

# USA: A Worker Agenda Against Coronavirus

Friday 3 April 2020, by [Labor Notes](#) (Date first published: 1 April 2020).

This week and last, Labor Notes invited labor leaders and organizers to talk via Zoom about what we can do to organize during this pandemic. These are the beginning steps we came up with:

- Ask individuals and organizations to sign on to the principles and demands below, notifying Labor Notes when you do so and using these as organizing tools. Labor Notes will publicize the demands and the endorsers.
- Agree to support local and regional actions as workers assert these and other demands. Ongoing calls will allow us to do so.
- Look for opportunities to take bigger collective action as conditions change.

Our idea is that the relationships we build during this crisis will prepare us for struggles ahead. Keep reading the website for examples of workers fighting for their rights and for analysis of the crisis. <https://www.labornotes.org/>

**If you agree with these demands, please sign on and get your organization to sign on.**

## PRINCIPLES AND DEMANDS

The experience of other countries and the advice of epidemiologists shows workers in the United States that the best way to keep the toll of the coronavirus from reaching millions of deaths is for everyone to stay home.

**To allow that to happen, our demands can be summed up easily:**

- Shut down every workplace except those essential to health and survival.
- Federal government economic support for all non-essential workers, to allow and incentivize them to stay home. The unemployment benefits in the CARES bill are a step toward that goal. We must demand more.
- Provide everything that essential workers need to do their jobs safely and compensate them for the immense risk they are taking.

**Some specifics:**

- Ensure that industries and businesses labeled as “essential” really are.
- Shut down all non-essential businesses for a time frame recommended by public health authorities, with full cancellation of rents, mortgages, utilities, student and credit card debt, and other obligations for three months. No evictions.

- \$3,000 a month per person for the duration, to be paid by the federal government by taxing corporations.
- A relief package to support working people, not bailouts for billionaires and corporations.
- An Essential Workers Bill of Rights: Priority testing, all protective equipment, sanitized workplaces with social distancing, fair hours, hazard pay, free child care (which is also essential work).
- Free and high-quality medical care for COVID-19 and all secondary illnesses for all those infected.
- Use the Defense Production Act powers to immediately ramp up production of medical supplies and building of facilities.
- Jobs program to train health care providers at all levels and to employ workers to build hospitals, expand production of medical supplies, and do other socially necessary jobs.
- These benefits will be applied to all workers regardless of immigration status.

**To endorse these demands, fill out this form.**

<http://www.bit.ly/labordemandscovid19>

**Read here about two unions that are calling for a national shutdown with compensation for all.**

<https://labornotes.org/blogs/2020/04/shut-it-all-down-now>

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**P.S.**

<https://www.labornotes.org/blogs/2020/04/worker-agenda-against-coronavirus>