



# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION LOCAL 555

REPRESENTING THE RAMP, OPERATIONS, PROVISIONING, AND FREIGHT AGENTS OF SOUTHWEST AIRLINES  
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January 6, 2025

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Brothers and Sisters,

Upon hearing that the Company intends to implement "Unanticipated Absenteeism Procedures" to TWU Local 555 Ramp Agents in DEN on January 5, 2025, we wanted to address previous attempts by the Company to breach our contractual rights agreed upon by the Union and the Company in Article 23 - Attendance and reiterate that our position, which is affirmed by Arbitrator Richard Adelman, remains the same.

In the memorandum sent to DEN Ramp Agents by Vice President of Ground Operations Chris Johnson, it stated: *"Under the UAP, requests for reported personal absence (RPA) are currently allowed at this time. If the number or increase in requests for RPAs begin to adversely affect the operation, RPAs will then be necessarily disallowed...."*

**An arbitrator's decision on this is clear, and if the Company does deny RPAs, these violations will be grieved.**

The memo referenced above also states: *"Under the UAP, we hereby direct Employees alleging illness to provide a doctor's note on the first day returned to work....."*

**While not stated in the memo, our contractual rights guarantee that a TeleDoc note must be accepted IF the four contractual requirements of a note are met. If TeleDoc statements are denied, these violations will be grieved. In addition, the Union's position is that these required doctor's statements under the UAP in violation of contractual provisions do not count towards your allotment of doctor's statements for the year.**

**When the Company attempts to circumvent contractual language using "State of Operational Emergencies," or the newly renamed "Unanticipated Absenteeism Procedures," we will fight to ensure that our rights are being upheld.**

Previous attempts by the Company to do this have failed. In Group Grievance 1143 dated April 10, 2023, which can be read [here on our website](#), Arbitrator Adelman ruled:

*The Company violated the collective bargaining agreement when it issued the State of Operation Emergency for the Phoenix Airport on June 5, 2022, in which the Company declared that it "will deny requests for reported personal absence (RPA). Agents will be directed to work their regular shift. Failure to comply will be considered insubordination and will result in termination."*

*The Company shall refrain from issuing work directives that conflict with the terms of the Agreement unless the Company can establish that it has a good faith belief that the Union and/or the employees failed to fully cooperate by engaging in a sick-out or in some other concerted interference that adversely affects the Company's operations.*

The Company continues to operate at minimal staffing levels that put an undue burden and strain on our members. The razor-thin margin the Company continues to operate with, while still claiming the stations are "overstaffed" help create this problem of overworking our members to the breaking point.

While it is disappointing to see the Company threatening our members with the aforementioned contractual violations instead of reflecting on appropriate staffing levels during holiday periods, we are prepared to defend the rights of our members.

In Solidarity,

TWU 555 Local Executive Board