

# Boeing contractor to halt work on 737 MAX, furlough staff

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Spirit AeroSystems will furlough staff following a directive from Boeing to halt work on the 737 MAX, which remains grounded following two deadly crashes

Spirit AeroSystems, a major contractor on the 737 MAX, will furlough staff after being directed by Boeing to pause work on the embattled plane, Spirit announced late Wednesday.

Boeing told Spirit to suspend additional work on four 737 MAX planes and to avoid starting production on 16 others scheduled to be delivered in 2020, Spirit said.

Spirit is taking the actions "in order to support Boeing's alignment of near-term delivery schedules to its customers' needs in light of COVID-19's impact on air travel and airline operations, and in order to mitigate the expenditure of potential unnecessary production costs," Spirit said.

As a result, Spirit, which builds the fuselages for the MAX, will place workers at its Wichita factory working on the [plane](#) on a 21-day unpaid furlough starting on Monday. Local media said the move will affect 900 workers.

Spirit said it was also undertaking an "immediate reduction" of the hourly workforces in Tulsa and McAlester, Oklahoma.

The MAX has been grounded since March 2019 following two deadly crashes that resulted in 346 fatalities.

Boeing had been targeting mid-2020 to win regulatory approval for the MAX, but has more recently said it expects commercial deliveries to resume during the third quarter.

A Boeing spokesman declined to comment on the timing of a certification flight, a key step in Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) approval process.

"We are continuing to work closely with the FAA and global regulators on the rigorous process to safely return the 737 MAX to service," the Boeing spokesman said.

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