



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



Negotiations Update

Contract 2021 Negotiations to Date

24

TOTAL DIRECT
NEGOTIATIONS
SESSIONS
HELD

MONTHS IN
SECTION 6
NEGOTIATIONS

Since exchange of
Opening Proposals

17

69

TOTAL DAYS OF
FACE TO FACE
NEGOTIATIONS

OPEN
SECTIONS

33

01

CLOSED
SECTIONS

TENTATIVE AGREEMENTS
REACHED

We received management's Section 7 – Scheduling proposal on March 13, 2023, during the direct negotiation session in Chicago. Discussions on this proposal continued the week of March 20, 2023, in Denver.

Management's Section 7 – Scheduling proposal is a comprehensive rewrite of important quality of work life provisions. They have proposed the elimination of significant Contractual provisions including Partial Trip Trades, Piggybacking, Out of Base Trades, Bad-Day-Worse-Day Trades, Seniority Option and Personal Time Off.

Additionally, they have proposed a Preferential Bidding System (PBS) and replacement of our current trading system with a seniority-based system. They have identified these items as being aligned with their goals of flexibility, simplifying work rules, and leveraging technology to create a more efficient streamlined operation.

Before closing out the talks in Denver we presented management with a counter proposal on Section 17 – Filling of Vacancies.

While we had anticipated a presentation on changes to the Purser Program during the direct negotiation session in Chicago, the presentation was rescheduled to April so that we were solely focused on Section 7 – Scheduling.

During our next direct negotiations session in Chicago the week of April 10, 2023, management will bring to the negotiating table their Section 8 - Reserve Scheduling Procedures proposal. We will also receive a financial and business plan update that week. Additionally, we have confirmed that management will present their Section 29 – Benefits proposal at the direct negotiation session the week of April 24, 2023, in Chicago.

We remain focused on resolving open items and strive to close out sections in a tentative agreement. It is anticipated that over the next several sessions we will finally have all of managements proposals on the table. Only then will we have a complete picture of what is at stake in these negotiations.

Letter from...

Ken Diaz, United MEC President

By now most of you will have read the March 10, 2023, *AFA Negotiations Update* from the Senior Vice President of Inflight Services. You have made it clear that this update from management is insulting and demonstrates a lack of respect for the work Flight Attendants do every day. Statements like “*when we’re at work, we’re going to work*”, only suggest Flight Attendants don’t work when we’re at work today.

Featherbedding is an old insult leveled by union busters to impugn the integrity of its workers. The term originated in the use of feathers to fill mattresses in beds, providing for more comfort. The modern use of the term in the labor relations setting began in the United States railroad industry, which used feathered mattresses in sleeping cars. The concept being that when negotiations result in improved working conditions for workers, that results in companies increasing their labor costs, something that companies with poor labor relations never want to do.

It’s clear that the use of the term featherbedding in the context of your proposals can only be construed as an intentional insult, and a continued expression of current management’s view that Flight Attendants need to work harder.

Workers around the country, including the aviation industry have been protesting over staffing levels. In fact, in the aviation industry workers are responding to a hailstorm of workplace issues related to staffing. And it is clear that you are no different than other workers demanding a better work life experience. You have made it abundantly clear that better customer service, safety and security are contingent on improved staffing levels. Our proposals reflect your demands, and for management to insult a workforce wanting to do better is never a good tactic in negotiations.

We know based on your feedback that when our Company is properly staffed, you are able to complete the duties and responsibilities of our jobs in a timely manner. In contrast, the experience over the past several years has been that management has failed to identify efficient staffing levels and hired too few Flight Attendants and other employees resulting in overworking current employees. This failure has surely led to poor performance and high attrition rates, resulting in wasted resources related to training and finding new employees.

Understaffing onboard our flights and across our Company has created numerous challenges. Experts agree that understaffing leads to decreased productivity, customer service issues, and increased employee stress. And in customer service, understaffing is actually a tangible problem. When you don’t have enough people to handle demand, it impacts our Company’s reputation immensely.

We know this to be true and in fact United received a dismal rating on the [Forbes 2022 list of Best Employers](#). United Airlines ranks towards the bottom of the list of employers and dead last for airlines ranked, worldwide. Imagine if management were only as focused on making United the best airline in the world *to work for* as they are to make it the “*best airline in the world*”.

You are AFA. When management refers to “AFA” they are speaking to every single Flight Attendant. These negotiations are about all of us and our proposals on the negotiating table reflect our *collective* priorities, as determined by Flight Attendants. Our solidarity grows stronger every day and it is what will carry us through these negotiations. Stay informed and remain engaged. WE ARE ALL AFA.

