




Amalgamated Transit Union

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Office of the International President

MEMORANDUM

TO: ATU Local Union Presidents and Financial Secretaries
FROM: John A. Costa, International President 
DATE: April 29, 2020
RE: Air Flow Issues in Buses and Solutions

We have lost at least 34 ATU members and dozens of other transit workers to COVID-19. As many of our employers fail to meet their obligation to ensure a safe workplace, the ATU is fighting hard to implement our Safe Service Now campaign. As part of that campaign, we are providing the enclosed notice on the importance of proper air flow in buses.

Bus, Rail and Paratransit systems are forcing operators to breath in air that has been circulated through the cabin and HVAC system, carrying the viral loads of potentially infected passengers. That clearly lethal air steam exits past our members, putting their lives, and healthy passengers at risk. There is clear proof that socially distancing six feet, or two metres, from riders is insufficient. However, we can reverse that airflow and protect our members. **Please see the enclosed notice and distribute to your members and employers.**

All buses will benefit from proper air flow. But the benefits of proper air flow are even greater where barriers and proper air filtration are employed. We will provide instructions for immediate installation of temporary barriers and follow up with details on semi-permanent barrier installation, air filtration and airflow sterilization. To ensure that we provide the best possible solutions, the ATU International has been working with engineers at the **Virginia Tech Transportation Institute** and the **University of Washington Aerodynamics Department** to design semi-permanent barrier prototypes and airflow controls protecting drivers and their passengers.

Local union business agents with questions about this or other COVID-19 related requests should direct them to the International Union's COVID-19 business agent hotlines and email addresses. U.S. business agents should use (855) 640-0WIN or coronaviralert@atu.org. Canadian business agents should use (855) 611-0WIN or coronaviralert@atucanada.ca.

Enclosure

c: Javier Perez Jr., International Executive Vice President, ATU
Kenneth Ray Kirk, International Secretary-Treasurer, ATU
International Vice Presidents, ATU
John Di Nino, President, ATU Canada
International Representatives, ATU
(above via email)