

LAX Alert

Improving Safety, Security and Service Standards at Los Angeles International Airport

Aviation Safeguards Workers Become Latest Airline Service Workers to Win Union Recognition

On December 13, passenger service workers employed by Aviation Safeguards voted overwhelmingly to form a Union, thereby becoming the latest in a growing movement of airport workers fighting to win improved wages, benefits, and training. As a result of the vote, Aviation Safeguards formally recognized the workers' choice and will now begin bargaining with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Local 1877.

The victory not only comes on the heels of union recognition for Aviation Safeguards in Oakland International Airport and San Jose International Airport, but it also follows another successful unionization effort by workers at Aero Port Services (APS), a major contractor operating out of LAX.

Workers at Aviation Safeguards began pushing for a union early this year after years of low wages, inadequately funded health care, and lack of voice on the job. In late summer of this year, Aviation Safeguards agreed to a fair and non-disruptive process for workers to decide to join the union. With the card count by a neutral third party finding in favor of union representation, contract negotiations covering wages and working conditions will follow shortly.



Henry Watts, worker, Aviation Safeguards

"I've been a skycap for 20 years, and I've seen hassles and chaos for passengers get worse and worse," said Henry Watts, an Aviation Safeguards worker. "As long-time airport workers, we've got a lot of ideas of how things could be better, but no one listens to us. By joining Airport Workers United, we're going to have a stronger voice to improve both the experiences of the passengers and also the quality of our jobs."

Responsible Union Contractors at LAX

- Air Serv
- G2 Secure Staff
- One Source
- World Service
- Service Performance Corporation
- American Building Maintenance
- Lee's Maintenance Services

Recent Trends: NY Passes Passenger Bill of Rights

Momentum has been building throughout this year for a U.S. Passenger Bill of Rights, following several incidents of severe airline delays that have left some passengers stranded for hours while their planes sat on runways. In some cases, passengers were kept waiting for hours with no food or water, overflowing toilets and a lack of ventilation at John F. Kennedy International Airport.

Recognizing New York's position as a major international travel hub and the need to "adopt measures that will ease air travel for passengers," New York Governor Eliot Spitzer signed state legislation creating an airline passenger bill of rights, the first of its kind in the U.S.

The legislation requires that all airlines operating out of New York airports must provide passengers with food, water, fresh air, power, and working restrooms on any flight that has left the gate and been on the tarmac for more than three hours.

In addition, the legislation will also establish consumer protection guidelines, which will, among other things:

- Create a consumer bill of rights for airline passengers;
- Establish an office within the State of New York to oversee compliance of the bill of rights; and
- Mandate that all carriers provide consumers with notice of complaint contact information to be posted at all service desks.

Solutions need to take into account that "the airlines overload thousands of flights into hub airports at rush hours, causing massive delays and for passengers to be stranded for hours on end," said Kate Hanni, founder of the Coalition for an Airline Passengers' Bill of Rights. Passenger service workers at LAX repeatedly report that critical services are understaffed and insufficient to accommodate rushes of passengers.

Staffing levels for airline staff and contracted staff are directly related to their ability – or inability – to ensure quality, consistent passenger service. A passenger bill of rights is one important step towards ensuring safeguards of quality service in the airline industry.



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