

On taking action:

- Congress must act quickly to ensure the health and safety of working people.
- We support actions to provide emergency funds to support our communities as this situation evolves.
- All information on the coronavirus and responses should be overseen by public health experts, not financially motivated politicians or CEOs.

TOUGH QUESTIONS

Q1. If unions have so much power, why do so many working people still not have paid sick time or affordable health insurance?

The rules are rigged against working families. America's economy and democracy are out of balance, with too much power in the hands of corporations, billionaires and self-serving politicians who point their fingers at poor families, Black people and new immigrants during hard times.

The opportunity to join a union no matter where you work is the best way to raise wages, improve working conditions, create family-sustaining jobs and begin to fix the rigged economy.

While some working people have good healthcare plans through their jobs, many do not. It's time for everyone in America to have quality, affordable healthcare, paid sick time and wages that can sustain our families and retirement security. It's time to rewrite the rules so that every working family in America — Black, white or Brown — can thrive.

We fight for healthcare for all because nobody should have to wait in the hospital parking lot, worrying that they won't be able to pay the bill if they go inside, nor should they worry about how they'll afford rent if they take much needed sick time.

Q2. Are you advising workers to stay home?

[Locals' responses may vary]

The best course of action is to follow guidance and advice from the CDC and from public health officials.

When it comes to health and safety, employers have a responsibility to step up, be prepared and establish protocol for employees with potential exposures. All cases must be taken seriously, and evaluated and treated at the employer's expense.

As we learn more about COVID-19, employers must develop contingency plans should working people see their workplaces closed or their hours scaled back. But in order for employers and employees to be prepared and protected, the national response to COVID-19 must be led by public health officials — not financially motivated politicians or CEOs.

COVID-19 is preventable and treatable, but only if we know the facts about prevention and have the equipment we need to keep our communities and our workplaces safe.

Q3. Do you feel like healthcare facilities in your state are prepared for the virus?

[Locals' responses may vary]

In this rapidly developing situation, facilities must be prepared to prevent and contain the virus. Staying up-to-date on the latest CDC guidelines and recommendations from health experts is critical — and facilities must be proactive in their prevention and management practices.

Our union is actively working with employers to ensure facilities and worksites have the equipment and supplies they need and that people are trained in the right protocols for their job and workplace, and appropriately staffed. Frontline healthcare workers are leading the fight for safer workplaces, and their efforts are an important step in the preparedness process.

Q4. What should the Trump administration be doing?

The Trump administration must allow public health experts to lead on a nationally-coordinated response — not politicians and businesspeople.

In the face of a health emergency, the President chooses to spread false information, blame the media and vilify immigrants, instead of prioritizing the release of safety guidelines and the development of treatment plans.