

Horizon Negotiations Update December 2019

AFA and Management met for an extended session in Olympia, from December 4-9, 2019. AFA's committee members are MEC President Ed Hawes; Flight Attendants Joelle Jaeger and Tanya Phillips; and our professional negotiator and attorney, Kimberley Chaput. MEC Vice President, Lisa Davis-Warren, also attended the session. Management's team consists of Michelle Abidoye, Managing Director, People and Labor Relations; Rachael Mattioli, MD Inflight Services; DeeDee Caldwell, Director, Inflight Operations & Labor Relations; Jeremy Ellison, Sr. Labor Relations BP; and Amber Hopkins, Director Finance.

This was a week of tough negotiations and hard choices for both sides. Management's position is that they're constrained by the cost caps in their capacity-purchase agreement with Alaska, and that they don't want to get way out in front of the regional airline industry. While AFA understands the competitive nature of commercial aviation, we also know that our new contract must lead the regional industry in pay, work rules and benefits and reward us for our hard work.

We made two major—and difficult—decisions during our time in Olympia. First, we withdrew our proposal for boarding pay. Although our pay rigs are at times difficult to understand, the truth is that even if the block-hour clock isn't running during boarding, we are being compensated. Some of that comes through the trip and duty rigs, and some comes through the fact that our block rates are higher than they would be if we were paid on a duty-hour basis, in part to compensate for boarding and deplaning. Management was unwilling to budge on boarding pay, even after we came up with some creative solutions. We decided to drop the proposal and focus on items we think are more achievable, such as higher block rates, increased per diem and ground holding pay.

Secondly, we did agree to a new reserve system. It's modeled after Alaska's system. Reserve availability periods would still be 14 hours, but time spent sitting reserve would not count toward the length of your duty period. Additionally, a reserve could be assigned no more than two 24-hour reserve periods per bid month. Airport reserve lines would be eliminated, and airport reserve would become an assignment by crew scheduling. In return, we agreed that all flying assigned from reserve would be paid an extra \$2.50 hourly. Also, reserves would be able to self-assign trips from Open Time. Airport reserve time would be capped at five hours and would be paid at one block hour per hour sitting at the airport. Finally, reserves could not be drafted. These changes are significant, but we think it will be financially rewarding for reserves and met one of our negotiations criteria: If management is going to get increased productivity, they're going to pay for it.

Although management did not meet its goal of reaching a new contract in 2019, we think we are beginning to see a path to a deal. They're still going to need to put more money on the table before we can reach an agreement, and hopefully they're ready to do so. We will be meeting the week of January 6th to see if we can reach agreement. Remember that whatever we come up with YOU have the final authority. Any agreement reached must be ratified by the membership—that's YOU.

As always, we appreciate your help and support. None of this is easy, and we couldn't do it without you.

Our updates will also be posted on our website, <https://afahorizon.org/> and on our official Facebook page, HZN AFA. "Like" our page to see posts in your newsfeed.