

# Florida Nightmare — Federal Air Traffic Controllers Conduct ‘Mass Sickout’ to Protest Vaccine Mandate...

By [Citizen Free Press](#)

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*Sunday Update — Southwest cancels 1,000 flights.*

Southwest Airlines cancels 1,000 flights and blames it on air traffic control issues and the weather: Passengers are left stranded for a second day in a row after pilots' union sued over vaccine mandate <https://t.co/7X0YFP0IXO>

— Andrew Bostom, MD, MS (@andrewbostom) [October 10, 2021](#)

Southwest Airlines canceled close to 2,000 flights over the weekend, blaming the woes on air traffic control issues and weather. The airline canceled more than 1,000 flights or 29% of its Sunday schedule, as of 7 p.m. ET, according to flight tracker FlightAware. That was the highest rate by far of the major U.S. airlines. Next in line was Allegiant, which canceled 6% of its flights. American Airlines canceled 5% of its flights, while Spirit canceled 4% on Sunday, according to the flight tracker.

**On Saturday, Southwest Airlines canceled more than 800 flights.**

Harteveldt says the most troubling reason is the likelihood that some pilots who oppose Southwest’s decision to mandate COVID vaccinations are participating in a “work slowdown.”

**Southwest Internal Memo**

## Memo to Southwest employees from Alan Kasher, Executive Vice President Daily Operations

"As we continue through the weekend challenges brought on by Friday's ATC issues and weather, we are still working to recover during this holiday weekend when we're seeing increased travel. So before I explain, I must apologize.

I'm sorry for the struggles that you and our Customers are experiencing, once again. Although we were staffed for the weekend, we could not anticipate the significant disruption that was created from unexpected ATC issues and bad weather across our Florida stations. As we know, irregular operations disrupt even the best plans and can make it difficult to recover the operation quickly. And as we've seen before, an unexpected number of delays ultimately leads to a staffing shortage, and at times, mandatory overtime because of the longer operating day.

Despite the intense efforts of our Crew Hotel and Transportation Team to find hotel rooms in maxed out locations, we know some did not have hotel rooms last night. All these challenges put pressure on our Crew Member regulatory and contractual limits, which in turn becomes a staffing challenge—leading to higher than expected cancellations.

So again, on behalf of all our Southwest Leaders, I apologize.

Although we've made schedule adjustments leading into the fall, our route system has not fully recovered—that will take time. So we still find ourselves with fewer frequencies between major airports to reroute delayed or cancelled Customers. Right now, our NOC Teams are working to protect our Crew network and prevent misconnects—both for our Crews and Customers—that would cause an even greater impact. And Teams are working to determine the best course of action to most quickly reset our network.

A sliver of good news is that we're seeing good performance with today's operating flights. We need more of that. Please stay tuned for a video update from Mike Van de Ven later today with information about how we will climb out of this—and future extreme irregular operations events—even in the midst of current network and staffing restraints that will be with us for some time.

I know this is incredibly difficult for all of you, and our Customers are not happy. Thank you for all you are doing today to listen to their frustrations. Your Warrior Spirit is on full display, and I know that will continue as we work to resolve this operational disruption."

Huge headaches for [@SouthwestAir](#) passengers this weekend. [@Newsy](#) has obtained the internal memo from an executive to employees that offers new details about the "operational disruption" that's resulted in hundreds of canceled flights. I'll have more on Morning Rush @ 7AM ET. [pic.twitter.com/Zhqq9JICB4](https://pic.twitter.com/Zhqq9JICB4)

— Clayton Sandell (@Clayton\_Sandell) [October 10, 2021](#)

[List of cancelled flights on FlightAware](#)



Denise Sawyer of CBS12 ✓

@DeniseCBS12

ALL flights into Florida have been canceled, per pilot.

The announcement was just made while on the tarmac.

Pilot told the full 737 @SouthwestAir flight that we now have to DEPLANE.

He said the Jacksonville air traffic control is “understaffed.”

Looks like I’m in AZ tonight

7:19 PM · Oct 8, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone

### Southwest cancels all flights into Florida

BREAKING: Air Traffic Controllers In Jacksonville, FL Staged A Walkout Yesterday In Response To The Vaccine Mandate

It’s Being Reported That All Flights In & Out Of FL Were Cancelled As A Result

Mainstream Media Chose Not To Report On This As Of Yet  
[pic.twitter.com/DCSqh8M1eq](https://pic.twitter.com/DCSqh8M1eq)

— HeadlineHunter! 📧 Alerts (@freehumanity911) [October 9, 2021](#)

The moment Orlando Airport travelers were informed of the cancellations.

Hundreds of flights today and yesterday have been postponed or canceled into and out of Florida. Legacy media is claiming the outages are due to bad weather, but word has leaked of a mass sickout at the FAA air traffic control center in Jacksonville in protest of federal Vaccine mandates.

Airline sources: mass “sickout” @FAANews center in Jacksonville - caused ripple effect and 1000+ flight cancellations mostly effecting @SouthwestAir - report “sickout” protesting #VaccineMandate

— Leland Vittert (@LelandVittert) [October 10, 2021](#)

Southwest Airlines blamed the mass cancellations on “ATC issues and disruptive weather”

ATC issues and disruptive weather have resulted in a high volume of cancellations throughout the weekend while we work to recover our operation. We appreciate your patience as we accommodate affected Customers, and Customer Service wait times are longer than usual. (1/2) [pic.twitter.com/o1scQJ5ILb](https://pic.twitter.com/o1scQJ5ILb)

— Southwest Airlines (@SouthwestAir) [October 9, 2021](#)

### **Travelers noted that the weather was just fine...**

ATTENTION @SouthwestAir Myself @ a plane full of passengers on the 6:40pm flight 873 from @ATLairport to @FLLFlyer are PISSED! At first the flight was delayed until 7:25pm & then canceled due to weather but my Lady just sent me this video in Ft Lauderdale. What is the REAL issue! [pic.twitter.com/k1VIWdpEuu](https://pic.twitter.com/k1VIWdpEuu)

— Carlos Scott (@NVisionMarketin) [October 8, 2021](#)

### **Walkout over Vaccine mandates...**

Is there a media blackout on last night's air traffic controller walkout in Jacksonville, FL?

Hundreds of flights canceled.

Walkout due to vax mandate

From a trusted source: [pic.twitter.com/kCseQMZlal](https://pic.twitter.com/kCseQMZlal)

— Tom Sauer 🇺🇸 🇺🇸 (@thomasbsauer) [October 9, 2021](#)

### **Confirmation ATC was short staffed...**

ALL flights into Florida have been canceled, per pilot.

The announcement was just made while on the tarmac.

Pilot told the full 737 @SouthwestAir flight that we now have to DEPLANE.

He said the Jacksonville air traffic control is “understaffed.”

Looks like I'm in AZ tonight

— Denise Sawyer of CBS12 (@DeniseCBS12) [October 8, 2021](#)

There seems to be a major air traffic control issue impacting a significant number of flights in/out of Florida.

Seems to be re: staffing at regional ATC ops in Jacksonville. [@MCO](#) has dozens of canceled flights. Awaiting word from [@FAANews](#). [pic.twitter.com/3ddKGcKXvU](https://pic.twitter.com/3ddKGcKXvU)

— Greg Angel (@NewsGuyGreg) [October 9, 2021](#)

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