

**Flight Attendant SLIP Leave Program  
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)  
Updated as of July 3, 2008**

**Q: How many SLIP leaves will be granted?**

A: As stated in the June 30, 2008 memo from Julie Showers, the number of leaves by duration and base has not yet been finalized, but we are projecting an estimate in the 750 range. As we refine the reduced flying level, we will provide updates as to the estimated number of leaves available.

**Q: What would happen to my leave if the merger with Delta Air Lines completed and I am still on leave?**

A: Nothing will change for you. Your SLIP leave status would remain in place if the merger is completed while you are on leave. Delta will assume Northwest's collective bargaining agreement and all of its obligations. Delta will also assume responsibility for other Northwest leave programs and are bound by the terms of those leaves as well. Unless DL elects to cancel leaves through appropriate notice as permitted by the program's terms, your leave will continue unaffected. Flight Attendants will return to duty when the SLIP leave term comes to an end (in 3.5, 6 or 9 months, depending on the leave awarded).

**Q: Why offer SLIP leaves and not another Early Out at this time?**

A: Inflight Services recently completed two early out programs. No other Early Out programs are planned at this time. During the time they were offered, many Flight Attendants expressed interest in a SLIP leave alternative. To be responsive to that interest, Northwest is pleased to provide a SLIP leave option to allow Flight Attendants to manage their needs while addressing the excess staffing situation.

**Q: Can the Company cancel SLIP leaves?**

A: Although we do not contemplate the need to cancel a SLIP leave once awarded; SLIP leaves may be cancelled if required in some or all bases with adequate notice.

**Q: Can a Flight Attendant awarded a SLIP leave request to end the leave early or not take one after the award?**

A: Flight Attendants may not voluntarily cancel a SLIP leave once awarded.

**Q: Please explain how Company-paid benefits are continued while I am on a SLIP leave?**

A: The Company will continue to provide Company-subsidized benefits for medical including prescription drugs and dental coverage, as well as, Company-paid basic life insurance through the duration of the SLIP leave for those employees who had these benefits while in active status. Any employee contribution, which was required as an active employee, will also be required during your SLIP leave. For example, if you are enrolled in the NWA Medical and/or Dental plan, you will need to make your monthly contribution for coverage to be continued.

Your Long Term Disability (LTD) coverage can also be continued, but you will be responsible for paying the full monthly premium for the duration of your SLIP leave.

Finally, any optional life insurance in place while an active employee may be continued by paying the monthly premium. Optional AD&D coverage is not eligible for continuation, however, the coverage may be converted to an individual policy.

**Q: How do I find out what I need to do to continue my benefits?**

A: On the last day of the calendar month in which you are placed on a SLIP leave, your benefits coverage will be cancelled. Benefits, including your SLIP Leave program Company-subsidized benefits, will not be reinstated until you return your completed election form(s) and employee contributions.

You will receive two notices from NWA regarding your continuation options. These notices will be automatically mailed to you at your home address so it is important to ensure that your mailing address is current with NWA (as shown on your most recent paycheck).

1. COBRA Continuation Notice and Election form – to continue your medical, dental or life insurance coverage
  2. Continuation of Long Term Disability (LTD) Coverage form – to continue your LTD coverage
- YOU MUST TAKE ACTION in order to receive the benefits available to you, including the SLIP leave program Company-subsidized benefits.
  - You have 60 days (from the end of the month in which the SLIP leave occurs or the date on the form – whichever is later), to complete and return the election form.
  - From the date that you sign the election form, you have up to 45 additional days before you must pay all retroactive contributions (from the first of the month following the start of your SLIP leave).
  - For limited disruption of your coverage, you should pay your monthly contributions as soon as possible. Otherwise, coverage remains cancelled until after your contributions have been received at NWA and your plans can be advised that your coverage has been reinstated.
  - Until coverage is reinstated, you won't be able to pick up a covered prescription at your pharmacy or have your eligibility verified by a medical or dental provider.

**Q: What is COBRA?**

A: COBRA is a federal law that applies to group health plans. Under COBRA, if certain events occur (such as a leave, reduction in hours or termination of employment) an employee and their dependents participating in the employer's health plan (on the last day worked) have the opportunity to continue coverage under the plan for up to 18 months.

**Q: Where can I find out how much my benefits will cost when I'm on a SLIP leave?**

A: The COBRA continuation packet and Continuation of LTD Coverage form will automatically be mailed to you and will show the monthly premiums for each benefit. The rates shown will reflect any Company-paid portion of the rate along with the employee contribution for medical, dental, optional life and the full cost of LTD insurance coverage. The 2008 employee contributions are on RADAR/Benefits/References & Resources.

**Q: If I want the SLIP Leave Program Benefits, what must I do and when do I have to make my employee contribution payment, if any, to NWA?**

A: To elect to participate in the SLIP Leave Program Benefits you **must** complete and sign the COBRA election form that you receive (mailed to your home address). Your contribution payment is due within 45 days of the date that you sign your COBRA Election Form. You must pay the full monthly contribution before coverage will be reinstated.

For limited disruption of your medical and/or dental coverage, you should pay your employee contribution, if any, as soon as possible. Otherwise, coverage remains cancelled until after your contribution has been received at NWA and your plans can be advised that your coverage has been reinstated.

**Q: Can I continue my FlexSaver accounts while I am off payroll?**

A: You may continue your health care flexible spending account (FSA) with after-tax dollars after you are off-payroll but there is no tax advantage to do so. However, if you haven't incurred enough eligible expenses to use your annual health care FSA balance prior to your SLIP leave date, you may wish to continue contributing to your FlexSaver account.

The rule of thumb is that "eligible expenses" for FSA reimbursement must be incurred while you are a plan participant. This means that your expenses must have been incurred while you were contributing to your accounts. After you stop contributing, you can still request FSA reimbursement but only for expenses incurred through the end of the month in which you made your last contribution (generally the month in which your leave occurs). You can submit eligible 2008 expenses until the 2008 deadline, April 15, 2009.

Health care FSA continuation costs will be included in your COBRA information sent to your home after your coverage is canceled.

You cannot continue your dependent (day) care FSA after you are off-payroll.

**Q: If I elect COBRA continuation for benefits not covered by the SLIP Leave Program, when do I have to make my first premium payment to NWA?**

A: If you want to continue your optional life insurance and/or LTD coverage, or FlexSaver, your first payment is due within 45 days of the date that you sign your COBRA/Continuation Election Form(s). Your first payment must include all retroactive contributions (back to the date coverage was cancelled). Thereafter, your monthly COBRA contributions are due on the first day of each month. If you miss your deadline for payments, you lose your right to continue these benefits.

**Q: If I don't respond or make an election for COBRA benefits, can I elect COBRA at a later date?**

A: No, you only have 60 days to elect COBRA. If you don't make an election within this 60-day period, your COBRA election opportunity ends. If you are uncertain whether or not you will need to continue coverage, we recommend that you return your election form within the 60-day window. By returning your election form, you are not obligated to make premiums but you "reserve" your right for continuation. However, if you don't take the final step of making your premium payments (within 45 days of the date that you signed the election form), you lose your COBRA continuation rights.

**Q: If I decline COBRA benefits, will I be eligible for benefits when I return to work?**

A: Yes, you will be eligible for benefits upon your return to work in accordance with your labor agreement and benefit plan eligibility rules. Upon your return to work in your same status in 2008, the coverage you had in place on the day before you went off-payroll will be automatically reinstated.

**Q: If I choose not to elect COBRA Continuation Coverage for myself (the employee), can I elect to continue coverage for my dependents?**

A: Yes, each qualified dependent has an independent right to elect COBRA if the dependent was covered by your plan on the day before you took a SLIP leave.

**Q: How can I pay for COBRA?**

A: You have two payment options:

- Automatic checking account (ACH) withdrawal (savings account withdrawal is not currently available)
- Personal check - mail payments to:  
NWA  
2700 Lone Oak Parkway, A1430  
Eagan, MN 55121-1534

Please note: You will not receive a monthly COBRA premium reminder.

**Q: Do the NWA benefit plans have pre-existing condition clauses that I need to worry about if I experience a break in coverage?**

A: No, there are no pre-existing condition limitations under the NWA sponsored group health care plans.

**Q: My spouse also works for NWA, how can I get my coverage transferred under my spouse?**

A: Your spouse can add you to his/her coverage through NROL & More, the online enrollment system which can be found on RADAR/Benefits.

Keep in mind, unless your spouse is a pilot or a dispatcher, your coverage through NWA must be canceled before you can be added to their coverage.

**Q: What happens if I have a payroll deduction for medical, dental or other coverage while on a SLIP leave?**

A: In the event an employee contribution taken after the end of the month in which your SLIP leave occurs, the Benefits Department will issue you a refund. You will need to pay the employee contribution in accordance with your COBRA election.

**Q: Can I still use the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)?**

A: All active employees and their dependents can use the EAP program. In addition to active employees, employees who are inactive (on leave or laid-off) and employees who are on COBRA continuation may use the EAP program. The EAP program provides free, confidential counseling and referrals for many issues including family, relationship or job concerns, emotional or stress related concerns, alcohol or drug abuse, and legal or financial worries. The toll free number for the Employee Assistance Program at National Employee Assistance Services, Inc. is 1-877-464-4009.

**Q: Will I receive other Benefits communications during my SLIP leave?**

A: As soon as your coverage is cancelled in the system, you will receive a “Certificate of Group Health Plan Coverage.” This document is commonly called a “HIPAA” notice. The purpose of a HIPAA notice is to provide you with evidence of when you had medical coverage and when it ended. It is not necessary to save these forms for NWA coverage, but this information may be needed when enrolling for coverage under another plan – especially if that plan has a pre-existing condition limitation.

**Q: Are employees on a SLIP leave eligible for unemployment compensation?**

A: State laws determine eligibility for unemployment compensation. In most cases, employees on a SLIP leave will be eligible following the state’s waiting period (three to seven days in most states). To access unemployment information by state, log on to the following Web site:

[www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov)

**Q: What does “projected to be active” mean as it relates to being awarded a SLIP leave?**

A: If you are on a medical leave for July and August, for example, we must have a release to return to work no later than August 30, 2008, by July 13, 2008, at 23:59 CDT.

*Example:* Mary has a note from her doctor that states she will be on a medical leave June 2008 - October 2008. Mary bids a SLIP leave. No release to return to work is received prior to the close of the SLIP leave bids on July 13 2008, therefore, Mary will not be awarded a SLIP.

*Example:* Jim was on a medical leave in July with a return date of the September 2008 bid month. Jim bids a SLIP leave and is awarded the leave.

*Example:* Jane was on medical leave in June and returned effective July 1, 2008. As of July 14, 2008, Jane has dropped her first two patterns as downward adjust (DA) and has done an OWT for the other remaining pattern on her line for July. Jane bids for SLIP leave, is eligible, and is awarded the leave.

**Q: If I only want a 3.5-month SLIP, can I be assured that is what I will be awarded?**

A: If you only want the 3.5-month SLIP leave, on the bid screen, enter an X in front of that duration. While we cannot guarantee that you will receive a 3.5-month SLIP leave at your base and at your seniority, it will guarantee that you will not be awarded a SLIP leave of longer duration.

**Q: What resources are available to employees?**

A: The RADAR Web site at [www.nwapeople.nwa.com](http://www.nwapeople.nwa.com) will be your best resource for finding information. Here you can look for the Employee Resource Center and/or review all of the various sections in RADAR (e.g., information about Benefits, Employee Assistance Programs, Retirement, Paychecks, etc.).

***This FAQ is intended as a summary only.  
For Benefits-Related questions, please refer to your Summary Plan Descriptions  
and Plan Documents.***