



U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

Press Release

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Pilots and EEOC Reach Settlement with Frontier Airlines over Lactation and Pregnancy Policies

DENVER – Five pilots and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) have reached a settlement with Denver-based Frontier Airlines resolving EEOC charges filed in May 2018 and a lawsuit filed in December 2019 alleging that Frontier discriminates against pregnant and lactating employees. As part of the settlement, which does not admit any liability, the airline has agreed to several policy changes that will better address the needs of pregnant and lactating pilots.

Marking a critical step forward for gender equity in the airline industry, Frontier Airlines will be one of the first airlines permitting pilots to pump breastmilk in the cockpit during noncritical phases of the flight, enabling lactating pilots to continue working while maintaining the highest safety standards.

Additionally, Frontier Airlines agreed to update and clarify its policies relating to pregnancy and lactation accommodations, including agreements that:

- Comply with the existing union agreement that permits pregnant pilots to fly with a medical certification.
- Clarify its policy that it accommodates pilots unable to fly due to pregnancy or

lactation on the same terms that it accommodates pilots with other medical conditions rendering them unable to fly (including by providing medical leave or temporary ground assignments, if such assignments are offered by Frontier).

- Continue to permit pilots who are breastfeeding to drop to 50 hours of flight time per month.
- Maintain a list of airport lactation facilities, updated every 6 months, that is distributed on an internal website.

“Many companies purport to be family-friendly but fail to provide any support to employees who are pregnant or lactating. We’re so proud we could come to an agreement that will benefit pregnant and lactating workers now and into the future,” said Aditi Fruitwala, staff attorney for the ACLU’s Center for Liberty. “This settlement should serve as a strong message to employers – especially airline employers – that reasonable accommodations such as those agreed to by Frontier Airlines are good for workers, good for families, good for business, and required by the law. We’re hopeful this will inspire more change and stronger protections for workers across the airline industry.”

“We are proud to be at the forefront of accommodating the needs of pregnant and breastfeeding mothers in the airline industry,” said Jacalyn Peter, vice president for labor relations at Frontier Airlines. “Thanks in part to advances in wearable lactation technology, the parties were able to reach an amicable resolution of this case that also maintains our commitment to the highest safety standards.”

“Today’s settlement accomplishes a vital goal: ensuring that expectant and new mothers are treated with the fairness and respect they deserve,” said Jayme Jonat, partner at Holwell Shuster & Goldberg LLP and a member of the litigation team representing the pilots. “We are proud to have played a role in accomplishing that goal and participating in this groundbreaking litigation, which we hope will influence employer behavior throughout the airline industry and beyond.”

“Colorado law offers even stronger protections than federal law for pregnant and lactating workers in our state,” said Sara Neel, managing attorney for the ACLU of Colorado. “The ACLU of Colorado is proud this settlement will lead to Frontier Airlines providing necessary accommodations to pregnant and breastfeeding workers and putting families first.”

“Our clients took a huge risk by taking their claims public. After years of litigation,

they've helped effect a genuine change for themselves and future Frontier Airlines pilots, making the workplace better for working parents," said Juno Turner, litigation director at Towards Justice.

"The EEOC is very pleased that Frontier has agreed to resolve this matter in such a positive manner with important worker friendly policy changes," said Mary Jo O'Neill, regional attorney of the EEOC's Phoenix District Office. "We think Frontier will be a model in the industry. We also hope that other employers will learn from this and look for creative ways to accommodate pregnant and lactating workers. This is even more important now that the Pregnant Worker's Fairness Act went into effect June 27, 2023."

"This is more than civil rights, it's basic human rights," said Amy Burkholder, director of the EEOC's Denver Field Office. "By providing a place for nursing mothers to pump breast milk, Frontier Airlines ensures their employees are able to continue breastfeeding their children even after returning to work."

The 2019 lawsuit was filed by the ACLU, the ACLU of Colorado, Holwell Shuster & Goldberg LLP, and Towards Justice.

For more information about pregnancy discrimination, visit: [**https://www.eeoc.gov/pregnancy-discrimination**](https://www.eeoc.gov/pregnancy-discrimination).

For more information about the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, visit:

[**https://www.eeoc.gov/wysk/what-you-should-know-about-pregnant-workers-fairness-act**](https://www.eeoc.gov/wysk/what-you-should-know-about-pregnant-workers-fairness-act).

The EEOC advances opportunity in the workplace by enforcing federal laws prohibiting employment discrimination. More information is available at [**www.eeoc.gov**](http://www.eeoc.gov). Stay connected with the latest EEOC news by subscribing to our [**email updates**](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USEEOC/subscriber/new).