unscheduled time within a duty period that is not flight time - including sit time between flights.

It is important to note that the time we spend boarding a flight is considered Ground Time Pay under your proposal.

The easiest way to find your Ground Time Pay is to subtract the total flight time from the total time of the duty period. As an example:

- Duty period is 12 hours long (From Check-in to Debrief)
- You have 8 hours of flight time in this duty period
- Your Ground Time Pay is 4 hours @half your pay rate (including any premiums or LQ overrides)
- $12 - 8 = 4$

It's important that we are paid for all of our time at work. Ground Time Pay ensures that we are.



---

### December 14, 2023 - Day of Action!

On December 14, 2023, we're hitting the picket line with our holiday spirit: Unity and Solidarity. We are strengthening our power and demonstrating our unwavering commitment to push for a contract that respects our work and contributions to this world-class airline.

We are the face of United. We are aviation's first responders, delivering safety and service on every flight to United passengers. As the flying public begins their holiday travels, we

will ensure United passengers hear our voices loud and clear. We stand with our Union and our Negotiating Committee for a Contract that we can ratify within the coming months, not years.

United management, which side of Santa's list do you want to be on, naughty or nice?

We're taking action, because we know what we want this holiday season: The Industry-Leading Contract we have earned!

RSVP today for your local event on our [contract2021.org](http://contract2021.org) website.

## UAW Strike and Flight Attendants

Our siblings at the United Auto Workers (UAW) were engaged in the Stand Up Strike action across the Big Three Auto Companies due to management's refusal to negotiate fairly and in good faith. Their situation is not unlike the turbulence we are encountering in our own negotiations with United Airlines - along with our flying partners at Alaska, American and Southwest.

Due to the incredible solidarity shown by the UAW auto workers, and their innovative strike tactic called the Stand Up Strike (which is inspired by our own C.H.A.O.S.<sup>™</sup> style of striking) the auto workers have secured new contracts with significant improvements in wages and quality of life provisions. They, along with other successful Unions, have shown us the way to achieving our goal of an industry leading contract for United Flight Attendants. The one thing all of these successful unions have in common is SOLIDARITY. If we stand together, and speak with one unified voice - management will have no choice but to take us seriously.

The UAW Stand Up Strike initially targeted three key facilities: Toledo, OH Assembly- Stellantis, GM Wentzville, MO, and Ford Michigan Assembly. UAW President Shawn Fain added more plants to the strike as management refused to get serious about addressing their members' concerns.


Inspired by our C.H.A.O.S.<sup>™</sup> campaign, the UAW Stand Up Strike targeted specific facilities for the initial walkouts and gradually expanded to include more. The Union's resolve was clear, and they were determined to continue until their demands were met. Their incredible solidarity was the key component of their success. They truly lived the slogan: "I've Got Your Back!!"

### *Why is this important for Flight Attendants?*

It's important because the auto workers' demands are a reflection of the demands of Labor across all industries - whether it be UAW, UPS, Healthcare Workers, Teachers, Starbucks, Amazon, or any number of other groups - it's true that "a rising tide lifts all boats." We, as Flight Attendants, recognize the importance of standing in unity with our Union siblings across various industries. Our presence and support during their struggle not only demonstrates our commitment to fair bargaining but also strengthens our position in our own negotiations and organizing efforts.


Corporate suites and boardrooms are watching, hoping that labor won't be strong enough to secure our fair share. It is our collective responsibility to prove them wrong, to show that our unity and determination can make a difference.

In solidarity, we have much to win, and together, we can make a difference. Let's continue to stand strong and show the world that we are a force to be reckoned with.



**"Our goal is not to strike. Our goal is to bargain a fair Contract. But if we have to strike, to win economic and social justice, then we will."**

Shawn Fain  
UAW President



**WORKERS UNITED WILL NEVER BE DIVIDED. TOGETHER WE RISE.**



## **UAW Stand Up Strike Wins Tentative Agreements at the Big Three**

The United Auto Workers (UAW) reached three tentative agreements as the result of their Stand Up Strike. On Wednesday Oct 25th, UAW reached a deal with Ford Motor Company after 41 days on strike across the Big Three. Three days later, the union reached a tentative agreement with Stellantis (Chrysler). And finally two days later, a tentative deal was reached at General Motors.

“For months we’ve said that record profits mean record contracts. And UAW family, our Stand Up Strike has delivered. What started at three plants at midnight on September 15, has become a national movement,” said UAW President Shawn Fain. “We won things nobody thought possible...Together, we are turning the tide for the working class in this country.”

The gains in the Ford and Stellantis deals are valued at more than 4x the gains from the 2019 contract, and provide more in base wage increases than Ford and Stellantis workers have received in the past 22 years.

As of November 20, 2023, UAW members at Ford, General Motors and Stellantis have voted to ratify their new contracts. Across the three companies, 64% of voting members voted in favor of the agreements.

The Stand Up Strike works!

---

## **Airline Industry Negotiations Updates**

### **Alaska Airlines Flight Attendants**

The Alaska Airlines AFA Master Executive Council continues to push forward with the next wave of their public pressure campaign. On November 15th, Mobilization Volunteers began distributing leaflets at all six bases in Alaska’s system. They also announced an email sign-up form for the traveling public to stay informed about the negotiations process.

During the June 2023 negotiation session Management shared their first economic proposal. Management refused to adequately address necessary improvements to pay and other work rule provisions, providing a 1% increase adjustment for inflation. AFA Negotiators canceled the November session until a mediator could be assigned. AFA Alaska negotiators will return to the bargaining table alongside their assigned mediator for their session scheduled for December 12-14.

On December 19th, AFA Alaska will be holding their system-wide informational picketing.

### **American Airlines Flight Attendants**

The American Airlines AFPA Flight Attendant Contract became amendable in December 2019. APFA announced that at their bargaining session at the end of September 2023, negotiators had presented management with comprehensive proposals on all remaining non-economic and economic issues, and to date, the company has yet to provide the Union with a new economic proposal and no plan to settle their contract.

(Continued)

## **Airline Industry Negotiations Updates (continued)**

In October, 99.47% of APFA members voted to authorize a strike. On November 17, 2023, in response to the continued delays from management, APFA National President Julie Hendrick sent a letter to the National Mediation Board (NMB) requesting that APFA and the Company be released into a thirty-day cooling-off period. On November 28<sup>th</sup>, APFA was denied by the NMB to be released into a thirty-day cooling-off period, and they will re-apply for release pending the outcome of their December sessions with the company.

### **Southwest Airlines Flight Attendants**

The Southwest Airlines and Transport Workers Union (TWU) Flight Attendant Contract became amendable in 2018.

On October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, a Tentative Agreement (TA) between TWU Local 556 and the company was reached. This included an industry-leading 36% cumulative pay increase, extended ground time pay, no loss of health insurance, and overall quality of life improvements.

TWU has completed its roadshows for Members to learn about the Tentative Agreement and get their questions answered.

The voting process opened for Members on November 16<sup>th</sup> and closes on December 8<sup>th</sup>.

### **Southwest Airlines Pilots**

As Southwest Airline Pilot Association (SWAPA) are waiting to be released from the Federal Mediation Board, they have begun opening strike centers to create a local place for pilot volunteers to watch and monitor the coming and going of both pilots and planes in the event of a strike.

As background, Southwest Airlines pilots stated on their website that they have been in contract negotiations for nearly three-and-a-half years with no meaningful progress. They have been in federal mediation since September 2022. The SWAPA pilots have said loudly and clearly with the recent Strike Authorization Vote that enough is enough.

According to the SWAPA website:

- “Our pilots have surrendered tens of thousands of days off against their will to cover an oversold schedule and a broken crew scheduling department.”
- “Our pilots have been forced to leave in record numbers to seek better career opportunities at our competitors. (You deserve to have the safest, most experienced pilot flying your family, don’t you?)”
- “At the start of this year, our managers pocketed millions in bonuses within days of cutting our employees’ profit-sharing by half due to the worst operational meltdown in the history of U.S. commercial aviation.”

(Continued)

## **Airline Industry Negotiations Updates (continued)**

- “Our pilots have seen zero raises in the wake of record inflation, deteriorating work conditions, and increasing cost of living away from home.”
- “Our pilots have been scheduled for increasingly longer duty days and shorter rest periods, resulting in record fatigue calls and consequent schedule disruptions.”

In addition, the SWAPA announced that “these are just a few of the conditions that have pushed the pilots of Southwest Airlines to decide that a strike is a necessary option. Should the National Mediation Board release our pilots to self-help, Southwest pilots will conduct a strike.

---