

ASSOCIATION OF FLIGHT ATTENDANTS-CWA, AFL-CIO

WELCOME TO OUR FLIGHT ATTENDANT UNION



We Are Aviation's First Responders

Your
AFA

“Our union is 100 percent focused on Flight Attendants.”

“Whether I’m working a trip or on a day off with my family, it’s great to know my Flight Attendant union is working 24/7 for me, my family and my profession. I am proud to be a part of AFA.”

– Kim Burckhalter, United



“The professional staff who assist our union are invaluable, but I really appreciate that our union’s leaders are all Flight Attendants. Whether it’s at the bargaining table, on Capitol Hill or in the media, we have representatives who understand what it’s like to be a Flight Attendant.”

– Janet Sheets, Endeavor Air

**Your union is with
you every takeoff and
landing**

[illegible]

Welcome from AFA's International President



Dear Flight Attendants,

A few brave women pioneered our Flight Attendant career in 1945, and the tradition of excellence they initiated is alive and well today. In the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA (AFA) you have a voice and a union focused on your career as a Flight Attendant. From reserve to retirement, every member is important in our union – welcome to AFA.

When you join AFA you are joining hands with Flight Attendants throughout the industry. Our membership includes Flight Attendants working at mainline, regional, low cost, niche and charter airlines. We understand that if airline management is able to lower standards for our career anywhere it is a threat to our careers everywhere. We work together in our union to unify and amplify our voices and lift the standards for all of us.

AFA is recognized as the voice for Flight Attendants on Capitol Hill and in the media all over the world, and our contracts have led the industry for years. Our union understands better than any other how to negotiate Flight Attendant contracts, enforce them on a daily basis and provide Flight Attendants the kind of support we need daily in our unique work lives. In AFA, you can expect negotiations based on what you want and need. Job protections, schedule flexibility, benefits, pay protections – it's all important, so you decide what you want your contract to look like. Our union will be responsive to your needs and we will champion your issues.

The vision and high standards of Flight Attendants have led our union to develop additional resources, like AFA EAP services, committees that address scheduling and hotel issues, a government affairs department that achieves legal benefits and improved regulations in our highly-regulated jobs, along with experts who drive safety, health and security policy. Recent advances of note include an AFA victory ensuring Flight Attendants access to family medical leave benefits (FMLA) according to the unique hours of our job. In 2012, we obtained Flight Attendant inclusion in the Known Crewmember alternate screening program and we succeeded in preventing a national security policy change that would have allowed knives in the passenger cabin for the first time since 9-11. In addition, AFA's continued advocacy has helped to ensure that Flight Attendants across the country begin to see occupational health and safety standards in the cabin enforced by OSHA.

Once you successfully navigate your initial months on the line we invite you to take a step forward and get involved in our Flight Attendant union, your Flight Attendant union. AFA is all of us and our union is successful when you actively engage in our many projects, programs and causes.

The airline industry is constantly changing, but our Flight Attendant union is the one constant you can count on. In our union, no one is left behind because we know through decades of experience that together we are better.

We welcome you to our Flight Attendant family and to our union.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Sara Nelson'.

Sara Nelson
AFA-CWA International President

Your **VOICE**

DEMOCRACY AT WORK



YOUR VOICE

Flight Attendants for Flight Attendants



No one knows your job and your issues like other Flight Attendants. That's why we believe in uniting in one union focused exclusively on Flight Attendants. We are a union of Flight Attendants, by Flight Attendants and for Flight Attendants.

In AFA, the Local Councils are the seat of power, where the union concentrates its resources. AFA knows your issues and works hard every day to promote the best standards for ALL Flight Attendants. AFA keeps our union where it belongs, in the hands of AFA members.

Flight Attendants hold every elected position. AFA's three international officers are current Flight Attendants: International President Sara Nelson is a United Flight Attendant, International Vice President Debora Sutor is an Envoy Air Flight Attendant and Secretary-Treasurer Kevin Creighan is a United Flight Attendant. The local leaders of the union, directly elected by AFA members in the same domicile or base, make up the highest governing bodies of the union.

Our union is organized to represent Flight Attendants only, autonomous on policy and directs 100 percent of our dues money to the issues that are important to Flight Attendants. We have the full support of the 700,000-member Communications Workers of America, and the millions of workers who join together through the AFL-CIO.

We encourage every Flight Attendant to become involved, to raise your voice and be an activist. Run for office. Tell us what you think. Your voice will resonate. In AFA, every Flight Attendant's voice counts.

AFA was the first professional organization to represent Flight Attendants, and it has grown with the passion and experience of its members, some 50,000 Flight Attendants at more than 18 airlines. Together we are better – a strong voice for our profession.

YOUR VOICE

Our Union Is Member-Driven



“AFA is our union and we’re so glad you are joining us. Wear your AFA pin proudly and always look out for each other. Speak out. Speak up. Be a part of making our union the best it can be.”

— Ricky Ramirez and Chelsea Whitworth,
United (pre-merger Continental)

We are all AFA

Our democratic process provides for direct member election of the Local Council presidents who represent us in each governing body of our union. Our representative democracy recognizes that not every member can or wants to be involved in every issue, while ensuring that the day-to-day decision-makers walk in your shoes and understand not only what it means to be a Flight Attendant, but also what the job is like at your airline and base. As in all forms of representative democracy, the voters (members) have the ultimate say. AFA is not an institution: it is all of us.

At Each Base/Domicile

All Flight Attendants working for the same airline and assigned to the same base or co-terminal form the Local Council. The president, vice president and secretary of each Council, elected by the members of that Local Council to a three-year term, form the Local Executive Council (LEC).

At Each Airline

All Local Council presidents from the same airline form a Master Executive Council (MEC). The MEC elects a president, vice president and secretary-treasurer for three-year terms, and handles contract enforcement, negotiations and coordinates other business affecting members at that airline.

All Airlines

The Board of Directors (BOD), the union’s highest governing body, consists of all AFA-CWA Local Council presidents from each airline. The BOD sets the priorities and policies of the union, determines the annual budget and oversees all union activities. The BOD elects and advises the International officers - the International president, vice president and secretary-treasurer - who serve four-year terms and administer union operations.

All MEC presidents make up the Executive Board, which interprets policy and carries out decisions of the Board of Directors.

YOUR VOICE

AFA Structure

Our AFA-CWA Constitution and Bylaws ensures a single Member has the power to bring forward ideas to change the course of our Union, to elect and hold accountable the leaders of our Union and to hold any position within of our leadership.

Flight Attendant (AFA-CWA Member), elects



Local Executive Council (LEC)

consisting of:

- ⇒ **Local Executive Council President (LECP)**
- ⇒ **Local Executive Vice President (LECV)**
- ⇒ **Secretary (LECS)**
- ⇒ **Council Representatives**

The leadership at the LEC is comprised of the Members' peers of that airline's Flight Attendants, in the same location or co-terminal. These are the people a Member goes to when there is a question, when needing assistance or when the Member wants to suggest change.



Master Executive Council (MEC)

consisting of:

- ⇒ **Local Executive Council President (LECP) from each local Council**

who elect:

- Master Executive Council President (MECP)**
- Master Executive Council Vice President (MECV)**
- Master Executive Council Secretary-Treasurer (MECST)**
- Master Executive Council Committees**

Note: An MEC President who is not also a Local Council President shall vote only in the event of a tie, otherwise MEC Officers and MEC Committees only have a vote as individual AFA-CWA Members in their Local Council, but do not play a voting role as Members of the MEC. The exception to this is a single Council airline, in which case the locally elected officers also serve as the MEC officers.



International Office

consisting of:

- ⇒ **International President**
- ⇒ **International Vice President**
- ⇒ **International Secretary-Treasurer**

elected by:

- ⇒ **The AFA-CWA Board of Directors**

consisting of:

Local Executive Council President (LECP) from nearly 60 Local Councils at over 18 airlines where AFA-CWA represents Flight Attendants.

**The International Office is also staffed with experts such as attorneys, professional negotiators, Congressional advocates, mental health professionals, communication specialists, a safety, health and security department, organizing and leadership development and training.*

Your PROFESSION

ADVOCACY



YOUR PROFESSION

A Strong Voice for Our Profession

For more than 70 years, AFA has represented Flight Attendants on the job, on Capitol Hill, before federal agencies and at the bargaining table. With AFA, you are guaranteed that your voice will be heard at every level of the union, and your interests will be represented with your employer and with government officials.

AFA engages members in this advocacy process, bringing Flight Attendants to Washington to speak directly with their members of Congress. When it comes to our profession, Flight Attendants are the experts that agencies and legislators seek out for guidance on issues related to our work.

AFA experts in the Government Affairs, Safety and Legal Departments also provide written and in-person testimony on issues important to us. As a result of our work together through our Flight Attendant union, we have achieved important improvements in our workplaces, and for our careers, benefiting every Flight Attendant, no matter what airline.

Flight Attendants in AFA worked together and essentially eliminated rampant, illegal discrimination around the industry, ending practices like mandatory retirement at age 32 and weight thresholds.

It was AFA that led the fight to demand single rooms on layovers. And it was AFA that took on the tobacco industry and ended smoking aboard the aircraft.

More recently, it has been AFA's leadership that made the Reciprocal Cabin Seat Agreement program commonplace in the industry, giving Flight Attendants options for getting to work. Our advocacy also resulted in correcting the Family Medical Leave Act to cover Flight Attendants, recognizing our unique work schedules. It was our work that led to Flight Attendant inclusion in TSA's Known Crewmember alternate screening program, recognizing our role as First Responders and aviation's last line of defense. And this year, AFA's relentless focus on workplace health and safety helped us achieve a 30-year battle for OSHA standards in the cabin. We achieve results by standing together, maximizing the power of Flight Attendants.



YOUR PROFESSION

We've Come a Long Way

From the early days of “Sky Girls” and stewardesses, the Flight Attendants of AFA have carved out a career as safety professionals, becoming the “go to” organization for information about Flight Attendants. As a result of our advocacy on Capitol Hill, and negotiations with our employers, we’ve won a lot of important legislation and work rules, including:

- Duty day and crew rest protections
- Minimum staffing on aircraft
- Elimination of height, age and gender restrictions
- Women’s right to lead Flight Attendant positions
- Domestic partner benefits
- Improved cabin safety, including floor-level exits and less flammability of aircraft
- Improved cabin air quality, including the ban on smoking
- Whistleblower protection
- Equal Access to Family and Medical Leave
- Defined OSHA standards in the cabin
- Known Crewmember (KCM) for Flight Attendants



“We came to work for the adventure but after a while it became clear that we wanted to make it our career. When we organized (what became AFA), we put ourselves on equal footing with the pilots. We were more than Sky Girls. We were partners in the cabin.”

—Ada Brown, AFA Founder



Your ISSUES

BARGAINING



YOUR ISSUES

Strengthening Our Profession Negotiating for Industry-Leading Contracts

AFA considers the whole Flight Attendant experience – your life away from work as well as on the job. We don't work a job with a typical eight-hour shift. That's why we've focused negotiating to provide you relief from an endless workday, time to rest, time to be yourself. It's the total compensation Package with pay protections that ensure you get your hourly rate more often, recognizing all of your time on duty and away from home.

Every member counts in AFA. Flight Attendants on reserve need attention on their issues too. We understand this because every member and leader of AFA knows what it's like to work as a Flight Attendant on reserve. AFA negotiates for all members – from reserve to retirement – and the priorities set by AFA members define our work at the negotiating table.

We have a team of professional negotiators who work with our Flight Attendant negotiating committee every step of the process. These professional negotiators have more experience with Flight Attendant contracts than any other negotiators in the industry. We bring experts to the process to ensure we have the best support for our negotiations. Our negotiating committees have access to financial analysts, economists, actuaries and researchers as necessary. And, in our Flight Attendant union we recognize that no one knows your contract like you do as you work with it every day. That's why Flight Attendants form the Negotiating Committee.



YOUR ISSUES

You Get to Decide

The Association of Flight Attendants is a truly democratic union, fully representing nearly 50,000 Flight Attendants. When it comes to negotiations, this means that *your* priorities will define what we try to achieve at the table.

AFA contracts do not all look the same because they reflect the unique desires of the members at each airline. Together we can achieve the best for all.



With AFA, negotiations are based on what you want and, you know what proposals are made at the negotiating table. We negotiate for flexibility on Flight Attendants' terms, not management's. Flight Attendants who understand and share your issues, are trained to negotiate and take that experience to the negotiating table, alongside AFA's professional negotiators. We conduct member surveys, take part in one-on-one discussions and work closely with your elected local leaders to ensure negotiations reflect what you want in your contract.

With AFA, you have the power to make your own determinations about what's valuable to you and your fellow Flight Attendants. And the entire process is transparent – so you remain involved throughout the negotiations.

The Flight Attendant Union Difference

We don't just wait for the next contract to address the issues that are important to you. We address your issues every day. Reciprocal Cabin Seat Agreements won by AFA are a good example of this. As airplanes throughout the country filled up and Flight Attendants had a harder time getting to work – AFA made it a priority to press the airlines for these agreements. The program comes at no cost to Flight Attendants.

Get Involved

Every three years we elect our local representatives. You elect your local AFA-CWA officers including your local president, vice president, secretary and council representatives. They share your airline and your base.

These are the people you go to when you have a question, when you need some assistance or when you want to suggest change. They could easily be you.



Committees

There is plenty of work to go around. Our union was built by passionate, hard working volunteers and we continue to operate with the work of volunteers throughout our union. Elected officers are not the only important positions in our union. We rely on the Volunteers who become experts in each of the areas that affect our jobs. For this reason, each AFA Master Executive Council and Local Council forms committees to address specific issue. Listed below are examples of some of the important committee work AFA-CWA activists are doing on behalf of members across many airlines:

- Scheduling Committee and Reserve Committee
- AFA Employee Assistance Program/Professional Standards Committee
- Air Safety, Health & Security Committee
- Communication Committee
- Government Affairs Committee
- Grievance Committee
- Hotels Committee
- Insurance & Benefits Committee
- Negotiations/Contract Interpretation Committee
- Member Mobilization Committee
- Uniform Committee

At some airlines, AFA committees have been set up to address issues specific to those members. Examples of this are:

- Payroll Committee
- LOD - Language of Destination Committee

Once you get your air legs, we encourage you to get involved. We welcome probationary Flight Attendant participation in our union. Just know that we support your first objective as a new Flight Attendant at our airline: learning the job, getting comfortable in it and leaving probation in the dust.

Your **AFA**

REPRESENTATION



YOUR AFA

The Flight Attendants' Union

Representation in our daily work lives makes all the difference. As a new hire, your contract is fully enforceable excluding the contract section as it applies to discipline. AFA provides support and will represent you from the beginning, but our union does not have access to the contract disciplinary process and protections that may be used to protect you from unfair discipline once you are off probation. Flight Attendants do not pay dues during probation, but new AFA members are required to pay a \$60 initiation fee in order to help defray the costs of enforcing your contract and providing other support locally.

AFA Expertise: the Difference in our Daily Work Lives

The AFA Grievance Committee enforces the contract and defends members against unfair practices by the company. AFA has a crew of legal experts 100 percent focused on protecting and advancing Flight Attendant careers. Your reports are critical to ensuring the Grievance Committee can do its work.

The Benefits Committee educates AFA members on their benefits, and addresses any discrepancies on a daily basis. Our Scheduling Committee scrutinizes the scheduling process and often works with management to resolve conflicts before they are in the operation. Our Hotel Committee inspects contract hotels to ensure we have lodging that is safe, clean, quiet and meets the standards of our contract. The Communication Committee ensures our union is transparent and educating members on all of the issues, so we can address them together.

In short, AFA looks out for you because you are AFA. You're involved in every aspect, as much as you want. We are Flight Attendants for Flight Attendants.

AFA members are supported by a team of experts in Washington, DC, who work full time on our Flight Attendant issues. With specialists in our Air, Safety, Health & Security Department, incisive writers, designers and technical experts in our Communications Department, seasoned activists directing the Government Affairs Department, and award-winning professionals coordinating our AFA EAP Program, AFA staff members are 100 percent focused on improving the lives of Flight Attendants; supporting the goals we set collectively as members of AFA.

AFA Government Affairs

The Government Affairs Department coordinates our efforts to gain new legislation and rulemaking. Flight Attendants work in one of the most heavily regulated industries in the U.S. – decisions that affect our daily lives are made in the halls of Congress and in government agencies. That's why AFA is there, to advocate for our profession, to keep you informed and to call you to action when our interests are at stake.

Some of our recent work in Washington, DC includes: keeping knives out of the passenger cabin, gaining recognition as First Responders; extending OSHA workplace protections to the aircraft cabin; cabin air quality and temperature standards; maintaining the ban on cell phone use on the aircraft; carry-on baggage limits; protections against Flight Attendant fatigue; and protecting our jobs from outsourcing.

Air Safety, Health & Security (ASHSD)

The AFA Safety, Health and Security Committee constantly works with the airline and federal officials on safety in our cabin for crewmembers and passengers. AFA's ASHSD is recognized world-wide for our expertise in promoting cabin health, safety and security as well as advancing recognition of Flight Attendants as safety professionals and First Responders. The Department promotes air safety and security in numerous venues including:

- A network of 105 Local Safety Committee chairs and members at each AFA carrier who receive training, information and support to address daily issues and reports from Flight Attendants.
- Evaluating Flight Attendant safety reports with the Federal Aviation Administration and the airlines to improve safety.
- Working with the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to improve airplane safety.
- Representing the Flight Attendant viewpoint in government and industry committees/meetings, monitoring and anticipating possible regulatory changes.
- On call 24/7 to respond in the event of an aircraft incident involving AFA members and serving as a party to National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigations of airline accidents.
- Working with individual members who have work-related illnesses or injuries to help them find proper care and get fair treatment.

More information is available on afacwa.org.



YOUR AFA

A Family of Flight Attendants

AFA EAP/Professional Standards

Flight Attendants are known for our caring nature, and through our AFA Employee Assistance Program (EAP)/Professional Standards Committee we get to take care of each other. **Call 1-800-424-2406 seven days a week for confidential assistance.**

AFA EAP is a confidential resource for members, their families and partners to deal with problems that could or are affecting their health or well-being. AFA EAP reminds Flight Attendants that assessing your well-being – physical and emotional – is part of the daily evaluation you have to make in order to meet your responsibilities as First Responders. These responsibilities require the ability to assess situations, remain alert, and respond in a moment with quickness and surety.

Through a network of over 200 specifically trained Flight Attendants, and overseen by our own staff of mental health professionals, AFA EAP provides three distinct but inter-related services: assessment, peer support and referral; professional standards including conflict resolution; and critical incident response.

When AFA EAP provides us with the help we need, Flight Attendants get better faster and reduce the amount of time we must spend away from work to deal with problems. The Committee can actually quantify that the program protects 10-15 percent of a Flight Attendant's salary from the impact of personal health problems.

Since 1980, AFA EAP has helped thousands of Flight Attendants and their families. Bill Clinton awarded the program with the President's Volunteer Action Award and today our AFA EAP is one of the largest union-sponsored member assistance programs in the industry. Other unions and associations often seek to model their programs on what AFA has so successfully implemented.

With AFA, we have the means to address personal and professional issues in our family without the involvement of management – and that's what we have, a family of Flight Attendants.



"I have lots of opportunities to make my voice heard through AFA – through committee work or simply picking up the phone and calling our leaders. AFA is like a family."

— Adrienne Prince, Frontier Airlines

Our **SOLIDARITY**

Wear Your AFA Pin



AFA: The Strong Voice for Our Profession

Our **SOLIDARITY**

You have the legal right to wear your AFA pin today and for the rest of your career.

If you are told to take off your AFA pin, let that serve as a reminder of how powerful it is. Your AFA pin stands for:

- Flight Attendants throughout the industry standing together to defend and advance our profession.
- No matter which airline we fly for, together we are aviation's First Responders.
- Flight Attendants who know we have rights on the job and the world's largest Flight Attendant union in the world to enforce them.
- Unity: 50,000 of us share our careers and our union. We are never alone.
- The leading advocate for safety, health and security in the cabin for passengers and crew alike.
- The union that supports our airlines and a healthy aviation industry - and we expect to be full partners in the benefits that creates.
- Compassion. Wearing our AFA pin says to our fellow crewmembers: "I care about you."
- A strong voice for our profession.

WELCOME!

Flight Attendants for Flight Attendants



The Association of Flight Attendants-CWA

The Strong Voice for Our Profession



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AFA
The Strong Voice for Our Profession

