

Protection from Abusive Passengers Act

Since peaking at nearly 6,000 incidents in 2021, the annual number of unruly passengers continues to decline. Still, U.S. carriers are on track for another year of more than 2,000 unruly passenger incidents in 2025. As of September, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) investigated 1,133 such incidents year to date.

The **FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024** (HR 3935) was signed into law on May 16, 2024. Section 432 directed the FAA Administrator to convene a task force to develop standards and best practices for suspected interference with cabin or flight crew, security screening personnel, or flight attendants.

This task force is developing voluntary standards and best practices for proper and consistent incident documentation and reporting techniques. It is also creating best practices for flight crew and cabin crew response, including de-escalation; improved coordination between stakeholders to include flight crew and cabin crew, airport staff, other federal agencies as appropriate, and law enforcement; and appropriate enforcement actions.

Section 427 of the law modifies basic and advanced air carrier crewmember self-defense training requirements. Crew members can participate in this training on a voluntary basis. Section 434 requires Part 121 carriers to develop Employee Assault Prevention and Response Plans to facilitate appropriate protocols, standards, and training to equip employees with best practices and the experience necessary to respond effectively to hostile situations and disruptive behavior and maintain a safe traveling experience.

The **FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024** also increased the maximum civil penalty the FAA can propose per violation to \$43,658 and jail time. One incident can result in multiple fines. The FAA imposes almost \$7 million annually in fines.

The Allied Pilots Association and other labor groups continue to push for full criminal prosecution by the DOJ, FBI referrals, a permanent FAA “zero-tolerance” policy, and increased protections for workers. However, APA commends Congress for this legislation, which makes air travel more secure by addressing this continuing threat. We look forward to seeing the recommendations of the task force.

For questions or additional information please email GAC-Chairman@alliedpilots.org