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Time to organize for workers' power: Amazon workers have a right to a union

written by Sharon Black

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<https://www.facebook.com/watch?v=257582599797762>

Workers at Amazon are fed up! And they're speaking out!

Source: What Up Baltimore

The recent National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) nationwide settlement that forces Amazon to notify workers of their rights to organize for union representation is a victory for Amazon workers and all workers.

This decision orders Amazon to email approximately 750,000 workers describing their specific rights to organize for a union. In addition, according to the settlement, Amazon is not to threaten workers with discipline or call the police when they engage in union activity.

The company must also post the notice in prominent places in its fulfillment centers, sortation centers and delivery stations. Amazon must publish information on the news alert page of its "A to Z" app for workers and on its website.

You can read the entire agreement [here](#).

The credit for this decision squarely rests on the shoulders of the courageous workers from Chicago, Staten Island, New York, and Bessemer, Alabama. They not only filed charges but expressed themselves through work actions and protests.

Can workers use this moment to push forward to organize?

A former Amazon worker, Steven Ceci, stated: “This could be an important moment. The present labor shortage, due not just to the so-called ‘big resignation’ but to the omicron crisis - together with this NLRB decision - can ignite the movement for union rights and workers’ power.”



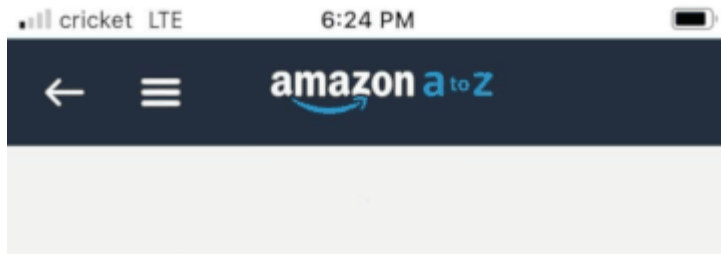
Baltimore rally and news conference Jan. 4 to support Amazon workers.

Baltimore Amazon workers press forward

Inspired by Bessemer, Staten Island and Chicago Amazon warehouse workers, Baltimore workers spoke out at a Jan. 4 rally and press conference to support Amazon workers and demand that trillionaire boss Jeff Bezos keep his “hands off workers’ right to unionize.”

Baltimore Amazon workers recounted unsafe conditions in the warehouse, unresponsive management, poor and unpaid wages, and the need for a union. The Unemployed Workers Union, Peoples Power Assembly and Seniors United vowed community support for their organizing efforts.

Warehouse workers shared this most recent message from Amazon management that cut paid time for COVID illness in half: “After reviewing the newly released guidance from the CDC, we are updating Amazon’s COVID-19 isolation and quarantine policy to one week (seven calendar days) from when you took the test, with up to 40 hours paid leave.”



Fri, Jan 7

Throughout the past two years, we have consistently based our response to the evolving COVID-19 pandemic on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the advice of our own medical experts. After reviewing the [newly released guidance](#) from the CDC, we are updating Amazon's COVID-19 isolation and quarantine policy to one week (seven calendar days) from when you took the test, with up to 40 hours paid leave. This change is effective immediately and applies to all employees in the United States, regardless of vaccination status.

Remember, do not come to work if you are sick. All employees must report a positive COVID-19 diagnosis to COVID Resource Center (CRC) and are not allowed in our facilities during the required isolation/quarantine period. Additional leave options are available for individuals who remain symptomatic beyond one week.

As the scientific community has learned more about [the benefits of COVID-19 vaccination](#), it is now clear that for most people who are fully vaccinated, the risk of severe illness is significantly decreased. Vaccines are universally available across the United States.

Go to [vaccines.gov](#) to find information about vaccine

From Walmart to Amazon, workers have seen sick pay cut as their billionaire bosses jump on the recent Centers for Disease Control (CDC) “miss-guidelines” that force COVID-infected workers back to work after just five days – a move that jeopardizes the health of workers and threatens community safety.

Andre Powell, a PPA organizer, described how a relative who works at Amazon is seriously ill with COVID and cannot work, and may end up fired and without money to support their children.

While some workers may recover quickly, many do not. Therefore, the community rally demanded that all workers have a right to full sick pay for the entire duration of the illness, regardless of time; no reprisals or firings for lost time; and COVID testing on the job, including negative tests to return to work.

The writer is a former Baltimore warehouse worker (BWI2) and author of the pamphlet [Amazon Worker Tells All](#), which can be downloaded free at [Struggle-La-Lucha.org](#).

