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AFA-CWA, AFL-CIO



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AFA and management held our third mediation session on September 16-18, 2025, at the AFA office in Chicago. The AFA Committee consists of MECP Lisa Davis Warren, Heather Coleman, Lexie Massey (all current Flight Attendants), and Staff Attorney and Negotiator Joe Salamon, who filled in for Kimberley Chaput. Management was represented by Shelly Parker, Vice President Station Ops and Inflight; Chéri Ruger, Managing Director, People and Labor Relations; Robin DeMan, Managing Director, Inflight; William Casalins Altimar, Manager, Inflight Labor and Performance; Mark Schuck, Finance; and Latrice Lee, Senior Corporate Counsel, Alaska Legal.

We concluded the mediator-conducted process of reviewing each open issue, covering the last two remaining articles: Article 3, Compensation, and one section of Article 4, Duty-Time Expenses. Those discussions continued to be off-the-record, at the mediator's request, in order to foster more open dialogue between the parties. Although the mediator cannot force either party to make or agree to a proposal, he may determine how sessions are conducted.

Once we completed the review of open issues, we negotiated Article 12—Uniforms and reached a TA. Notably, this is our first TA since beginning the mediation process. The Company agreed to provide uniforms to new hires at no cost, with the expectation that Flight Attendants who separate before completing probation will be required to return their uniform. In exchange for this new language, AFA successfully ensured that returned, uniform-compliant pieces will be made available to FAs at no charge in some manner (example: a rack or closet in the crew room) at ANC, PDX, and SEA. Additionally, the Company agreed to reimburse FAs from their uniform bank up to \$50/year for additional contractually/uniform compliant bags/luggage and codified our current agreement to reimburse from the uniform bank up to \$37.50/year for hats, scarves, and gloves. While the majority of the discussions leading up to this tentative agreement were off-the-record, again at the mediator's suggestion, we can say that this method overall improved the dialogue between AFA and management and allowed us to quickly filter out suggestions and options that were not progressing, rather than discussing them at length with no end result.

After Uniforms, we began a more formal, Interest Based Bargaining ("IBB") process for Article 25—General. At a high level, the purpose of IBB is to foster honest, open dialogue—again, off-the-record—so that the parties can better understand each other's interests and concerns, and so that they might collaborate to solve problems

rather than become entrenched in their positions. Given the slow pace of negotiations thus far, largely due to the entrenched positions of management, we viewed this process as an opportunity to reset. IBB first requires the parties to identify the precise question to be solved in negotiations. Second, the parties list and explain their interests and concerns as they relate to the question. Third, the parties brainstorm potential solutions to the question. Fourth, the parties caucus separately and list the potential solutions they are willing to discuss further, without committing. Fifth, and last, the parties discuss the solutions selected by both sides, in hopes of reaching agreement.

We utilized IBB to discuss personnel file requests, which led to a fruitful discussion; however, no agreement has been reached to date. We expect to continue the conversation at our next session on October 20-21 and address the other remaining issues in Article 25. IBB is slower than traditional negotiations, as it requires a significant amount of dialogue and deliberation for each issue. While we found it to be helpful and productive in this instance, and we expect the process to take less time as the parties become more accustomed to it, we do not foresee relying on IBB for the majority of the remaining open issues.

This was a productive session: We completed our discussion of the open issues, achieved a TA that only contains improvements for Flight Attendants, practiced a new negotiating technique, and applied it with promising results. Our next session will be held in Chicago on October 20-21, and we expect to cover Article 25. If time permits, we will also begin working on Articles 4, 9, and 14. We were relieved to finally reach a TA on one more article from the list, though we are acutely aware that there is much more work to be done. Overall, we felt that management was much more candid with us than in the past, and we are cautiously optimistic that we can preserve this momentum moving forward.

Finally, a note about bag tags and lanyards: We are aware that Flight Attendants want to know if we are ready to get these out on the line. The answer is not yet, but it will be soon. It is still a bit too early, given the movement we saw in our last session and the progress we made, but we are taking steps to ensure that they are ready to be printed and distributed once the time is right. We will keep you informed. That said, we recognize that we will be entering into two years of negotiations, and we need to get to the critical component of this contract as quickly as possible: **OUR PAY.**

As always, we will update you again after our next session. In the meantime, wear your red AFA pin.

One Union, One Voice

Lisa Davis Warren, Lexie Massey, Heather Coleman and Joe Salamon for Kimberley Chaput

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