

# American Airlines pilots' union sues carrier over request to help with training on days off

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The union that represents American Airlines' pilots sued the carrier in federal court Thursday Apr. 14 to block a program that encourages aviators to help with simulator training, an initiative the carrier launched as it races to add staff and meet strong travel demand.

The Fort Worth, Texas-based airline asked line pilots to come into one of American's training centers on their days off to participate in pilots' simulator sessions, which is normally handled by specially trained check pilots. A check airman would still conduct the evaluation.

"As demand continues to grow and we continue to hire, we need to expand our pilot-training capabilities to a historically unprecedented level," said Lyle Hogg, vice president of flight operations training, in a note to pilots.

But the Allied Pilots Association argued in its suit, filed in U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas, that the training sessions would constitute a change in work rules, which would require negotiation with the union.

"Management right now is making up rules as they go along," said Dennis Tajer, spokesman for the union, which represents some 14,000 American Airlines pilots. "They're in a crisis to get pilots through training. They're underwater trying to get as many pilots through as possible."

The lawsuit comes as American and other carriers are scrambling to hire as many pilots as possible as passengers return in droves.

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