

Contract 2021 Negotiations News

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



Contract 2021 Negotiations to Date



Negotiations Update

Negotiations across the airline industry are heating up and aviation workers are demonstrating their commitment to successful negotiations. In addition to our direct negotiations sessions this month there were other important events over the course of the past couple of weeks.

During our sessions in Denver and Chicago we engaged in discussions on open Sections currently on the negotiating table. While in Denver, management presented a counter proposal on Section 19 – Safety, Health, and Security. We presented counter proposals on Section 20 – Medical Examinations and Section 21 – Alcohol and Drug Testing. There are a number of unresolved issues in all of these Sections.

While in Chicago we presented counter proposals on attendance and dependability point values as well as progressive discipline currently in Section 23-F. and 23-G. of our collective bargaining agreement. Additionally, we made another counter proposal on Section 23 – Investigations & Grievances. There are substantial disagreements on all of these items.

Dates and locations for direct negotiations have been confirmed for the balance of the year. We will be rotating between Washington, DC, and Chicago from July through December. For June, we will again meet in Chicago and Denver and continue discussions on the sections on the negotiating table. When not in a direct negotiations session we will continue our work on analyzing proposals and preparing counter proposals in Chicago.

It's also worth noting other negotiations related events this month, including remembering the anniversary of the 1985 United pilots strike and a strategic negotiation meeting of Flight Attendants across the industry. Additionally, our friends at American Airlines (APFA) announced that they are preparing to take a strike vote.

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Negotiations Update continued

AFA and APFA met in Chicago to strategize on Flight Attendant negotiations. Flight Attendants at Alaska, Air Wisconsin, ATI, Avelo, Omni, United, and American are currently in Section 6 negotiations and working together to fight for quality of work life improvements through work rules, benefits and pay for all our time at work. The Teamsters attended the meeting and provided an update on the status of their negotiations at United Parcel Service (UPS). Key to the discussion during the meeting was the right to strike underpinning real collective bargaining.

We are all reminded of the power of Solidarity looking back at the United Airlines Pilots Strike of 1985. Solidarity is always critical to the success of negotiations and the strike anniversary is an important reminder of the power of workers standing together during the fight for improved pay, benefits and working conditions. Briefly, direct negotiations and then mediation dragged on for the pilots and no agreement was in sight in the spring of 1985. Ultimately, the Section 6 process of the Railway Labor Act (RLA) ran its course, and the National Mediation Board (NMB) authorized self-help on May 17, 1985. Management did not expect the overwhelming unity that was created by the pilots and AFA stood in solidarity with ALPA as they fought to win improved working conditions and to fight back the onerous proposals management was making at their negotiating table.

Management had every intention of flying through the strike and replacing all the pilots who did not show up to work. When the pilots were released to exercise their rights by the NMB, the strike occurred, and pilots responded with strong Solidarity. The strike lasted 29 days and only 4% of the pilots had crossed the picket line. When the strike concluded both pilots and Flight Attendants returned to work. Just as it was then, it is now, Solidarity amongst workers is critical to success in collective bargaining.

APFA announced this month that Flight Attendants at American Airlines are in advanced stages of negotiations and will enter federal mediation at the end of June. APFA is reporting that a number of unresolved issues remain on the negotiating table after years of direct negotiations including key economic demands, Scheduling, Reserve, and other issues. They are building their negotiations support structure and engaging in a series of system wide picketing events and many other internal mobilizing events. To date, over 2,200 Flight Attendants have signed up for their Contract Action Team. We stand in Solidarity with our peers on the APFA negotiating committee. They have tough negotiations ahead and they are fully prepared to fight for a strong contract. Recognizing

the importance of moving their negotiations to a successful conclusion, they are taking all steps necessary to advance their priorities, including taking a strike vote if necessary after they have engaged in their statutory mediation process. When you see an American Airlines Flight Attendant express your support for them in their negotiations.

We look forward to our next direct negotiations sessions and thank you for demonstrating your Solidarity as we move forward in our fight for an industry leading Contract.

Wear the Official AFA Red Pin Starting June 1, 2023!

As a cohesive group with shared interests and priorities, our true power lies in our unified front. Therefore, effective June 1, 2023, the United Master Executive Council has authorized the customization of the official AFA pin, now in the color red, symbolizing our solidarity as members and our support for negotiating an agreement that recognizes the vital role Flight Attendants play in United Airlines' success.

If you require a replacement, red AFA pins are available at your Local Council office.

