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CALIFORNIA WORKERS AND COMMUNITIES CALL FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION FOR COVID-19 RELIEF AND ECONOMIC STABILITY

Low-wage workers are being hit [first and hardest](#) by the economic and community impacts of COVID-19. Across the United States, workers, families, and vulnerable community members need immediate action to protect our health and our livelihoods.

We call on the State of California to take the following actions to enable workers, families, and communities to weather the crisis. We further call on all cities, counties, school districts, and other local governments to enact all of these actions possible at the local level.

- 1. Provide universal, immediate paid sick leave of at least 14 days. Strictly enforce and prohibit any retaliation against workers who take sick leave or who are in isolation or quarantine .**
 - A. *Require all employers to offer universal 14 days (80 hours) of paid sick leave with the understanding that in a public health emergency all workers have immediate access to their paid sick time regardless of approval by a doctor.*
 - B. *Pro-actively enforce new and existing paid sick leave policies.*
 - C. *Enact and enforce anti-retaliation protections for workers taking paid sick leave or paid family leave, or who are quarantined. No workers should be disciplined or fired for taking leave or as a result of being quarantined.*
- 2. Make unemployment insurance or equivalent aid immediately available to all workers who are laid off, had their hours cut, or otherwise cannot work, regardless of classification or immigration status, and temporarily increase benefits during the crisis.**
 - A. *Maintain the emergency measures recently adopted by the State, including elimination of the 1-week waiting period.*
 - B. *During the immediate crisis, expand the amount of UI to 100% of salary for lower-wage workers, to at least 80% of salary for higher-income.*
 - C. *Streamline the EDD process and expedite getting UI benefits to misclassified gig workers who are experiencing a partial or total decrease in work.*
 - D. *Create a fund for workers who are excluded from the state's UI program, including undocumented employees and any other categories of workers unable to access UI.*
 - E. *For individuals currently receiving UI, extend it without expiration for the duration of the public health crisis.*
- 3. Protect workers' livelihoods by ensuring that when it is safe to return to work, they still have a job to return to.**

- C. *For Grocery, Retail, Drug and Food Delivery workers:* Designate at least one person per shift to be COVID 19 emergency response advocates (more in larger settings). In addition to public health training for all employees, that person should be in regular updates with their employer and state and local authorities to address any new concerns which arise. Priority access to coronavirus testing at no expense to workers in Grocery Retail, Drug Retail, or food preparation or delivery.
- D. *For Hospitality workers:* Mandate that all hotel housekeepers be given a break after each room to wash their hands and disinfect. Mandate that hotels provide an affirmative reduction in workload or room quota for housekeepers, so they are not penalized for the time needed to perform thorough cleaning and frequently wash their hands. Ensure laundry/linen delivery in hotels is properly protected from contamination. Sanitize tables after guest use in all restaurants.
- E. *For workers contracted by local and state governments, such as security officers, cleaning professionals, and other service workers:* Mandate that all workers have access to immediate 14-day paid sick leave, furlough, and layoff benefits, access to personal protective equipment, training and adequate time to properly disinfect, and enhanced whistleblower protections, especially for those working in public health facilities, transportation hubs (train stations, airports, bus terminals), and other critical facilities. City contractors must all abide by CalOSHA, OSHA, and CDC standards. Ensure that contractors operating in our public airports, train stations and other transportation hubs provide these same provisions for contracted out airline, janitorial and security service workers.

6. Ensure that our communities provide basic shelter, food, and essential services for all residents; put an immediate moratorium on evictions, foreclosures, utility shutoffs, and on prosecution of people for being homeless; ensure sufficient food is available to out-of-school children and needy families; protect our immigrant communities; and support our local schools and childcare providers.

- A. *A moratorium on rental evictions for residents and small businesses.*
- B. *A moratorium on all foreclosures.*
- C. *Moratorium on vehicle habitation fees and impounds.*
- D. *Protections from residential utility cut offs for non-payment.*
- E. *All workers and their families without regard to immigration status are able to receive testing, treatment and all public resources available in response to the current health crisis.* Ensure that hospitals, schools, health care providers, public safety facilities, and other sensitive locations are safe spaces for immigrants and are not subject to ICE or Border Patrol raids.
- F. *Accommodations related to school closures* including meal replacements and extra support for childcare. No state funding cuts based on attendance.
- G. *Develop a strategic plan with stakeholders to ensure retail food and drug stores are stocked and accessible* to meet the needs of the public. Grocery retail and drug store allocations of inventory to ensure those over 65 and SNAP/WIC recipients have access to food and products under that program.

- A. To protect workers further, *just cause terminations* only to ensure employers do not take advantage of the crisis to unfairly fire workers. See Philadelphia Municipal Code Section 9-4700 et seq.
- B. *Right of recall by seniority* for workers laid off during the crisis. (See Santa Monica Municipal Code Section 4.66.10 et. seq.
- C. *Worker retention* in case companies go bankrupt and/or are sold during the crisis. See Santa Monica Municipal Code Chapter 4.67.050; Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 183.00 et seq.
- D. *Permit workers to alter their schedules* to address childcare and family needs arising from the pandemic without retaliation, and with good faith efforts to maintain hours. Offer full time hours to existing employees before hiring new staff.

4. Vigorously enforce these protections for gig employees, vulnerable immigrants, and other unprotected workers.

- A. [Support the Gig Workers' call to action](#) for COVID-19 protections. Enforce AB5 anywhere workers are being denied sick leave or access to benefits as a result of being misclassified. Presumption that all workers in the current crisis, including but not limited to all service workers, grocery, retail, drug, food and other delivery workers, and improperly classified port drivers, are employees.
- B. Enforce short-term rental laws, starting with multi-unit buildings and rent controlled apartments. Public safety measures in the hospitality industry are not meaningful if a significant part of our hotel units are being run through illegal, unregulated operators. This is especially true when short-term rental businesses occupy entire buildings or multiple units in one building, and take over rent controlled units.
- C. Create a fund or support existing funds to provide working people and their families with *cash assistance* for rent or any other needs. Models like Santa Clara County's Homeless Prevention System can provide cash quickly to workers in need.

5. Prioritize workplace health and safety, including mandated paid time for and access to hand-washing, provision of protective gear, and appropriate training, for all those still at work and for the communities they serve.

- A. *Mandate that all employees have time to wash their hands at least every 30 minutes*, and that the employer provides at its expense all necessary sanitary cleaners, including but not limited to sanitizer, disinfecting cleaning products, and protective gear (gloves, etc.) and appropriate training on their proper use. Mandate sufficient staffing to ensure sanitary bathrooms are stocked with all necessary items to protect public health. Presumption that all workers providing such services are employees under CA law.
- B. Workers, particularly those still engaging with the public, must be *trained in public health protection* either by a government entity, or a non-profit authorized by a government entity not controlled by the employer. See the Santa Monica Municipal Code Section 4.67.060.