

American, pilots agree on steps aimed at reducing job cuts

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In this March 25, 2020, file photo, American Airlines jets sit idly at their gates as a jet arrives at Sky Harbor International Airport in Phoenix. American Airlines is telling 25,000 workers that they could lose their jobs in October because of the sharp drop in air travel during the virus pandemic. The airline said Wednesday, July 15, it was starting new offers of buyouts and partially paid leave, which it hopes will reduce the number of furloughs. (AP Photo/Matt York, File)

American Airlines has reached a deal with its pilots' union designed to reduce the number of job losses in October as the airline shrinks because fewer people are flying during the pandemic.

American had previously offered early retirement to pilots and other employees. But, Senior Vice President Kimball Stone said Tuesday, "we still had many more people than necessary to run our operation."

The agreement with the Allied Pilots Association would let pilots work every other month through next May, or take leave while receiving training so they could be rehired if travel demand recovers.

It is the latest among a number of deals negotiated by airlines and their unions to limit or avoid job cuts in October. That is when federal relief for airline labor costs and a ban on layoffs end. Congress is considering giving passenger airlines another \$25 billion to avoid layoffs shortly before the Nov. 3 election.

Last month, American, which is based in Fort Worth, Texas, warned 25,000 employees, including about 2,500 pilots, that they could be furloughed, or laid off with rehiring rights. More than 800 American pilots took early retirement.

Delta Air Lines, which sent furlough warnings to more than 2,500 pilots, got 2,200 to take [early retirement](#). United Airlines warned 36,000 employees that they could lose their jobs.

A hoped-for recovery in air travel leveled off in June and July as the number of coronavirus cases in the U.S. surged. Passenger traffic is down more than 70% from a year ago.

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