

OMNI AIR INTERNATIONAL
FLIGHT ATTENDANTS

Strike Vote Information



Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, AFL-CIO



ASSOCIATION OF FLIGHT ATTENDANTS-CWA, AFL-CIO

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January 30, 2024

Negotiations continue to drag on it's taking too long. Patiently waiting is no longer an option. Now, it's time to take the next step in our fight for a new contract. That step is a strike vote.

Omni management is hiding behind the fact that it's a charter airline. A shorter duty day? No, we're a charter and that's the nature of our business. More money? No, it's a charter and that's the nature of our business. Being off while on overnights instead of sitting reserve? No, we're a charter airline and that's the nature of our business. This cop out is not acceptable.

Our negotiations have hit a critical stage and membership solidarity and support is critical. Management knows that your Negotiating Committee is willing to fight for more. Now it's time for the membership to send the same message.

We have heard from so many of you that the combination of company disrespect, COVID, schedule uncertainty, outrageously long duty days, no real crew rest, and poverty wage rates has been crushing.

Our pilots are taking a strike vote right now. A strong strike vote from both of us will alert management, ATSG and the various federal agencies which charter the planes, that we mean business. We encourage you to vote YES for the strike authorization vote. Together, we will win our struggle for the contract we deserve.


In solidarity,

Tricia Huber
MEC President

Jenny DeHitta
MEC Vice President

Debbie Parker
MEC Secretary-Treasurer

Key Dates

Thursday
January 25  Voting Credentials Mailed

Friday
January 26  Voting Opens

Thursday
February 29  Voting Closes

Credentials will be mailed to each AFA Member.



Important: Once you vote, you cannot change your vote!
Get your questions answered before voting.

In This Booklet:

Strike Vote Information for Omni Air Flight Attendants

- What's at Stake
- Where we are in the Negotiations Process
- Negotiations Process Under Section 6 of the Railway Labor Act
- AFA's trademark brand of striking known as CHAOS™
- Strike Vote Q & A

What We Are Fighting For

Compensation

Our hourly rates and guarantee are the absolute lowest among flight attendants on similar aircraft. We are paid for a tiny portion of the time we are on duty, reserve and deadhead are unpaid.

Humane Duty Day and Crew Rest

No more 20+ hour duty days. Crew rest on the jumpseat is not rest. Climbing over sleeping soldiers for crew rest is intolerable.

Gateway Basing

Live legs or deadheads on Omni planes out of base rarely happen. Commercial deadheads can be scheduled from anywhere.

Reserve on Overnights

Commuters still need help with hotel rooms, especially for recurrent training.

Deadheads

Middle seats in coach for 26 hours is unacceptable. Three leg deadheads because the company doesn't want to schedule it on a nonstop has got to stop.

Failure to be returned to Base before Vacation or Days Off

Get us home when we're supposed to be home!

We are past ready for a contract and are willing to do what it takes to secure our economic future.



Where We Are In The Negotiations Process

DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS

Exchange of Openers

Direct Negotiations

Request for Mediation

Agreement Reached

MEDIATION & ARBITRATION

We Are Here



Mediation

Agreement Reached

Proffer of Arbitration

Binding Arbitration

Proffer Rejected

IMPASSE & SELF HELP

Cooling-Off Period

Agreement Reached

Work Stoppage/Imposed Work Rules

Presidential Emergency Board



Negotiations Steps Under the Railway Labor Act



Direct Negotiations

The first step in the negotiations process is direct discussions between management and the union. The parties pass proposals back and forth. If an agreement is reached, and if the Members approve it, it becomes the contract. If no agreement is reached, either party may petition the National Mediation Board for mediation.



The Mediation Process

Mediation & the National Mediation Board (NMB)

When progress stalls, either the union or management may file for mediation. AFA filed for mediation and our bargaining is currently in mediation.

The NMB is the federal agency that oversees our negotiations. The Board assigns and directs the professional mediators who assist the parties when negotiations break down. Our assigned mediator actually sits in on negotiations sessions with us.

The mediator establishes when and where the parties will meet and may recess a case from time to time if they deem appropriate.

There is no time limit for the mediation process. During mediation, we rely on our solidarity to put pressure on management and encourage progress. If management knows we are united, they will have an incentive to reach an agreement rather than deal with the consequences of not reaching an agreement.

Mediation continues until a full tentative agreement is reached or until the NMB determines that further mediation would be pointless because the parties are at impasse. Impasse occurs when the NMB believes that neither party will make any further moves. Throughout the process, and especially as the mediator evaluates the status of our talks, a public showing of our solidarity is absolutely critical. Through our collective action, management must understand that we stand firmly behind our Negotiating Committee and that we are demanding a great contract with Omni.

When the NMB believes that the parties are at impasse, the Board makes a "Proffer of Arbitration" to the parties, proposing to resolve the remaining issues through binding arbitration. Typically, one or both parties (though almost always the union) lobby the Board for the proffer. This is not because we actually want arbitration, but because we need to move along to the next step in the NMB's process.

If both parties accept the Proffer, then the NMB would appoint a panel of arbitrators. The union and management would present their positions, and the arbitrators would decide what the new contract would be. This process is binding, and the new agreement would be imposed on both parties without union members having the ability to vote on the contract.

Since control is taken away from the parties, unions rarely accept this option. Although other unions may occasionally accept a proffer, AFA has never done so. If either side rejects the “Proffer of Arbitration,” the NMB releases the parties from mediation to a 30-Day Cooling-Off Period—the countdown to “Self Help”: The ability to strike.



The 30-Day Cooling Off Period

The 30-day cooling off period is designed to give the parties time to consider the consequences of failing to reach an agreement and to continue mediated negotiations. The NMB uses the mediation process to help the parties reach agreement and to avoid a resort to “Self Help” whenever possible.

The cooling-off period is commonly referred to as the “strike deadline.” During the cooling off period, the NMB invites the parties to further mediate the negotiations. These meetings are often referred to as “super mediation” and are usually attended by one of the three members of the NMB. Generally, the meetings are called at or near the end of the 30-day cooling-off period. The Self Help deadline provides a new incentive for the parties to reach an agreement. Both parties feel the pressure of Self Help: If they have not reached an agreement by the deadline, either party can begin Self Help.



? What Is Self Help?

For the Union

Self Help means engaging in activities that may inflict economic harm on the Company, up to and including CHAOS™ Striking.

For the Company

Self Help includes the right to unilaterally impose their changes to our Contract, or to lock us out (that is, prevent us from coming to work—in effect, a reverse strike).



Presidential Emergency Board

At any time during the “30-day cooling-off period”, the NMB may notify the President of the United States that, in its judgment, an agreement cannot be reached and that a strike may threaten to substantially interrupt interstate commerce and transportation. The President may then interrupt the “30-Day cooling-off” clock and appoint a “Presidential Emergency Board” (“PEB”). The PEB is a panel of arbitrators which has 30 days to conduct hearings with the parties. The hearings are similar to the binding arbitration discussed above. The PEB then issues a proposed settlement (in other words, what they think the contract should look like). If either party rejects the proposed settlement, the countdown clock continues.

Finally, Congress may also intervene and mandate an Agreement legislatively—actually vote into law what our contract will be. This drastic power has never been used in our industry, but it is yet another reason we work to elect presidents and members of Congress who understand the importance of protecting our right to negotiate fair wages, benefits, retirement, and work rules.



AFA and CHAOS™

Prior to any CHAOS™ strike, the National Mediation Board would have to release the Omni. Flight Attendants to strike following the end of a 30-day cooling off period.



Waiting around for hours on end with mountains of stuff.

Right to Strike with CHAOS™

In the event of a legal strike, we would use CHAOS™ tactics: **implementing a strike with minimum risk to Flight Attendants and maximum impact on management.**

CHAOS™ is AFA's trademarked strategy of intermittent strikes, other non-traditional work actions, and it is an integral part of our public-facing contract campaign. CHAOS™ is an important weapon in our arsenal. The United Autoworkers utilized a type of atypical strike to secure a 33+% increase just recently.



The form CHAOS™ takes for us is unique at each carrier. Where an intermittent strike against a few flights might work best at one airline, an all-out strike for a day or a week might be the best tactic somewhere else. One of the most powerful aspects of the CHAOS™ strategy is our ability to adapt it to the specific facts of our company and campaign- keeping airline executives off balance with the element of surprise and taking advantage of weakness in the company's strategy.

Federal Court Rules CHAOS™ Legal

Our very first CHAOS™ campaign was at Alaska Airlines. As that campaign gained momentum, twenty- four Flight Attendants struck seven flights targeted by AFA over a period of nine months, with no advance warning. The CHAOS™ strikers persisted despite threats, discipline and illegal suspensions. Faced with management's threat to fire the next striker, AFA won an injunction in federal court, including an order to reinstate – with full back pay – those strikers who remained on suspension. The court upheld the Union's legal right to implement intermittent strikes citing protection under the Railway Labor Act. The CHAOS™ strategy had won protection under the law.

Two weeks after the court ruled, and on the eve of another wave of CHAOS™, Alaska Airlines management capitulated and signed a new contract with AFA via fax machine. Under the agreement, Flight Attendants won top-of-the-industry pay; some received as much as a 60% pay increase. At Alaska, Flight Attendants won top-of-the-industry pay.

CHAOS™ Revisited

After CHAOS™ proved so successful at Alaska Airlines, AFA Flight Attendants have used this strategy at other airlines. At America West in 1999 and at US Airways in 2000 the threat of CHAOS™ was enough to help win contract settlements.

At Midwest Airlines the Flight Attendants won a strong first contract just weeks after the end of the cooling-off period. CHAOS™ succeeded there even before a single flight was struck.

Lessons of CHAOS™



CHAOS™ works because it is creative, taking advantage of our strengths and management's weaknesses to maximize our impact and minimize our risk.



CHAOS™ works because it appeals directly to the passengers' self-interests. Traditional strikes and picket lines are often resented or ignored by the public. By contrast, passengers learn quickly from media coverage of CHAOS™ that their flight might not depart, or it might not get them home. That element of surprise forces them to alter their travel plans once CHAOS™ begins.



CHAOS™ works because of our solidarity and the support we receive from our Union and from our siblings throughout the labor movement.



CHAOS™ works because it can be adapted to any situation. Intermittent strikes are just one form of CHAOS™. An all-out strike might work better in some situations. But CHAOS™ always brings an element of surprise that is not part of traditional strikes. That element of surprise makes it more powerful, and keeps management from developing an effective strategy to counter CHAOS™. Our ultimate strategy is limited only by our creativity and our willingness to do whatever it takes.



Why A Strike Vote?

A Strong Strike Vote

A strong strike vote sends a clear message. It says that we are 100% committed to the fight for the contract we deserve and have earned. Conversely, a weak vote sends the opposite message. Which message do you want to send to management?

What a Strike Vote Means

A Strike Vote Authorization does not mean a strike will happen. Under the RLA, a strike would be illegal unless sanctioned by the NMB. A successful strike vote sends a powerful message to management that the Flight Attendants stand behind their bargaining team. That show of solidarity combined with picketing, public outreach, and other actions result in increased pressure on management to come to the bargaining table with proposals that recognize our worth.

High Turnout is Essential

High turnout demonstrates unity and engagement. A strong "YES" vote of the membership alerts the media, government officials, and the flying public, that a major dispute is brewing and our concerns must be dealt with. Combined with our actions, it creates a powerful contract campaign.

The screenshot shows a mobile app interface with a status bar at the top displaying the time 12:27, signal strength, and battery level. The app title is 'Flight Schedule Statistics'. Below the title, there is a dropdown menu set to 'Last 30 days'. The main content area displays two statistics: 'Block Hours' with a value of '29:05' and 'Duty Hours' with a value of '230:20'. Both values are in red. Below 'Block Hours', there is a small text label 'Incl. SIM hours'.

Flight Schedule Statistics	
Last 30 days	
Block Hours	29:05
Incl. SIM hours	
Duty Hours	230:20

Let's break it down, this person was paid \$7.91 an hour or was paid for about 13% of the time worked.

Other AFA Members With A Strong Strike Vote

→ **PSA**

Took a strike vote, requested a proffer and reached an agreement before proffer was granted. Agreement ratified.

→ **Spirit**

Took a strike vote and requested a release to strike from the NMB. The request was denied, however with a renewed threat of a strike vote and two of management's offers voted down, a TA was reached with significant improvements and ratified by a high percentage.

→ **Mesa**

Facing years of stalled negotiations, Mesa Flight Attendants voted to strike in March 2017. Mesa Flight Attendants went back to the bargaining table with the full support of AFA-CWA and the entire labor movement. After months of pressure tactics, including leafletting of passengers of United and American Airlines, Mesa Flight Attendants reached an agreement which was ratified in September 2017 and included major improvements in pay and work rules.

→ **Piedmont**

Took a strike vote in October 2021. 100% voted FOR. Reached an agreement shortly afterwards.

→ **US Airways**

Took a strike vote, requested a proffer, received a proffer, went through the 30-day cooling off period, reached an agreement after extending the end of the 30-day cooling off period by a couple of hours. Agreement ratified.

→ **Alaska Airlines**

Took a strike vote in 1993, requested a proffer, received a proffer, went through the 30-day cooling off period, did not reach an agreement. Company imposed work rules. AFA threatened and implemented a series of CHAOS™ strikes and achieved significant pay and work rule improvements. New Agreement ratified overwhelmingly.

→ **Frontier Airlines**

Took a strike vote in 2018 and, with 99% voting FOR a strike, soon after reached an agreement on significant wage and work-rule improvements.

→ **Hawaiian Airlines**

After 4 years of stalled talks, took a Strike Vote in 2019 and 99.9% of Flight Attendants voted FOR. Soon after, reached an Agreement that still sets industry top wages and standards.

→ **Air Wisconsin**

Took a strike vote in 2024 and, with 99% voting FOR a strike.

Strike Vote FAQs

Why are we taking a strike vote?

We need and deserve a fair contract. Management's economic offers have been a slap in the face. We must demonstrate that Omni Air Flight Attendants stand in solidarity and support our Negotiating Committee. A strike vote is the best way to tell management what we think of their offers.

Can we strike right away if members vote for it?

No. Taking a strike vote does not mean that we are able to strike right away. Under the Railway Labor Act, which governs negotiations in the airline industry, airline employees are not free to strike until released by the National Mediation Board. We have not been released nor have we yet requested a release to strike.



Will the NMB release us to a 30-day-cooling off period and give us the right to strike if management fails to reach an agreement with us?

We cannot answer this question with a simple yes or no. The National Mediation Board (NMB) certainly could release us if it determined that we were at impasse. It could also “recess” our negotiations, meaning that the mediator schedules no further sessions until one or both parties agrees to make significant movement. We don’t want that to happen. To get to a release (or better yet, to get management to make a fair offer), we need to show the NMB that we are unified and that we will do what it takes to get an agreement we can ratify.



Assuming we vote for a strike, what would have to happen before we could strike?

The following steps would have to be exhausted before a strike could occur:

- The NMB would continue to schedule mediation dates. We’re still in mediation.
- Either the union or management could request a Proffer of Arbitration.
- The NMB would decide whether to issue a Proffer of Arbitration or continue mediation sessions, or recess the parties.
- If the NMB issues a Proffer of Arbitration and one or both parties reject a Proffer of Arbitration, then the NMB would “release” the the parties into a 30-day cooling-off period, followed by “Self-Help.”

A Proffer of Arbitration means that an outside arbitrator would decide all outstanding issues. AFA has never accepted a proffer of arbitration because of the loss of control.



By voting yes, does this mean I will be going on strike?

As we have stated above, there are many steps before we actually strike and the vast majority of strike votes result in a successful agreement prior to even striking.



What if the company threatens to discipline Flight Attendants for striking?

AFA has a long history of defending our right to strike. If the company were to take action against any Flight Attendants for participating in CHAOS™, AFA lawyers would immediately be in Federal Court to enjoin the company and get full back pay for the Flight Attendants. At Alaska Airlines, all striking Flight Attendants were returned to work with back pay. At other carriers, the threat of CHAOS™ proved so successful we were able to reach agreements before ever striking a flight.

Voting FAQs

Am I Eligible To Vote in an Election?

- Eligibility to vote will be determined prior to the ballot mailing. This Strike Vote booklet and balloting instructions will be provided to all Members eligible to vote, including Members who have the opportunity to become eligible during the voting process.
- All active AFA Members in good standing (dues current, active AFA Member) are eligible to vote. Members ineligible due to non-payment of dues will be notified when attempting to vote and directed to the AFA Membership Department to become current in order to vote.
- Inactive Members (Unpaid Leaves of Absence of more than 3 months, etc.) may choose to “leave and remain active” to continue payment of dues during the leave in order to be eligible to vote. Contact the AFA Ballot Help Line at (844) 232-2228, extension 2, to complete the process to “leave and remain active.”
- New Flight Attendants who are scheduled to become a dues paying AFA Member (at least four months of flying) before the ballot closes will be able to vote during the entire period the ballot is open.
- Flight Attendants who have been here fewer than four months are not eligible to vote. We encourage Flight Attendants in this situation to remain informed, ask questions and participate in our Union. This is about the future of *all* Omni Air Flight Attendants.



How can I be sure that my vote is protected?

AFA is committed to providing the most secure and effective means for our members to vote. We do this by contracting with Votenet Solutions Inc., the leading provider of secure on- demand voting and balloting software and telephone voting for organizations including unions, membership associations, trade associations, and many others. Votenet routinely goes through highly sophisticated vulnerability and penetration assessments to ensure that malicious scripts and hackers can't interfere with your vote.

Electronic balloting is simple and effective. It can be done over the phone or on-line through a computer. As long as you are an active member in good standing, your completed electronic vote will be counted.



How will I know that my vote has actually been cast?

You will be issued a confirmation code. If you are voting over the phone, you may copy down the confirmation code for your records. If you are voting online, you may print the confirmation screen containing your code for your records.



Can anyone else see how I voted?

No, no one has access to how you voted. Once you have cast your ballot it is sealed and cannot be viewed by anyone, including AFA.



Can I change my vote if I have already voted?

No. Once you hit "submit," your vote is cast and you cannot re- vote.



Am I eligible to vote if I am on furlough or a leave status?

All active AFA Members in good standing are considered eligible voters. "Active" means paying dues. The AFA Constitution and Bylaws provides that any Flight Attendant on an inactive status (voluntary furlough, leave of absence, etc.) may keep her/his AFA Membership active. In order to exercise this option, a Flight Attendant may choose to place herself/himself on a "Leave and Remain Active" status with AFA. Contact the AFA Membership Services Department at (844) 232-2228, extension 2, if you would like to use this option.



Can an Apprentice Member on probation vote?

Flight Attendants cannot become AFA members until they have four months of service following their IOE. In short, as long as you have enough months of service, you may become a member even if you are on probation. If you have less than four months of service, you cannot vote. We encourage Flight Attendants in this situation to remain informed, ask questions and participate in our union. This is about the future of all Omni Air Flight Attendants.



Do probationary Flight Attendants have the right to strike?

Yes. In the event of an actual strike, probationary Flight Attendants have the same legal rights as everyone else and the full protection of the union. We encourage all members to support our newest flying partners – they are the future of our union and our careers. Let's be sure they know how to get accurate information from our union and that they have the support and solidarity of all of their flying partners. Even though a Flight Attendant is on probation, the Company cannot legally discipline a probationary for voting to strike or for participating in a legal CHAOS™ strike.

2024 Strike Vote Voting Guide



Steps to Vote by Internet

1. Go to afacwa.org/elections and choose "Click Here to VOTE"
2. Enter your activation code
3. Write down your username
4. Create, confirm and write down your password (8-number minimum)
5. Follow the prompts to cast your vote
6. Print your confirmation



Steps to Vote by Telephone

1. Dial (888) 488-7288
2. Enter your activation code
3. Write down your username
4. Create, confirm and write down your password (4-number minimum)
5. Follow the prompts to cast your vote
6. Write down your confirmation number



Important Voting Notes

- Remember, once your vote is cast, **you cannot change it**. Get all of your questions answered before you cast your vote.
- If you need a **new activation code**, you can request one at afacwa.org/elections.
- **For technical assistance**, you can call the Ballot Help Line at (844) 232-2228, extension 2. The Ballot Help Line is open weekdays (Monday-Friday) from 9:30 AM to 5 PM ET.

For more information, visit
afaomni.org