



# On The Move

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[www.twulocal234.net](http://www.twulocal234.net)

## Coronavirus Sparks World-Wide Public Health Disaster and a Growing Economic Crisis

On March 5, 2020, the leadership of Local 234 met with top SEPTA management to discuss steps that could be taken to protect the health of our members, and the public, in the face of the world-wide spread of a highly contagious and potentially deadly new virus. To learn more about the virus go to [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov) and click on “Corona Disease 2019.” The virus is creating a serious health and economic crisis that needs to be addressed by everyone. At the meeting, the Authority agreed to do the following:

- Provide hand sanitizers, Lysol wipes and alcohol wipes for use throughout the day. You should also wash your hands as often as possible, since scientists say washing *works better* than the sanitizers.
- Institute an intense cleaning and sanitizing program of the vehicles, bathrooms, lunch rooms, train stations and other facilities and equipment where exposure to the virus can occur.
- Immediately order a large number of gloves for those who do not already use gloves as part of their job. Gloves for operators will be distributed as soon as they arrive and operators will have the right to wear them on the job.
- Facemasks were discussed, however, health experts agree that the only people who need facemasks are those already ill, and those who care for them, because facemasks are not very effective.
- If you can't report to work due to the closure of schools, or the effect of a county-wide or state-wide quarantine, you can use paid or unpaid leave, including vacations, paid personals and earned days off, etc. Of course, if you can't work because you are sick you are entitled to paid sick leave under the contract. And don't forget the no lay-off clause.

The actions taken by SEPTA are a start, but they are not enough. SEPTA must also protect the income of our members *who are not sick but can't report to work* as a result of the coronavirus.

As far as the Union is concerned, TWU members who have used their paid and unpaid leave, but are unable to work as a result of a quarantine, including one that is the result of exposure to a co-worker with the virus, should receive “paid coronavirus leave,” based on the contractual “40 hour guarantee.” As we write, the U.S. House of Representatives is voting to provide “income protections” to those forced out of work as a result of the coronavirus. We will challenge SEPTA to do the same.

## WE CAN AND WE WILL