



November 4, 2021

My name is John Cronin. I'm a Captain flying 737's for United Airlines (UAL). I've been an airline pilot for almost 32 years. I served in the US Air Force Reserve working with the Civil Air Patrol and the USAF Academy admissions office. I'm a member of the Airline Pilots Association (ALPA), a worldwide pilot union.

In May of 2021, ALPA and United Airlines signed a Letter of Agreement (LOA) stating the decision to take a Covid vaccination shall remain a voluntary election on behalf of each individual pilot. This LOA also provided a means for either party to terminate the LOA. I thought I wouldn't have to worry about forced vaccinations.

On August 6, 2021, as I prepared to leave my house for work, I read that United Airlines CEO, Scott Kirby, announced a vaccine mandate for all employees. I was in total shock. My hands were shaking, my heart was racing, and I was short of breath. I went to work, flew the trip, and returned home that night. I could sleep only four hours. I flew the next day, returned home, and managed to sleep five hours. I then flew my third trip, and have not flown since.

I was so upset and angry, I cancelled my Monday classes teaching kids how to build an airplane. We've been on the local news and an article was written in a aviation publication. I'm not able to concentrate and still can't sleep well. I keep a small bowl of antacid next to my bed now. The stress is enormous. Unvaccinated pilots were grounded sometime in October with pay, but the other employees continue to work under difficult conditions.

I've never been threatened or bullied before. I felt as if UAL had a gun to my head. With all my years of service and all the knowledge and skills I acquired, which I could pass on to my co-pilots, I found it appalling they would be so willing, almost eager, to kick me into the gutter.

I requested a religious exemption. It was granted. I was under the impression they had to offer a reasonable accommodation. What they offered was unpaid personal leave. I would have no benefits and would have to pay the airlines portion of medical coverage. In short, it's unemployment. It's not a reasonable accommodation. For roughly 18 months, employees could work after a simple temperature check, which was eventually automated. I'm not sure why that's no longer an option.

Scott Kirby stated the mandatory vaccine is for our safety and the safety of others, yet he didn't make the vaccine a requirement for passengers, and the terminals and airplanes are full of them. I doesn't make sense to me, and it has not been explained why passengers are exempt from the requirement to be vaccinated. The pilot union (ALPA) refuses to defend their members from this unprecedented change to our work rules. It appears the other unions likewise are not defending their members.

Unvaccinated employees are now forced to wear a N95 or KN 95 mask at work (but does not apply to unvaccinated passengers for some reason). Other employees do not have to wear that mask, so it acts as a scarlet letter, identifying the unvaccinated. The N95, which is really a respirator, has caused problems. United Airlines refused to provide the OSHA and manufacturers' **required** medical examinations, training, or fit testing.

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“If not me, then who? If not now, then when?”

Many employees suffered severe harm from the respirator mandate. On the first day, an agent suffered a broken clavicle, torn rotator cuff, and damaged meniscus passing out from use. A baggage handler, in the extreme heat of the aircraft belly, passed out face-first on a moving belt loader. A flight attendant passed out in flight. An agent passed out on a desk requiring paramedic attention and an ambulance.

I eventually joined with other employees in a group called Airline Employees For Health Freedom (ae4hf.org). We support and encourage each other. Employees share their stories of stress, harassment, intimidation and injuries suffered for standing against the vaccine. Unvaccinated employees are literally crying at times. Unvaccinated employees are suffering greatly.

Airline Employees 4 Health Freedom ([AE4HF](http://www.AE4HF.org)) began as a group of faithful employees determined to exercise their rights to reasonable accommodations under Title VII and under the Americans with Disabilities Act to protect their medical autonomy. As the membership approached 4000 across many different airlines and other industries including Amtrak, 2000 of the members joined together to file a complaint against UAL in the 5<sup>th</sup> Circuit in Ft. Worth, TX.

I've attached photographs and documents.

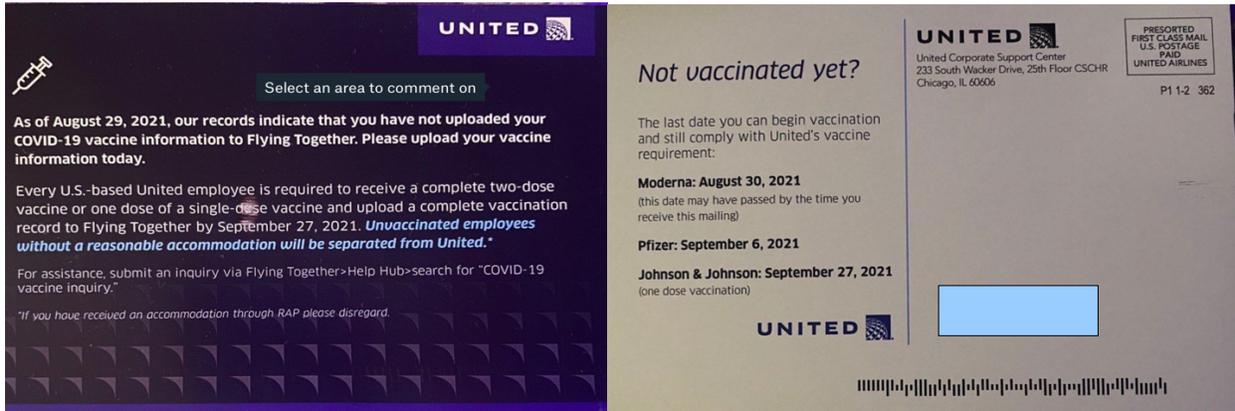
Most Respectfully,

John Cronin,  
Captain & Member  
Airline Employees 4 Health Freedom

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“If not me, then who? If not now, then when?”

Attachment 1: Postcard mailed to every unvaccinated employee in violation of their medical privacy



Front

Back

Attachment 2: Example of Breakroom Calendar sanctioned by UAL (Note "Termination Day 9/28)



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"If not me, then who? If not now, then when?"

Attachment 3: Announcement of requirement to vaccinate.

**Read Your Message**

Title	A message from Bryan - Taking another step to keep our employees safe
Sender	Flight Operations
Date	Aug 06 21 11:12 CT

Since the beginning of the pandemic, we've taken industry-leading action including becoming the first airline to mandate masks for employees, the first to introduce customer COVID-19 testing and contact tracing, and the first (and still only) to run our HEPA filtration systems during the entire boarding and deplaning process.

Today, Scott and Brett announced another important step we're taking to ensure your safety: **this fall, all U.S. based\* United employees will be required to receive a COVID-19 vaccine and upload their vaccination record to Flying Together.**

Here is a brief overview of how it will work. If you are:

- **Vaccinated and have not uploaded your vaccination card to Flying Together OR not yet vaccinated:** You will be required to upload a vaccine card showing you have received two doses of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine (or one dose of the J&J vaccine) no later than five weeks after the FDA has announced it has fully approved any COVID-19 vaccine OR no later than five weeks after Sept. 20, 2021, whichever comes first. This means that the latest potential deadline for meeting this requirement is Oct. 25, 2021.
- **Vaccinated and have uploaded your vaccination card to Flying Together:** No further action is needed.

LOA 21-02 offered incentive to pilots to encourage the vaccination and the good news is about 90% of our pilots have been vaccinated and uploaded their vaccination cards to Flying Together. Now that we've announced a vaccine requirement for all employees, we'll work with ALPA to encourage the small number of remaining pilots to get vaccinated.

I know many of you will have questions about this news and I ask that you visit Flying Together to read the complete letter with additional details (including FAQs) about this policy. Our HR teams will also be hosting a series of town halls next week to continue the conversation - those details will be provided soon.

All my best,  
Bryan

\*Including Guam and Puerto Rico

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Attachment 4: Religious Exemption approved.

## Approved Medical Accommodation for the COVID-19 Vaccine Mandate

\* Please respond within five full calendar days of the date of this notification. Select your choice below, then hit Submit. If you do not respond in this timeframe, we will consider you to have accepted the accommodation.

In reviewing these exemption submissions, we have taken into account the current rate of COVID-related illness in the U.S. - right now, COVID infections are up 20%, there are **close to 100,000 people in the hospital** and more than 1,000 people are dying from COVID every day. All these statistics apply almost exclusively to the unvaccinated.

**Your submission for a religious accommodation is approved. If you acknowledge the accommodation or do not reply within five calendar days after the date of this notification, and as you are in an operational customer-facing role,** you will be put on a personal leave of absence effective October 2, 2021. If you are currently on a leave, you will be put on temporary, unpaid personal leave once cleared to return from your current leave. Read more about personal leaves on [Help Hub](#).

This accommodation will be re-evaluated on an on-going basis for appropriateness given overall pandemic conditions. Once the pandemic meaningfully recedes, you will be welcomed back to the team on active status.

**If you withdraw your accommodation request,** you are required to get fully vaccinated within five weeks from your withdraw date and get your first shot by September 27. If you withdraw on or after September 21, you will need to receive your first vaccination within one week of the withdraw date, and complete vaccination within five weeks. You will also need to upload the documents into [My Info](#).

Please feel free to contact the Employee Service Center at (1-877-825-3729) if you have any questions.

Cancel

Save

Submit

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“If not me, then who? If not now, then when?”

## Attachment 5: Rules of unpaid personal leave (ULA).

# COVID-19 Vaccination: Religious Accommodations

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If you are offered a personal leave as part of an accommodation due to a deeply held religious belief, and you accept the accommodation or do nothing for 5 days after receiving the approved accommodation in Help Hub, the following outlines your benefits and privileges while on personal leave which will begin on October 2, 2021. If you are currently on leave, you will begin when you return from your current leave of absence:

- **Maximum duration of leave:** up to 72 months.
- **Vacation & Sick accruals:**
  - You'll keep the vacation and sick time you've already accrued while you're on the approved personal leave. If your leave starts after the first half of the month, you will earn vacation and sick accruals for that month. You won't accrue additional vacation and sick time for the rest of the leave.
- **Sick & Vacation time usage and payout:**
  - You cannot use sick leave or vacation time while out on personal leave.
  - You will not be paid out for sick leave upon separation.
- **Seniority:**
  - Longevity up to 3 years.
- **Travel:**
  - Pass travel for you or your eligible pass riders is not allowed while you're on unpaid personal leave.
- **Medical coverage:**
  - For the duration of your Personal Leave, you will be required to pay full premiums (both your portion and the Company's portion) for medical benefits.

## Attachment 6: N95/KN 95 masks and latest date to start ULA:

**JOHN CRONIN**

**Read Your Message**

Title	Correction to HR message about mask usage
Sender	Flight Operations
Date	Oct 22 21 1444 CT

You may have received an email message from HR Communications entitled "Your leave is delayed until October 26" that included a statement about wearing a N95 or KN95 mask in the workplace in error. This direction for such mask usage was intended for other work groups and does not apply to pilots.

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