Junior Assignments (JA) and Extensions (EXT) – Explained

This FAQ Document was created by the AFA Compass Scheduling Committee. You can reference the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) Section 6, paragraphs I.2 & K.1-4 for the contract language that addresses JA’s and EXT’s.

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If you have ever been Junior Assigned (JA) or Extended (EXT) you know the feeling: disbelief, frustration, disappointment, anger, sadness, fatigue. Most of us would agree that nothing good comes from a JA or EXT and would like to keep them from ever happening. Without any control or input into the staffing levels at this airline, that is a nearly impossible task. All we can hope to do is ensure that when JA’s & EXT’s are necessary, it is done in compliance with the provisions of the collective bargaining agreement (CBA).

The purpose of this document is to address some of the most frequently asked questions about JA and EXT assignments. The second part of the guide will provide some useful tips to aid you in determining if you were JA/EXT legally. The following are actual occurrences that have been brought to AFA Compass’s attention.

FAQs:

Q. What is the difference between JA’s and EXT’s?

- JA’s can only occur if the assignment forces you to work a duty period on a day off.
- EXT’s occur if you are released in domicile prior to 0200 on a scheduled day off.

JA Example: You are on your last day of a 3-day trip. You started duty at 11:45 and are originally scheduled to be released from your trip back at base at 14:00 and the next day is your day off. Crew scheduling notifies you that you have been given a JA, and you must operate a leg to SAT, overnight in SAT into your day off, and operate from SAT back to base on your day off. This is a JA. Why? It is an assignment that includes a duty period on a day off.

EXT Example: You are on your last day of a 3-day trip. Your duty day started at 11:45 and are originally scheduled to be released from your trip back to base at 14:00, and the next day is your day off. Crew scheduling notifies you that you have been Extended, and you must operate a turn and will now be released back to base at 23:15. This is an EXT. Why? It is an assignment that includes an additional assignment of flights past your originally scheduled duty out time but does not include a duty period on a day off.

EXT becomes a JA Example: You are on your last day of a 3-day trip. Your duty day started at 11:45 and are originally scheduled to be released from your trip back to base at 14:00, and the next day is your
day off. Crew scheduling notifies you that you have been Extended, and you must operate a turn and will now be released back to base at 23:15. This EXT assignment is unexpectedly delayed by 3 hours and you will now be released back to base at 02:15. This is a JA. Why? It is an assignment that includes a duty period past 0200 on a day off.

**Q. Are all Reassignments/Reschedules a JA or EXT?**

**A.** No. Reassignment or Rescheduling is the adding or deleting of flights or assigning an FA to different flights within the footprint of the original duty start & end time of the trip. This could mean that in the middle of your 3-day trip a turn is added to end of day 2 that results in a reduced layover time; this is legal. A reassignment/reschedule is not paid at 150% but an FA will receive the greater of the pay and credit due for the originally scheduled trip or the pay and credit earned for the changed trip.

**Q. I was supposed to be done with my trip today, but I got stuck in SFO overnight due to bad weather or maintenance and now, crew scheduling has me on a deadhead flight back to my domicile tomorrow. That is my day off. Is this legal?**

**A.** Yes. Even though it is your day off, the company has an obligation to return you back to your domicile as soon as possible. This would be a JA because a deadhead is duty!

**Q. I got a JA after my trip and I know there are many Flight Attendants junior to me. Why didn’t Crew Scheduling JA them first?**

**A.** Section 6.K.2. of the contract states that crew scheduling must use the most junior, qualified and available Flight Attendant for the JA. It is possible that the Flight Attendants junior to you are either not legal, already on another assignment, or crew scheduling was unable to make positive contact with them. If this is the case, they are not considered as “available” for the JA.

**Q. Today is April 16th and I am starting a 3-day trip. I have 2 days off after this trip. I just received an ACARS message from Crew Scheduling saying I was going to be JA for a three-day trip starting on April 19th. Can they JA me 3 days in advance?**

**A.** No, all opetime must be available until 1200 central time the day prior to the trip (CBA 6.H.10). JA’s can only be assigned until after this time.

**Q. I was given a quick turn JA and when I got done with my last flight of the day, there were Ready Reserves in the crew lounge that are junior to me. Is this legal?**
A. First, this is not a JA as it is not an assignment on your day off. It is considered an EXT and EXT’s are not subject to the JA conditions in the CBA. It is important to remember that Ready Reserve is an assignment and therefore these Reserves would not be considered ‘available’. Also, the Ready Reserve may have been given an assignment and are just waiting to begin their outbound flight. However, seniority conditions apply per Section 21.E.1, and seniority does govern all aspects of Section 6 including EXT’s. This means that if you wish the Ready Reserve to take your EXT assignment and you take their Ready Reserve assignment, then that option should be available for you to choose. This type of ‘swap’ is not allowed under JA rules (CBA 6.K.1)

Q. I was extended at the last minute when I came in from my trip. Couldn’t crew scheduling have called a reserve from home to do this assignment?

A. Section 7.E. requires crew scheduling to provide Reserve Flight Attendants, a two-hour call-out period prior to check in time. If the flight became available at the last minute there may not have been enough time to provide a home Reserve with the required two-hour call-out period. In this instance, those home Reserves will be considered ‘unavailable’ for the assignment.

Q. I was given a JA on my day off tomorrow, but crew scheduling gave me the JA at 8:00 P.M. the night before. Can they do that? I mean they should have been able to find someone junior to me by the next day!

A. Yes, they can do this if it is done legally. The key here is to find out, per the contract, if the JA conditions were followed properly and find if there were more junior FA’s available. See the section below for tips on how to investigate this further.

Q. I was given a JA on one of my days off. Will the Company have to pay the day off back?

A. Please refer to Section 6.C.3.a & 7.B. The Company must give you a guaranteed day off (GDO) if they have scheduled you a JA assignment below your eleven (11) minimum days off in the bid month.

If you are owed a GDO:

Lineholder: Your owed GDO must be given in the current bid month.

Reserve: Your owed GDO can be given in the current or next bid month.

Please Note: If you have picked up trips on your days off and thereby willingly waived your 11 day off minimum guarantee, they do not owe you any guarantee. Example: You were awarded 11 days off and you pick up a 1-day trip on a day off taking you under 11 days off. By picking up this trip, you have waived your right to any off-day minimum.

Q. I was given a JA on one of my vacation days. Is that legal?
A. No, they cannot use your VAC days for a JA because a VAC day is not considered a ‘day off’.

Q. I’m not feeling well and called in sick more than 2 hours before my JA. Crew Scheduling told me that I couldn’t call in sick for my JA/EXT. Can they do this?

A. No. The Company cannot prohibit legitimate use of sick time. The Union does not advocate that any Flight Attendant abuse sick leave. However, if you are truly sick/exhausted/fatigued, you need to ask yourself if you are fit to fly and can safely perform your safety related duties while onboard the aircraft.

Q. Crew Scheduling called me at 2:00 A.M. on my overnight to notify me of a JA/EXT for the next day. I had already been in rest for six hours and only have 4 hours left before my show time, is this legal?

A. First, you are not obligated to answer any call from Crew Scheduling during rest. If you are on rest and need your rest DO NOT ANSWER. Per section 5.D, we must have FAR minimum rest on overnights. Interrupting your FAR required rest to give you a JA, EXT, OR a rescheduling assignment is not permitted under this provision of the contract or CFR’s.

Q. I’m on RSV and I’ve just finished a 5-day RSV work block and crew scheduling has given me a JA over my 2 days off. This JA will keep me working for more than 7 days in a row without 24 hours off in base. They said this is legal because one of my RSV days was on home reserve and that will count towards my rest. Is this correct?

A. NO! Home reserve, while it’s not active duty, it’s also not rest. Anytime there is a violation of our CFR’s you need to call a Union representative immediately and fill out an ASAP report so the FAA can be properly notified.

Q. Can I be given a JA/EXT that would schedule me to be on duty over fourteen (14) hours?

A. No. Section 5.C.1. states “A Flight Attendant shall not be scheduled to exceed fourteen hours (14:00) per duty period”.

Q. Can I be given a JA/EXT for an assignment that would require me to work seven days in a row with 24 hours rest at an outstation?

A. No. Section 5.F. states “A Flight Attendant will have at least twenty-four (24) hours off at her/his domicile in a seven (7) days.”
**Q.** If I have been given a JA/EXT and I find another Flight Attendant who is willing do the assignment, can I trade it?

**A.** Yes. Per section 6.H.10, you can trade with another Flight Attendant up to 2 hours prior to departure. You can submit the trade via the electronic trip trade system. If there is insufficient time to process the trade through automation, it will have to be manually submitted and approved by Crew Scheduling via email or call crew scheduling directly. **The traded trip is not paid at 150%**.

**Q.** What happens if I refuse to fly a JA/EXT?

**A.** AFA does not advocate that any flight attendant refuse to fly. If you do refuse to fly, you will more than likely be given a missed flight assignment or “MFA”. The Company considers an MFA an attendance occurrence. Attendance occurrences are addressed under the Company’s Dependability Policy.

**Q.** Crew Scheduling gave me a JA for the fourth time this month! Is this legal?

**A.** It is if you accept the assignment. Please look at Section 6.K.3. This limits the number of JA’s to no more than three (3) per bid period unless you agree otherwise.

**Q.** Crew Scheduling has given me a JA for a Reserve Assignment. Can they do this?

**A.** No. Section 6.K.1. prohibits this.

**Q.** I was Extended into an overnight on my day off. How long can Crew Scheduling keep me out before I can return to my domicile?

**A.** First, this is not an EXT, this is a JA. If the JA trip doesn’t return to base, Crew Scheduling can assign you the entire length of the trip. If the trip returns to base and there are more junior FA’s available to take the rest of the trip, then Crew Scheduling must comply with contract provisions found in section 6.K.

**Q.** Why can’t the Union file a grievance for all flight attendants about JA/EXT problems?

**A.** While the Union does have the ability to file MEC grievances on behalf of the entire group of Compass Flight Attendants, it would be nearly impossible to do so for most of the JA/EXT incidents as each one varies. We can file grievances on behalf of individuals that have proof that they have been given a JA/EXT illegally. Each case involves different dates, times, available flight attendants, etc. Therefore, it is usually necessary to look at each case individually and file separate grievances.
Q. Crew Scheduling called me and left me a voice mail on my day off saying I've been given a JA and I must call them back or self-notify. Do I have to call them back or self-notify?

A. No. Only call them back or self-notify if you want the assignment. Otherwise, please don’t answer the phone on your days off. If you do, you’ve been notified and are obligated to take the assignment and could be subject to disciplinary action if you refuse the JA.

Q. I’m a lineholder, I just finished my trip and I have a voice mail from crew scheduling giving me a JA/EXT. Do I have to call them back?

A. No. Our phones are not required items and they are not Company property. You are under no obligation to answer your phone, respond to voice mail, or to check IOCC and self-notify.

Q. I’m on RSV, I’ve just finished my trip early and it’s my last day. I don’t want to be given a JA/EXT. Do I have to call crew scheduling to be released?

A. Yes. This is contractual: Section 7.I. A Reserve must call crew scheduling after the completion of any assignment other than Ready Reserve (7.G.4).

Q. I was just told by my CA that I’ve been given a JA. The ACARS message intended for me said to call crew scheduling, My phone died, so do I have to call them?

A. Yes. You can use a phone in the crew room if yours isn’t available. ACARS messages are considered positive contact as well as being told a message from any ‘company representative’ and you are obligated to call crew scheduling or self-notify to gain information of the assignment once your flight duties are complete.

Q. I landed and the Gate Agent told me that crew scheduling called, and I’ve been given another assignment to work the flight back to base. There is another crew here to work this flight back to base and I’m not needed. Can I just go to the hotel with the rest of my crew?

A. No. The Gate Agent should have just told you to ‘call crew scheduling’ rather than verbally give you the assignment. It turns out that crew scheduling didn’t assign you to work the next flight back to base, but the one after. Now you’ve missed it and will receive an MFA because you were notified of a change in assignment by a ‘company representative’ and you are now responsible for the adjustment even if the Gate Agent gave you the wrong information. If any company representative tells you to call crew scheduling, you’ve been positively contacted and are obligated to contact crew scheduling.
How Can the Company Legally Contact You?

**Q.** What methods can crew scheduling use to positively contact me for a JA/EXT?

**A.** We get asked this question a lot! There are 4 ways:

**Controllable:**

1. A telephone call. Unless you are on Reserve, you are not obligated to answer your phone or respond to voice mail. If you answer your phone or call crew scheduling back, this is positive contact and you are now obligated for any notified assignment.
2. Self-notification on IOCC. Again, you are not obligated to check IOCC or self-notify. If you do self-notify, this is positive contact.

**Uncontrollable:**

3. An ACARS message. This will be relayed to you from the flight deck and is positive contact.
4. Verbal message from a ‘company representative’. A ‘company representative’ is anyone who is employed, contracted or affiliated with the Company. This could include but is not limited to an employee of Compass, Delta, American, or staff at a layover hotel. This type of verbal message is considered positive contact and you are obligated to contact crew scheduling or self-notify.

**Q.** How much will I get paid for this JA/EXT?

**A.** Both get paid at 150%. However, an EXT is paid only at 150% for actual hours flown beyond the originally scheduled duty out time (CBA 6.I.2.b). A JA is paid 150% for the entire trip. This means that if the JA is added to the end of an originally scheduled trip without in base rest in between the original trip and the added JA, then the entire trip will be paid at 150% (CBA.6.K.4).

Researching Your Situation

**Research Aids**

If you believe that you may have been given a JA/EXT illegally, what can you do? Research! It takes a lot of time to investigate, but it can be done. Your Union representatives need your help. It isn’t enough to think or assume that you have been given a JA/EXT illegally, you must prove it. We will be able to get relief for Flight Attendants who have been given an illegal JA/EXT when there is proof that there were junior, legal and available Flight Attendants to do the assignment. The following is a list of ideas that can assist you in your research:

1. Section 6.J: Flight Attendants who are junior to you who have “lost” flying in some manner through cancelations and are on TAR.
2. Volunteer/Will Fly list: This list consists of Flight Attendants who have called Crew Scheduling to inform that they would like to pick up additional time and are available for assignment on that day. (There is no way to track this list therefore a call to crew scheduling will be necessary to determine if there were any individuals on the list)

3. Reserve Flight Attendants:
   a. At home Reserve Flight Attendants for whom there is at least two hours call out time available.
   b. Reserves already on a trip whose legalities may permit the assignment of additional time.
   c. Airport Ready Reserves.

4. Most junior available Flight Attendant in domicile on a day off.

Other Helpful Items:

- You can view a list of reserves and their respective assignments by putting looking at the ‘Reserve availability list’ found on the Compass intranet.

- You can also look through your bid package. Find lines that contain trips that end at a time where the individual on that trip could have done the JA/EXT or were on days off at the time of the JA/EXT. You will then need to see if that flight attendant was junior to you. They may have trip traded or dropped. If the relevant Flight Attendant is junior to you, then you may have been given the JA/EXT illegally.

- Ask around the crew lounge. There may be someone junior and available, you just need to ask.

- If you are unable to prevent a suspected illegal JA/EXT before you must fly it, remember to gather as much information as possible to prove the illegality. Once you have researched your JA/EXT and believe that you have the proof that you were JA/EXT illegally, we strongly recommend you contact a Union Representative immediately for assistance.

We hope that the information in this article will help protect you from any violations of our contract. Be armed with the knowledge to protect yourself...The AFA Compass Scheduling Committee.

KNOW YOUR CONTRACT!
Invest in Yourself