



General Field Talking Points for Workers' Memorial Day- 2020

- Each year on April 28, Workers Memorial Day, working people throughout the world mourn for the people who were hurt or killed on the job and renew our struggle for safe workplaces. The best way to ensure that workplaces are safe is to make sure workers have the freedom to join a union.
- Together, workers can fight to make their issues a priority. Together, workers can fight to keep and create good jobs in this country. Together, workers can fight for safe jobs.
- Today—broadcasting virtually in town squares and union halls, in front of manufacturing plants and memorials, in community after community -- we have organized actions and observances to do just that -- to fight for safe workplaces and good jobs -- jobs that pay decent wages and provide health care and pensions.
- Today we see an overall decline in the quality of jobs unlike any we've seen in decades. Lower-paying jobs, gig economy workers with lousy benefits are just the beginning. The increased push for production, growing use of subcontracting and outsourcing, rampant worker misclassification, mandatory overtime, and changes in work processes are taking a significant toll on workers.
- During the COVID-19 Pandemic, many workers are experiencing stress regarding currently limited workplace safety and health protections, issuance of weak non-legally enforceable agency guidelines, a lack of enforcement of current OSHA regulations, weakened anti-retaliation protections, and concerning return to work policies that offer no health and safety protections.
- 2018 Bureau of Labor Statistics Fatality Data:
 - In 2018, over 5,200 workers were killed on the job. An estimated 50,000 workers died from work-related illnesses in 2018. 828 Deaths were attributed to workplace violence, the second-leading cause of death on the job.

- Driver/sales workers and truck drivers had the most fatalities of any broad occupation group at 966. Among all detailed occupations, heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers had the most fatalities at 831.
- Police and sheriff's patrol officers had 108 fatalities in 2018, up 14 percent from 2017.
- Fatalities to Black or African American (non-Hispanic) workers increased 16 percent to 615 in 2018, the highest total since 1999. Their fatal injury rate also increased from 3.2 per 100,000 FTE workers in 2017 to 3.6 in 2018.
- Hispanic or Latino workers experienced 961 fatalities in 2018, a 6 percent increase from 2017.
- 2018 Bureau of Labor Statistics non-fatal injury and illness data:
 - There are approximately 3 million non-fatal injuries each year – including injuries experienced by truck drivers, sanitation workers, and warehouse workers who suffer epidemic rates of repetitive motion injuries and Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs).
 - Of the approximately 3 million non-fatal injuries, over 2.8 million non-fatal workplace injuries and illnesses were reported by private industry employers.
- If unions don't fight for safe workplaces, and to keep good jobs in the United States, then who will?
- Union members have long pushed for safe jobs and for good jobs. We fought for and won the OSHA law in 1970 and the federal laws to protect miners in 1969 and 1977. We've organized workers to fight for safe workplaces, to collectively bargain for contract language that protects us, where federal laws cannot. We've also formed and worked on safety and health committees to improve safety and health in our workplaces. We fought for and won a 40-hour workweek. We fought for and won healthcare benefits and strong pensions.
- We still have a lot of fighting to do to make workplaces much safer and to ensure that significant standards are issued and enforced, to protect workers.
- Workers Memorial Day 2020 is a day on which we call for an end to such injustices, and rededicate ourselves to the fight to make workplaces safer and to make our community stronger.
- Mary Harris "Mother" Jones, the great labor leader of the turn-of-the-century coal mines, called us to "Mourn for the Dead, and Fight for the Living!"
- We mourn, we remember, and we will never stop fighting.