

Stories from the Frontline: How One State is Supporting Home Care Workers Through the Pandemic

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Agenda

- The Impact of COVID-19 on Home Care
- Washington's State-Level COVID Response
- The SEIU 775 Benefits Group COVID-19 Response
- COVID-19 Impact Bargaining Wins

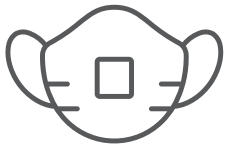
The Impact of COVID-19 on Home Care



The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened existing workforce shortages.



People of color in the home care workforce face disproportionate impacts from COVID-19.



Home care workers do not have enough personal protective equipment (PPE).



Home care workers should be recognized and prioritized in state responses to COVID-19.



Workers would benefit from hazard pay, strong paid leave polices, and other policy interventions.



Novel approaches to education and training are needed to protect workers.



Effective responses to the COVID-19 pandemic require increased funding.



Stephen Campbell

Data and Policy Analyst

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Transforming
Lives

Washington's State-Level COVID Response

Bea Rector, Director, Home and Community Services

Aging and Long-Term Support Administration

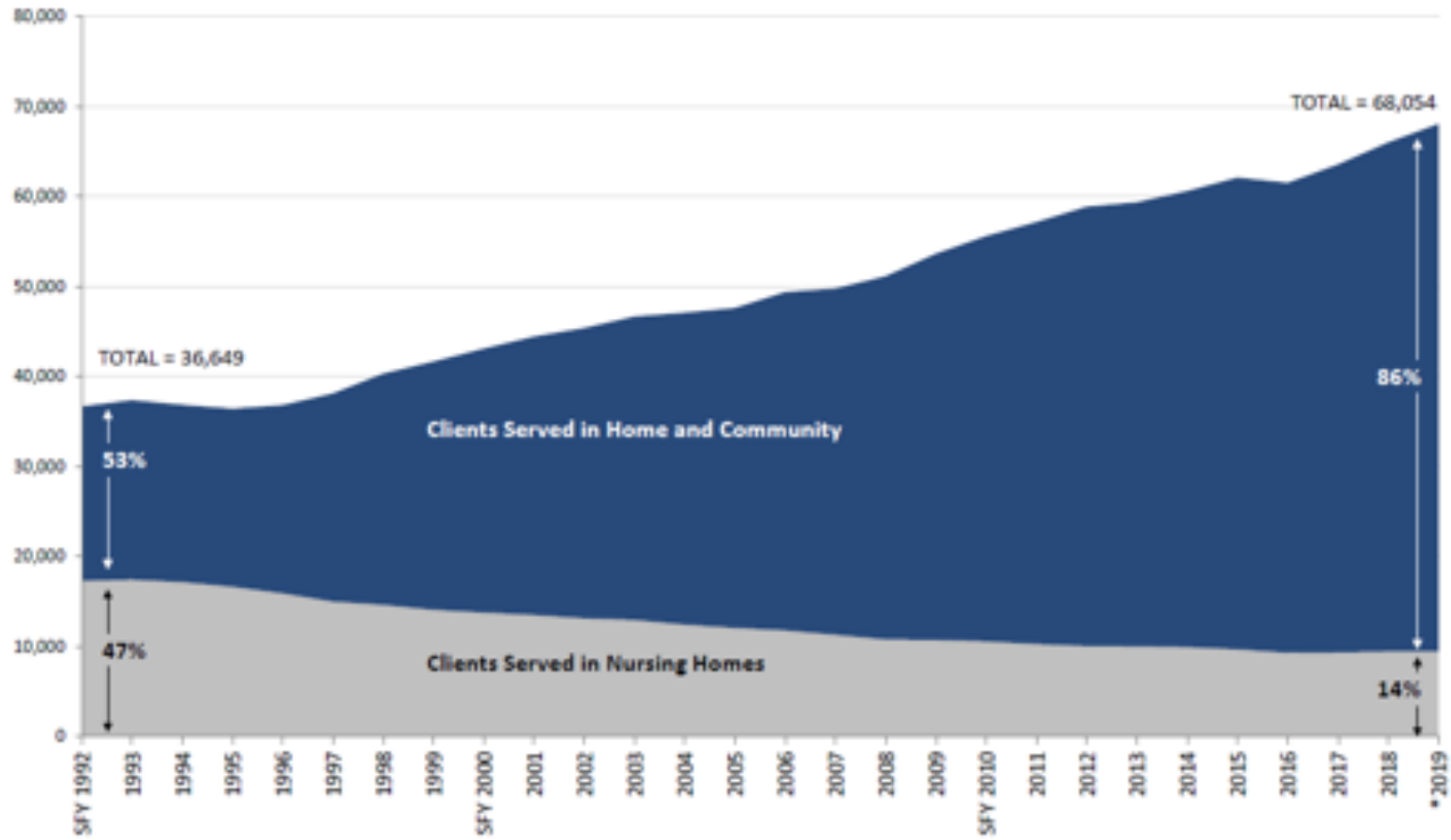
Washington State Department of Social and Health Services



Where do clients receive care?

...some in nursing homes, but most in the community

Percent of long-term services and support clients served in home and community-based settings



*As of March 2019

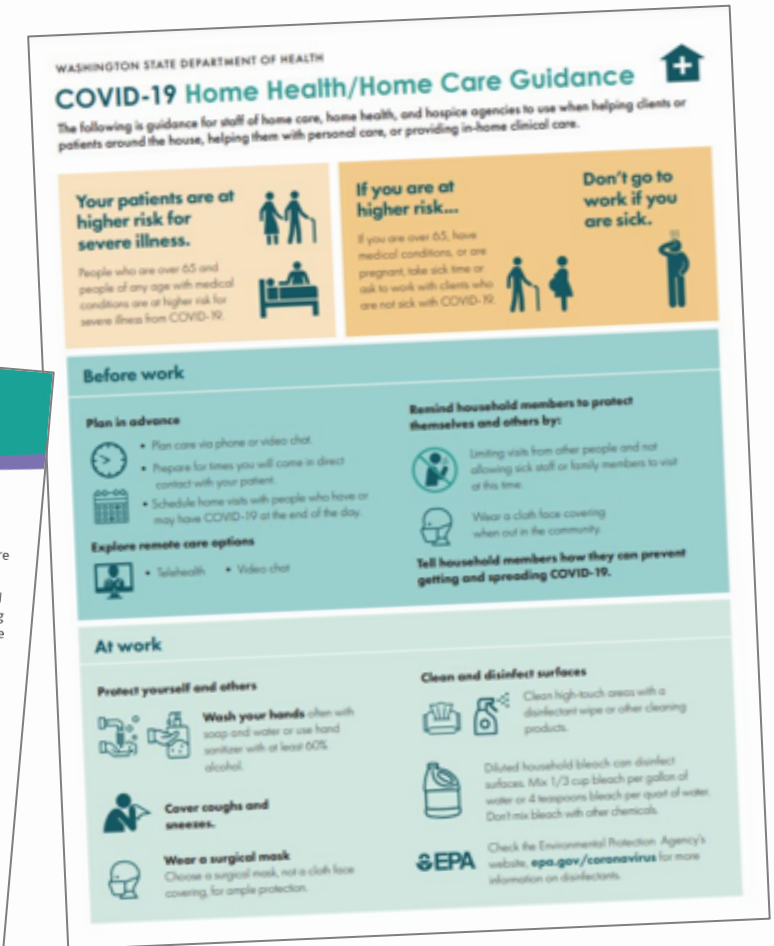
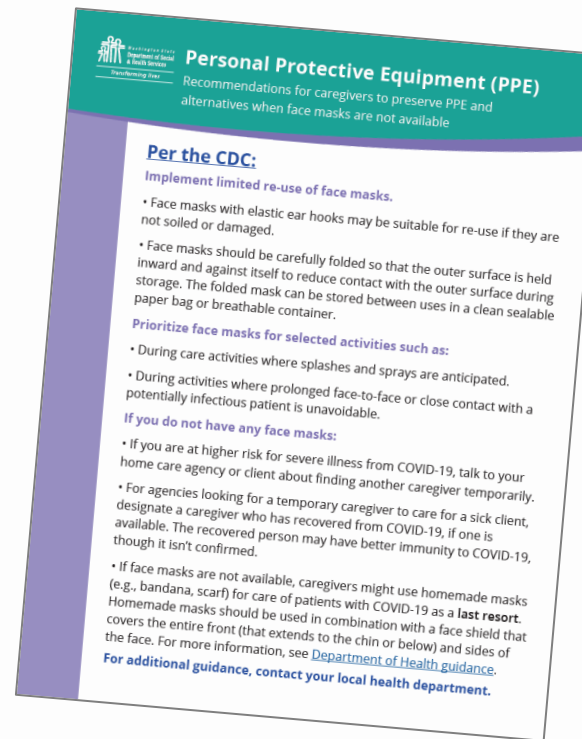
Immediate Challenges

- Getting information out to workforce and provider networks about how to prevent exposure and spread
- Constant changing of public health information about the disease



Provider Guidance & Advocacy

- Partnered with Department of Health on home care guidance documents
 - Disseminated to providers
 - Translated into 13 languages
- When PPE was difficult to procure, provided guidance on alternative forms of PPE and other protections



PPE Dissemination



- **Advocated for home care workers to be recognized on the Department of Health's PPE priority tiering system**
- **Purchased and disseminated cloth face coverings and PPE**
 - Continue to mail regular shipments of cloth face coverings and PPE (including surgical masks, gloves, gowns, face shields and N95 masks)

Remote Service Delivery

- **Issued guidelines for remote service delivery, when appropriate**
 - Telephonic/virtual reminders for and supervision of medication, bathing, personal hygiene, eating, wellness checks, behavioral interventions, etc.
 - Some tasks could be completed outside of client's home, such as: meal preparation and food delivery, essential shopping and errands and laundry
- **Personal care tasks that require hands-on assistance could continue to be done in person**
- **Case managers also reduced face-to-face contact, visiting with clients remotely when appropriate**
- **Telephonic assessments & care planning when possible**

Extra Payments to home care workforce

Spring 2020

\$100

One-time
payment of \$100
for each client.

May-June 2020

+\$3/hr

Additional \$3 per
hour for hours
worked.

July-December 2020

+\$2.56/hr

Additional \$2.56
per hour for hours
worked.

How Did We Pay for It?

Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)

- Provides a temporary 6.2 percentage point increase to Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP), which allowed for temporary rate increases and PPE
- Funding for home-delivered and congregate meals

Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act

- Funding for nutrition programs, supportive services and other programs
- Funding for procurement and distribution of cloth face coverings and PPE

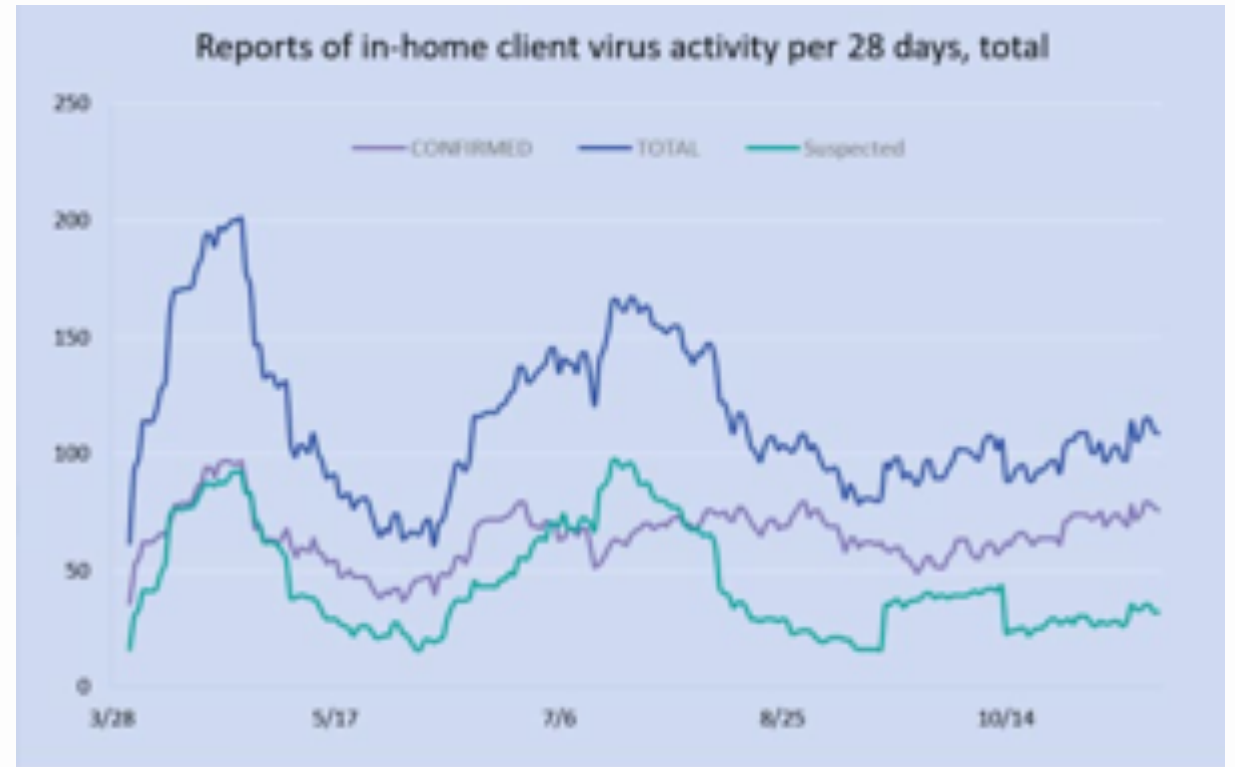
Temporary Worker Qualification Changes



- Training and testing sites for home care workers closed due to COVID-19
- Temporary qualification changes:
 - Long-term care workers may provide services without completing a national fingerprint-based background check.
 - Basic training, certification, annual continuing education requirements are temporarily suspended.

Other Measures

- **COVID training for providers**
- **Data tracking of COVID cases**
 - Daily tracking of in-home clients confirmed or suspected to have COVID-19
- **Working with CMS, securing flexibilities**



Longer-Term Issues



- **Continued & improved communications with providers**
- **Fit testing for N95 masks**
 - Limited testing facilities
 - Difficulty educating providers on proper fit testing
- **Compliance with wearing PPE**
 - Which type of mask to wear when
 - Some caregivers forgoing PPE

Determine Lessons Learned to Inform Future Changes

- **Communication strategies and Infection Control**
- **On-line training**
- **Virtual delivery of some services**
- **Expedited eligibility for client services puts home care more on par with nursing facilities under Medicaid**

Thank you!

Bea.rector@dshs.wa.gov



Transforming lives

COVID-19 Response

Supporting caregivers during the pandemic through benefits and partnership.



December 9, 2020

Confidential and proprietary information. For SEIU 775 Benefits Group Trustees and Employees only



Shazia A.
Caregiver, Kent

SEIU 775 Benefits Group's mission is to improve the skills, health and stability of the caregiving workforce through innovation and high-quality benefits and programs.



Learning



Health



Retirement



Jobs



COVID-19 Challenges

Unique challenges faced by caregivers

- Limited information about the new virus, how to stay safe and how to care for their clients.
- Inability to practice social distancing at work.
- Lack of access to appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Reduced access to health care and other health resources.
- Loss of jobs/hours.
- Unable to complete critical caregiver training.

SEIU 775 BG Solutions

How we supported caregivers during this time

- **Trusted Source of Information:**
 - COVID-19 microsite.
 - Facebook live events featuring health experts and other caregivers.
 - Closely monitored deadline extensions, and worked with DSHS to ensure caregivers were given time to complete training.
- **Health and wellness resources:**
 - Extended continuous health coverage during the pandemic.
 - Campaigns to promote virtual care and behavioral health supports to caregivers.



SEIU 775 BG Solutions

How we supported caregivers during this time

- **Masks, personal protective equipment (PPE):**
 - Partnered with DSHS to distribute information about making face coverings and obtaining PPE, practicing remote care and staying safe at work and in the community.
 - #WeGotThisCovered, a multi-channel mask awareness campaign.
- **Classroom Safety and Education:**
 - Increased opportunities for remote learning.
 - In-person Basic Training following strict safety protocols.
 - Developed COVID-19 specific CE courses.
- **Job Matching:**
 - Promoted Carina and how to use it safely during the pandemic.



Dani R.
Caregiver, Moses Lake

Live, Online CE Courses

COVID-19 webinars for all caregivers

- COVID-19 Basic Information.
- Infection Control: Coronavirus Precautions.
- Working With Clients Who Are COVID-19 Positive.
- Care Delivery Guidelines During the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- COVID-19 and Cognitive Conditions.
- Preventing Stigma Associated with COVID-19.
- COVID-19 and Caregiver Self-Care.
- COVID-19 and Behavioral Health Issues.

Your New Classroom Experience

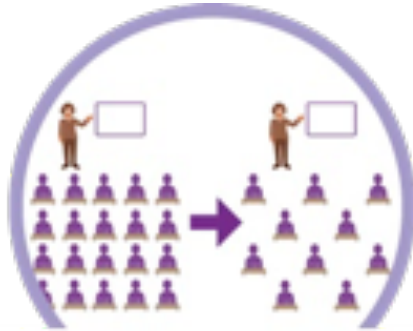


Changes to the Classroom

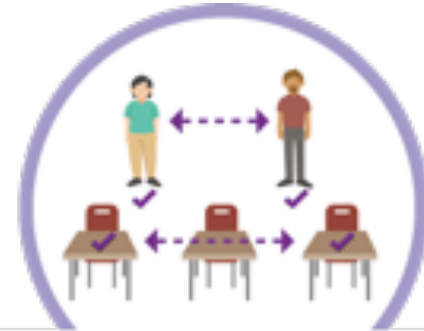
A new safe and comfortable learning environment



Temperature check and COVID-19 screening upon entering the classroom.



Reduced class sizes.



Markings on the floor and tables to help maintain 6 feet of distance.



Sanitizing gel and wipe provided for use during class.



Safety supplies provided.



Mannequins used to limit physical interactions.

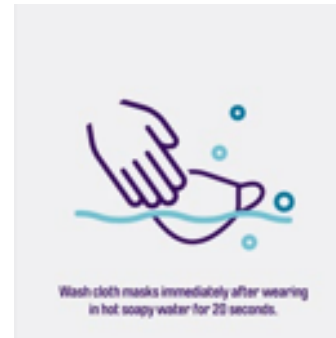
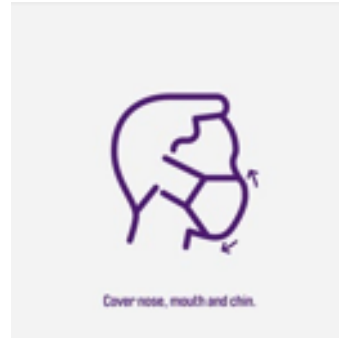
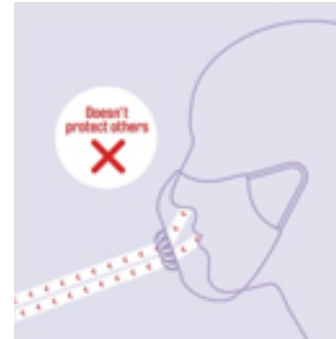
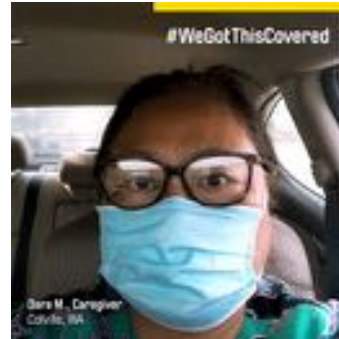
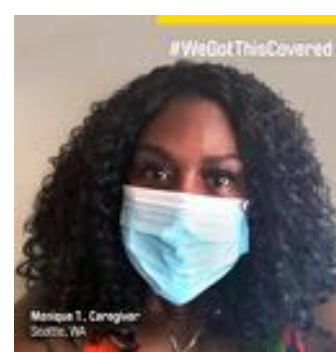


Hand washing required upon entering the classroom and after using the restroom.

#WeGotThis Covered

Mask Awareness Campaign

- Email directing to an informative landing page.
- Mailer — “The Caregiver’s Guide to Face Coverings”.
- Animated videos and caregiver mask selfies featured on social media.



What Caregivers Are Saying

"Thank you for keeping information flowing to us during these uncertain times. I appreciate you and everything you do to keep bringing us benefits, coverage and safety!"

Deborah J.

"I'm a caregiver working from home. I learned PPE from this video, it was very helpful."

Kongmy S.

"It's a really easy system to figure out and navigate. It really helped me put myself out there, and it was a lot faster than a referral agency."

Patrick M.

"Being an IP in the middle of nowhere during a pandemic, I feel alone, afraid of not meeting my deadline and scared at times to provide care to my client. I love that SEIU 775 Benefits Group mailed a Skills Reference Guide then followed up to help me walk through it. This phone call really set my mind at ease."

Sandra B.

Thank You

Abby Solomon

Executive Director, SEIU 775 Benefits Group

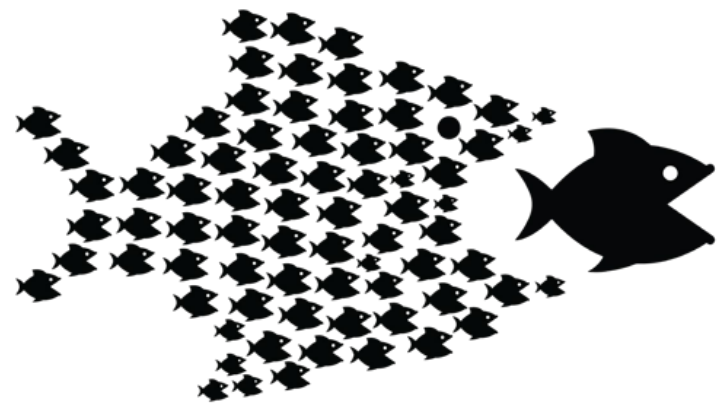
abby.solomon@myseiubenefits.org



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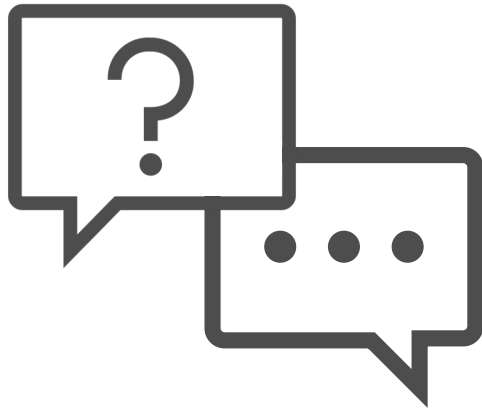
joebiden The workers on the frontlines of this pandemic are making extraordinary sacrifices every single day. They deserve leaders who will listen and work as hard for them as they are for their communities. As president, that's exactly what I'll do.

2h



COVID-19 Impact Bargaining Wins

- PPE supplied by the State, including masks, face shields, and gowns
- Hazard Pay of at least \$3 an hour to all in-home caregivers from May-June, and \$2.56 for July-December
- COVID Pay for workers at nursing home facilities with active cases
- Supplies reimbursement for cleaning supplies
- Extended healthcare coverage even if people have lost hours
- COVID pay (different from hazard pay) where members would get an additional differential for COVID-19 test+ care provided



Q&A Discussion

Please raise your hand or type your question into the chat box.