

AFA and management met June 13-15, 2024, to continue negotiations for our new contract. The AFA Committee consists of MECP Lisa Davis Warren (SEA), Heather Coleman (PAE), and Lexie Massey (SEA), who are all current Flight Attendants, and our Staff Attorney and Negotiator, Kimberley Chaput. Management was represented by Shelly Parker, Vice President Station Ops and Inflight; Cheri Ruger, Managing Director, Labor Relations; William Casalins Altimar, Manager, Inflight Labor and Performance; Amber Hopkins, Director, Finance; Latrice Lee, Senior Corporate Counsel, Alaska Legal; and Molly Gabel, Partner, Labor and Employment (outside legal counsel).

We discussed one, and only one, article this week—Vacation (Article 11). At the end of our previous session, management gave us a single sheet with a few concepts for bidding vacation. The general idea was that they would put out for bid enough slots to cover all vacation accrued in the previous year, but none for any carried-over vacation. While we liked that idea, we were not enamored with the rest of their proposal, which, following a transition period, would eliminate our ability to carry over vacation.

We wanted to see what it would look like fleshed out to see if any compromise could be reached. We said that we needed to maintain carryover. On Wednesday, management gave us their proposal. It had no increase in vacation accruals, but it did, in fact, have 100% of accrued slots available for bid, but it also gave management the ability to assign slots to Flight Attendants if they had 34 or more hours (2 weeks) of un-bid vacation. If a Flight Attendant had up to 33.99 hours, they could hold onto it for day-at-a-time vacation, but at the end of the year, they could only carry over or cash out 17 hours—anything more would be forfeited. Under their proposal, they would also have the ability to remove weeks from open vacation.

AFA wanted to try to maintain the 100% piece while improving the rest of the proposal. We proposed that 100% of accrued weeks be put out to bid, that weeks be more equally distributed over the year, that some vacation could be assigned, and that slots could be removed only three months out. But we insisted on higher accruals and vacation pay, the current 150% carryover and that carried-over slots could not be assigned. We were not thrilled with this proposal but thought it might have some value if we could increase accruals and vacation pay.

This was not to be. Management stated that they had no interest in increasing Flight Attendant vacation accruals. They said they might be willing to increase pay; however, that would simply mean that a week would be worth more hours. Unless accrual also increased, you would end up with fewer vacation days because your bank would run out faster. They maintained the ability to assign and remove slots but reduced the lead time to 180 days. They also would not change their ability to distribute weeks at their discretion.

AFA was understandably disappointed, and after much discussion, we returned to a proposal much closer to our opener—basically, the current contract (with the vacation side letter on bidding and vacation adds and drops, increased accruals, 150% carryover, and pilot language on vacation slides and extensions. We also proposed that flight attendants could use day-at-a-time vacation if Crew scheduling removed a pink or purple trip.

It honestly felt like we were going a little backward after contemplating a whole new system, but we knew Flight Attendants would not want to lose their carryover and that many of us do not bid all of our vacation. Management said they will review our proposal and respond at the July 1-3 session. They also owe us proposals on Sick Leave (Article 9), Leaves of Absence (Article 14), Benefits (Article 19), and General (Article 25). We will be busy!

We are working on setting up a Mobilization Training for later in the summer. Contract mobilizers help the MEC and the Negotiating Committee spread information about negotiations and assist in designing and running events, such as picketing. If you would like to be in the mix and help us all obtain the contract we deserve, please let your LEC President know you are interested. This is

shaping up into a battle for a living wage—and we need all the support we can get. In the meantime, wear your AFA pin so the Company knows we are united.

Next Session June 12-14

Next month, we will pick up where we left off. At this point, the only Article we have not discussed at the table is Compensation (Article 30).

As always, please wear your AFA pins as a symbol of solidarity. We are in the slog part of negotiations, but we hope things will pick up as we dive into comprehensive proposals in the coming months. When that happens, you'll know—and more importantly, management will know.

We will update you again after our next session. Until then, remember that we are Stronger Together, Better Together!