

Wisconsin AFL-CIO: Delivering homemade masks to healthcare workers in Milwaukee

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(July 31, 2020) – As Governor Tony Evers' statewide masking order goes into effect Saturday, union volunteers of the Wisconsin AFL-CIO Union Mask Brigade are delivering homemade masks to nurses and healthcare workers at Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division.

Today's mask drop-off is in tandem with a PPE giveaway sponsored by the Wisconsin Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals, AFT. Along with Union Mask Brigade cloth masks donated by the Wisconsin AFL-CIO, Milwaukee County Behavioral Health workers are receiving face shields, surgical masks, and other PPE donated by the American Federation of Teachers union.

"Being part of a union is so important," said **Tinika Aldridge**, registered nurse and member of Wisconsin Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals, who distributed PPE to co-workers at Milwaukee Behavioral Health. "It's vital to stand together, stay engaged, and stay aware. Go union!"

"Our union has our back to help us limit COVID-19 exposure in the workplace," **Angelina Wyatt-Jolly**, a registered nurse at Milwaukee Behavioral Health and union member with the Wisconsin Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals. "As healthcare workers, we risk illness and infection every day, but with proper PPE like what has been distributed today by the WFNHP and the Wisconsin AFL-CIO, we are much safer and better able to care for our patients. The Union Mask Brigade cloth masks are beautiful, thank you."

"Today, the Wisconsin Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals delivered

needed safety equipment. Our members at Milwaukee County's Behavioral Health Division haven't slowed down or been able to stay home since COVID-19 hit. PPE is still in great need for our nation's front-line healthcare workers," said **Jamie Lucas, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals, AFT**. "Keeping workers safe in the job and ensuring a safe work environment for all is how we beat this virus. Thank you to the Union Mask Brigade and the AFT for today's PPE delivery. Shout out to the Wisconsin AFL-CIO and all the volunteer union members sewing and donating supplies to the Union Mask Brigade."

"Our healthcare heroes work tirelessly day in and day out, caring for patients and promoting community health," said **Stephanie Bloomingdale, President of the Wisconsin AFL-CIO**. "In every workplace, it is morally and legally incumbent upon employers to create and maintain conditions that, to the greatest extent possible, allow employees to work in safe and healthy conditions. As we push for employers in every sector to provide Personal Protective Equipment, our worker-powered Union Mask Brigade is stepping in to make sure no one is left unprotected. This is a "by workers, for workers" effort, and we're proud to be helping keep our union brothers and sisters at Milwaukee Behavioral Health safe."

View members of the Union Mask Brigade, download patterns to make face masks or shields at home, and join the effort to get front line workers virus protection at unionmaskbrigade.org