



The Union of  
Southwest Airlines Flight Attendants  
**TWU LOCAL 556**

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TWU Local 556 Executive Board  
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Gary Kelly, CEO  
Southwest Airlines  
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Gary:

We have continued to fly in the midst of the most deadly pandemic in 100 years. We have served with smiles behind the masks we wear to save our lives. We have been there for our Customers -- sometimes over and above being there for our own families. We have rolled with changes, pitched in to buoy our Co-hearts, and dealt with untenable working conditions. Many of us have even left the jobs we loved because the Company asked for our help. The rest of us work in unrealistic conditions to weather this storm.

But today, we write to tell you that we have given all we have left to give. Flight Attendants are weary, exhausted, frustrated and forgotten. Some of us – far too many of us – are sick. Many of us are making choices that can have grave impact to our jobs, our Customers and our Company. And all of us are trying to keep the jobs we love, keep our Customers happy, and keep our carrier in the air.

This TWU Local 556 Executive Board, on behalf of the Members of TWU Local 556, the Union of Southwest Airlines Flight Attendants, has one thing left to say:

**NO WAY, SWA.**

The circumstances we are forced to endure are NO WAY to treat the best Flight Attendants in the industry, the face of our Company and the front-line safety professionals whose primary goal is the safety of our Customers.

We recognize that this pandemic has created hardships for professionals across our Company, and we hold hands with our Brothers and Sisters who are also experiencing undue burden. The Company has previously stated that it sympathizes with the plight of Flight Attendants, but despite many months of meetings and requests, the small actions we have seen on the part of Southwest Airlines have not helped to solve this issue, the size of which you and your teams may have underestimated. **NO WAY, SWA.**

Here are the actions Southwest Airlines *can and should take in short order* to help its Flight Attendants do their jobs to protect the safety of our Customers:

1. **Immediately terminate the Company's use of Emergency Sick Call Procedures.** These procedures were never meant to be used as a stop-gap for poor operational planning. They were never intended to be used during a pandemic. Our Union has offered a variety of suggestions to help mitigate the damage that your repeated and incorrect use of ESCP has caused our Members. In monitoring available Open Time and VJA offerings, we find that, at the time of this writing, there is NO VJA being offered in any base. Additionally, we are unaware of any Supervisors currently flying, and we know of no JA being enacted. Management is not exhausting all measures within its control to mitigate the impact on the operation, and that we see as an intentional disregard of the parameters set forth in the Helburn ruling. And, despite what the Company has said to the media: This is NOT a sick call issue. This is an understaffing issue, an operational issue, a pandemic issue. This is not an issue that subjecting our Flight Attendants to a misuse of the ESCP will fix.
2. **Stop adding additional pairings into the system.** Our operation cannot support additional business until we have the crews and planes to SAFELY fly it. Currently, the Company has decided to compound the problems faced by an already stretched-thin workgroup by adding 720-plus pairings to our Open Time in September. We are adamant about the impact this will have on our Members and the operation.
3. **End the abusive nature of extended duty days and reschedules.** When we come to work, we need to be able to work the pairing we checked in for. Constant rescheduling makes no sense, puts undue stress on our Flight Attendants and poses great inefficiencies to the operation. The absurdly extended duty days we are forced to work not only put us at more risk for illness and infection, but also are a threat to Customers by demanding that beleaguered Flight Attendants do "just one more" 18-hour duty day.
4. **Improve our working conditions.** No food and no rest is no way to treat the best. From lack of transportation to lack of hotels accommodations, our Flight Attendants sometimes resort to sleeping in the airports, hungry and tired. Allow us to go home when we were scheduled. Make transportation available. Get food to us in airports and on layovers, even if it has to be delivered to the plane or room. Find hotels where we can lay our heads.
5. **Protect us—and help us protect ourselves.** The skyrocketing number of air rage incidents are not just sensational stories; they are well-reported versions of the aggressions lived every day by Flight Attendants. Give Flight Attendants the benefit of the doubt when investigating air rage incidents. Stand by us, trust our word, and collaborate with other carriers to show collective force. Help us protect ourselves with paid time off to attend the TSA Crew Member self-defense training so we may be asset to ourselves and others in these difficult times.

For months, we have sounded the alarm on behalf of our Members. We have been asked to work through a myriad of unacceptable circumstances: lack of food, accommodation and transportation challenges, inconsistency in policies, and knowing that when we report for duty we are subject to being extended well into our days off. We have experienced technology failures, severe understaffing and operational failures that are completely out of our control, yet we suffer the sometimes violent frustration of our customers as the face of Southwest Airlines.

We need support in *any and every* way possible.

The pervasive sentiment in our Membership is that there is no interest in protecting the well-being of the single most Customer-facing department in this Company. We refuse to continue to be treated like our safety and our ability to perform our duties is an afterthought. Our Members are at a breaking point and we believe now more than ever the Company must work with us to solve issues for our Members and for the operation of our Company. **THERE IS A WAY, SWA.**

Regards,

TWU Local 556 Executive Board

cc: TWU Local 556 Membership