



Fast Fact Friday

Time Away Program (TAP)

Friday, July 11, 2025

Q1: “What is the Time Away Program (TAP)?”

TAP was first introduced to our workgroup during the MAX grounding as a way to regulate over-staffing (for the flying at that time) and avoid potential furloughs. Our Pink Contract incorporated the TAP in Article 10.4. This voluntary time-off program allows for Flight Attendants to bid for and be awarded multiple months of no scheduled flying without pay. TAP will be offered and awarded prior to Primary Bidding and does not prohibit Inflight Crew Planning from offering MRT, DRT, and/or SDRT.

In our Pink Contract, the TAP can be offered for two (2) or three (3) month increments. The Time Away Program (TAP) Letter of Agreement allows Southwest Inflight Crew Planning to offer the TAP for a single bid month during the effective bid months of September 2025 through February 2026.

Q2: “When and how do I bid for the TAP?”

Bidding for a TAP slot will take place prior to Primary Bidding for the month it is being offered. Currently, a Flight Attendant wishing to bid for a TAP slot will use the link sent in the announcement communication via your company email (wnco).

Example: The September 2025 TAP announcement was sent on Friday, July 11, 2025. Bids will close on Thursday, July 17, 2025, and be awarded on Friday, July 18, 2025. All times are Noon CT. If awarded a TAP slot for September 2025, the Flight Attendant will not participate in Primary Bidding for that bid month, which begins on August 2, 2025, at Noon CT.

Q3: “Can I pick up trips or Reserve blocks during a month that I’ve been awarded Time Away to supplement my income?”

No. While on Time Away, you are not allowed to pick up additional flying. The only exception would be in extraordinary circumstances, where Southwest Airlines and TWU Local 556 could agree to allow for Flight Attendants on Time Away to pick up assignments in order to protect the operation and staff uncovered flying.

Q4: “Does TAP affect my quarterly record improvement?”

It does not. When awarded a TAP slot, you are still considered on “active” status, which does not disqualify you from any of the applicable record improvement options in Article 32.7 (Perfect Attendance During a Quarter, No Chargeable Occurrences During a Quarter, Fourth Quarter Record Improvement Bonus, and December Record Improvement Bonus).

Fast Fact Friday

Monthly Release Time (MRT)

Q5: “Will my non-revenue travel benefits be impacted if I’m awarded Time Away?”

Nope! Travel benefits for you, your eligible travelers, and Guest Pass users will have no restrictions. This included non-revenue travel on Southwest Airlines, the use of our Cabin Seat Agreement, or travel on other carriers via myIDtravel.

BONUS Question: “Can I be awarded Time Away if I’m on probation?”

Unfortunately, if you are on probation for the Time Away bid period, TAP cannot be awarded unless the language in Article 18 - Reduction in Force is in play. If your “off probation” date is prior to the start of the Time Away bid period, you would be eligible.

Example 1: Your off-probation date is August 29, 2025. You would be eligible for September 2025 Time Away.

Example 2: Your off-probation date is September 2, 2025. You would not be eligible for September 2025 Time Away.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Reduction in Force (Article 18) is not applicable to the voluntary time-off programs being offered at the time of this communication being published.

