



ATU AND TWU: 'WE WILL NOT SIT BACK AND LET TRANSIT WORKERS BE TREATED LIKE CANNON FODDER'

ATU and TWU, joined forces vowing to take “aggressive action” if system operators don’t better protect workers from COVID-19. “Too many transit agencies are not providing personal protective equipment for their employees, endangering the lives of our members and the families they go home to,” said ATU International President John Costa. “We are prepared to take whatever aggressive action is necessary in order to protect our members and their families. Nothing is off the table. Dying is no way to make a living.” The Unions demanded transit agencies provide masks and gloves for workers, disinfect vehicles regularly, mandate social distancing among riders, provide line of duty death benefits and pandemic leave among other measures. “We will not sit back and let transit workers be treated like cannon fodder in this war against the coronavirus. We can—and will—take aggressive action,” said TWU International President John Samuelson. [Read more.](#)

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CNN - Detroit Local President on the death of Brother Hargrove, why agencies must provide workers protection



In the wake of the tragic COVID-19 death of Local **26**-Detroit, MI bus operator Jason Hargrove after a rider with the virus coughed on him, Local President Glenn Tolbert told CNN’s Anderson Cooper that bus drivers and transit workers need better protection as the pandemic escalates. “Brother Jason, transit workers all over the U.S. and Canada, and my ATU brothers and sisters, we see more sick people than any doctor. We are the first responders before the first responders,” said Tolbert, who also tested positive for COVID-19. “We pick up the sick and take them to the hospital and we pick the grocery store workers. It’s shameful that we can’t get some real help and attention to the problem. Transit lives matter also.” Tolbert talked of his members walking off the job for a day to get buses properly sanitized and some members getting masks.

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ATU mourns the deaths of more members

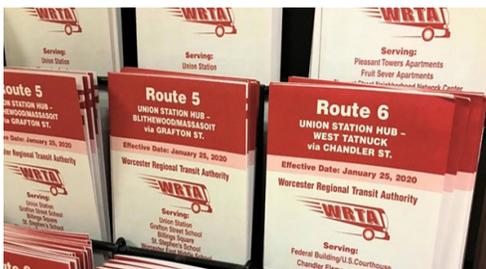


As the COVID-19 pandemic escalates, the ATU mourns the deaths of those members who put their lives on the line as essential frontline workers during this global crisis. Our fallen heroes are:

- Scott Ryan, Local **1576**-Lynwood, WA
- Phillip Deberry, Local **1700**, Greyhound, Richmond, VA
- David Dudley, Local **1764**-Washington, DC
- Sylvester Palmer, Local **1560**-New Orleans, LA
- Jason Hargrove, Local **26**-Detroit, MI
- Joseph Madore, Local **1763**-Rocky Hill, CT
- Andrew Wong, Boston Carmen's Union -ATU Local **589**-Boston, MA

International President John Costa sends our Union's deepest condolences to their families, extended families, friends and all the members of their Locals. We honor the memory of our fallen members and the brave work our sisters and brothers continue to do each day on the frontlines in the fight against COVID.

Worcester Local secures rear door boarding and no fare enforcement



Following a social distance picket by Worcester transit workers demanding better worker protections, the Worcester Regional Transit Authority will begin requiring riders to board buses at the rear doors and will stop enforcing fare collection. Local **22**-Worcester, MA President Ken Kephart said rear boarding has been one of the hurdles the WRTA administrator had refused to adopt. "From the get-go, our position was to maintain the social distancing and to keep the passengers and operators safe," Kephart said. The Local says the

changes will help protect bus drivers and passengers from contracting coronavirus. The policy will be in effect for at least the next 30 days.

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Edmonton bus operators volunteer to transport homeless to COVID-19 safe shelters



Eight Edmonton bus operators have volunteered to drive a new route to transport the homeless to a safe haven at the Edmonton EXPO Centre. The Centre is home to a daytime drop-in space and an isolation shelter for Edmontonians experiencing homelessness. Asked about his decision to volunteer, ETS operator and Local **569**-Edmonton, AB member Derek Bailey said, "When all of this is said and done, and when COVID-19 is finally over, I want to be able to look back and say I did what I could do when I was asked."

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Local 113 tells members to limit bus passengers on board for social distancing



To promote social distancing on buses to protect bus operators and riders, Local **113**-Toronto, ON is advising its operators to limit the number of passengers they carry to 10 on regular buses and 15 on articulated buses. "ATU Local 113's recommendation comes after ongoing overcrowding on some TTC bus routes, which goes against the guidelines coming from public health officials and political leaders," said Local President Carlos Santos. "We apologize for any inconvenience to the public. However, limiting the number of passengers on TTC

buses will help ensure riders are practicing physical distancing by staying two metres away from each other." Santos also said the recommendations come after several operators sent him photos of packed buses, adding that many are scared for their health and the safety of their families. [Read more.](#)

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Questions about COVID-19? Contact the ATU Rank-And-File Hotline or email

**ATU COVID-19
COMMAND &
RESPONSE
HOTLINES**

FOR U.S. MEMBERS:
855-610-8WIN (8946)
coronaviralert@atu.org

FOR CANADA MEMBERS:
855-641-7WIN (7946)
coronaviralert@atucanada.ca

For questions about your employer's policies,
please contact your Local Business Agent

For more information, please visit: www.atu.org/covid-19

Our COVID-19 Command and Response Hotlines for rank-and-file ATU members are an easy way to get info about your Union's response to COVID-19. Any messages will be followed up on by an ATU organizer or representative as soon as possible. For questions about your employer's policies, please contact your Local Business Agent. In addition, more resources about COVID-19 including informational leaflets, workplace safety checklists, tips for prevention, and information from Centers for Disease Control (CDC) can be found online on the ATU International's [COVID-19 page](#).