

# Delta Air Lines Reveals COVID Spike Among Employees, Major Quarterly Losses

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Delta Air Lines announced it lost \$408 million during the fourth quarter of 2021 and expects another quarter of loss before travel demand in the spring and summer helps the airline report a more positive outcome.

According to The Associated Press, Delta CEO Ed Bastian said the Omicron variant of the coronavirus has impacted demand, with the recent spike of COVID-related cancellations costing the airline \$75 million.

Bastian also revealed 8,000 employees have contracted COVID-19 over the last four weeks, complicating the issues winter weather have already presented the airline. As a result, over 2,200 Delta flights have been canceled since December 24.

“I don’t think we’re going to see a pickup in bookings or travel during January and probably the first part of February,” Bastian told The AP. “It’s always the weakest part of the year, and it’s going to be that much weaker because of omicron. We need confidence in travel returning once the virus recedes.”

The Delta CEO said the company saw a dip in demand after a long period of slow but sustained return to travel. Around 20 percent fewer people traveled in January than the same month in 2019, a drop from the 16 percent declines registered in November and December.

The airline revealed it expects to return to profitability in March when spring break should bring increased demand, especially if coronavirus infections begin to decline. As a result, Bastian said the company plans to hire several thousand new employees.

