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United States: Transit Workers Must Take Action to Stop COVID-19

Thursday 9 April 2020, by [ATU 308 for Justice Coalition](#), [Local 100 Fightback](#), [Transit Workers Unite](#) (Date first published: 8 April 2020).

SIGN THE PETITION !

https://www.change.org/p/transit-agencies-transit-workers-must-take-action-to-stop-covid-19?recruiter=900927374&utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=copylink&utm_campaign=share_petition&utm_term=psf_combo_share_abi

Over three dozen New York City transit workers have died from the virus—and the worst is yet to come.

In Chicago, about 90% of front-line transit workers are Black.

The virus is killing Black people at about twice the rate of others. People who have money are staying home. Transit workers and other “essential” workers have no such privilege and continue to work in dangerous conditions.

It is clear to front-line workers that those in power are making this crisis worse. By unnecessarily packing the buses and trains, failing to provide enough personal protective equipment (PPE) to workers, and failing to frequently clean the vehicles, public transit has become a lethal pipeline for viruses.

For generations, cutting corners with safety has turned Covid-19 into a worldwide crisis. Further deepening the crisis is how the “essential” front-line workers are being treated as “expendable” cogs in the wheel.

We, the so-called essential workers doing the actual work during this crisis—such as transportation workers, nurses, agricultural and factory workers—can no longer wait or hope for protection!

We must decide to take initiative now!

Our working-class communities have been hit hard! If we get the virus, we may bring it to our families and our communities.

We know our jobs, understand safety and must take the lead to take action for the protection of ourselves, our families and communities!

We, the undersigned, call for the following actions during the Covid-19 pandemic:

- Unions and workers organizations must step forward and lead where employers and governments have failed.

Our unions and workers organizations must utilize modern technology to maintain democratic-processes through which workers have authority in how they run.

The undersigned pledge to support the democratically decided mass actions of our unions and workers organizations.

NO TESTING, NO PPE, NO WORK!

- Committees of front-line workers must be organized to establish where transit service is most needed. This must include orders for the transit companies and agencies to enact safety measures to protect workers and passengers.

Onsite testing and treatment is critical to ensure such protection.

- All transportation workers should be immediately allowed to isolate at home with full pay and no discipline on their work record for the duration of the crisis.

Those who are able and willing to serve their community will be paid at a significant hourly premium.

No transit worker can be furloughed without pay or laid off during the Covid-19 pandemic.

- Immediate establishment of added homeless shelters to relieve pressure on transit crowding. Open up hotels and college dormitories for immediate free, safe housing, etc.

The front-line workers are the heroes of the crisis. The undersigned support workers taking the necessary measures to protect themselves and our communities.

Transit Workers Unite

<https://www.facebook.com/transitworkersunite/>

transitworkersunite gmail.com

Local 100 Fightback

<https://www.facebook.com/Local100Fightback/>

ATU 308 for Justice Coalition

<https://www.facebook.com/308ptduespublic/>

P.S.

<http://www.laboursolidarity.org/United-States-Transit-Workers-Must?lang=en>