



# Member Update

## NATCA and FAA Reach Agreement on "Safe Leave"

NATCA is excited to announce that we have reached agreement with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regarding the use of "safe leave" ("the Safe Leave MOU"). In accordance with the [Safe Leave MOU](#), NATCA bargaining unit employees (BUEs) may now use time off from work to keep themselves and their family members safe from and to recover from domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and related forms of abuse or harassment.

NATCA successfully initiated bargaining on this important issue in response to the Biden Administration's efforts to encourage federal agencies to support access to leave for federal employees. On Feb. 2, 2023, President Biden issued a Presidential Memorandum directing the Director of OPM to provide guidance regarding actions OPM and agencies may take to support federal employees' access to paid leave or leave without pay, for purposes related to seeking safety and recovering from domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. On May 15, 2024, OPM released a memorandum, "Maximizing Access to Leave to Seek Safety and Recover from Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, and Related Forms of Abuse or Harassment (Safe Leave)." This memorandum provided guidance advising agencies to provide enhanced support to federal workers seeking safety and recovering from domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and other related forms of abuse or harassment, including technological abuse.

This guidance was not mandatory for any agency, including the FAA. However, via these negotiations, NATCA secured a binding commitment from the FAA to support our BUEs in utilizing time off for safe leave purposes.

In accordance with the Safe Leave MOU, BUEs may utilize telework, flexible work schedules, and time off (including annual leave, sick leave, credit hours, court leave, excused absence, leave transfer, and leave without pay, as appropriate) for safe leave purposes. BUEs may utilize safe leave to assist themselves or a family member.

A BUE's credible statement that they are dealing with domestic or dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or related forms of abuse or harassment

should generally be sufficient to grant qualifying safe leave. BUEs should provide sufficient information in their leave request for their supervisors to know which type of leave is appropriate and in what order the BUE chooses to use available types of leave. However, under no circumstances will a BUE be required to contact law enforcement as a condition of accessing safe leave. In addition, a BUE may request leave or other time off through their union representative or Employee Assistance Program (EAP) coordinator if they are uncomfortable talking to their supervisor. Only in individual cases where the Agency has cause to believe that verification is necessary may the Agency ask the BUE to provide additional supporting information.

Please contact your [regional leadership](#) with further questions about the Safe Leave MOU.

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