



# tubeworker

www.workersliberty.org/tubeworker • tubeworker@workersliberty.org • @Tube\_Worker

## Win on cleaners' sickness and isolation pay

**In September, ABM withdrew an agreement to pay cleaners in full for sickness and self-isolation. This was a huge infection control risk that put the cleaners themselves, other workers, and passengers in danger.**

RMT reps pressed both ABM and TfL/LU bosses. Union branches called for action. A social media campaign was mounted, with campaigns like Safe and Equal providing support. Activists in Tooting Labour Party, Mayor Sadiq Khan's CLP, passed a resolution calling on him to act, and planning for action to pressure him.

On 15 October, RMT Regional Organiser John Leach reported to reps that ABM had reinstated the agreement.

This is a significant win, achieved because of pressure from RMT activists and supporters elsewhere in the labour movement.

But the fight doesn't end here. We need to make the agreement permanent.

A guaranteed right to full sick pay shouldn't just be an emergency measure, it should be a permanent entitlement for all workers, all the time.

**The best way to permanently secure this would be to bring all outsourced work in house, and employ workers on LU terms and conditions.**

**More: [safeandequal.org](http://safeandequal.org)**

## Covid-19 second wave:

# Fight for safer workplaces!

**As coronavirus infections, hospital admissions, and, tragically, deaths, continue to rise, we must organise to ensure the maximum degree of workplace safety.**

### VULNERABLE STAFF

Workers with underlying health conditions that put them at additional risk should not be compelled to come to work.

LU must guarantee special leave with pay for these workers.

### FULL SICKNESS AND ISOLATION PAY FOR ALL

RMT pressure rectified the scandalous withdrawal of cleaners' sickness and isolation pay (see column). TfL and LU must ensure that all workers working on the Tube, directly-employed and outsourced, have access to full sickness and isolation pay.

If workers can't afford to self-isolate, the virus will continue to spread.

### PROTECTIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

Distancing measures in individual workplace must be reviewed by union health and safety reps, and strengthened.

Measures such as reduced Covid rosters have to be maintained, and station staff must work from behind glass - in control rooms or GLAPs - wherever possible.

### VIP/MIP "SLEEVE"?

LU now expects station staff to assist VIPs/MIPs using a plastic "sleeve" to minimise contact.

This is unsafe. No station worker should be compelled to use it.

TfL/LU need to guarantee alternative travel for VIPs and MIPs to ensure their right to accessible transport is upheld during the pandemic.

### "LONG COVID"?

The mounting evidence about the long-term health effects of Covid-19 mean that workmates who have had the virus may need ongoing or permanent adjustments once they're able to return to work.

This may include redeployment to roles in which they can work from home, either temporarily or permanently.

### REFUSE UNSAFE WORK

All workers have the right to refuse work that places them or others in "serious and imminent" danger.

We should all discuss when and how to exercise that right, and be prepared to do so when necessary.

**TORIES THREATEN TfL TAKEOVER TO FORCE THROUGH CUTS: WE MUST FIGHT BACK!**

**MORE ON REVERSE**

## TfL FUNDING: PREPARE FOR ACTION

**Talks between TfL and the government about a further funding bailout are ongoing.**

The Department for Transport is now threatening to take direct control of TfL. This must be opposed. TfL must remain in public hands, but it should be democratically administered at local level, not controlled by national government.

Mayor Khan resisted some measures the government wanted to impose as a condition of further funding, including extending the congestion charge. But reports suggest the Tories will push for "workplace reform" (i.e., cuts), and cuts to our pensions. Tory politicians have also demanded the scrapping of nominee passes. Will the mayor continue to stand firm?

We should demand that he does, but we can't rely on him. We need to prepare to take action to resist any cuts.

Aslef did the right thing by balloting pre-emptively. They now have a mandate for action and can name strikes at 14 days' notice. Other unions need to do likewise. Winning a ballot won't be easy, and there are understandable anxieties about striking during a pandemic.

**But ultimately, striking is our most effective means of asserting our demands and we can't be afraid of using it.**

## RESIST SODEXO JOB CUTS

**Sodexo, the multinational outsourcing giant, plans to cut 30 jobs on its TfL catering contract.**

It has been cooking up cuts (pun intended) since late 2019, when it won an extension to its contract.

Any Sodexo workers not yet members of RMT should join now, and get active. Sodexo workers need strong organisation, and their own reps.

The restructure will see canteens no longer offer fresh food, but only "regenerated" microwave meals. Canteen users also need to pressure Sodexo - out of solidarity with workmates, but also because the restructure will mean a drop in the quality of the service.

**Fleet and trains reps have already organised a petition to oppose Sodexo's plans.**

## UNION PRESSURE GETS RESULTS ON SRT

**Thanks to pressure from RMT and TSSA reps, management on the Special Requirements Team have abandoned their plan to move SRT staff off their rosters to cover local absences.**

Bosses have agreed to unions' demand that coverage be resourced from within SRT rosters patterns, allowing the SRT to be utilised to cover local absences whilst allowing SRT staff to retain their existing rest days and fixed links. This scheme will be piloted for an initial six weeks.

It's a good win for SRT staff, who faced the prospect of having their work/life balance thrown into turmoil by being placed on entirely new rosters.

## COVID CONGESTION

**While Covid cases rise again, the Tube is getting more congested, not less, with many of us faced with overcrowded trains on our journeys to and from work.**

The 10pm pub and restaurant curfew has seen thousands of people pour out of venues at the same time, into stations and onto trains. Our unions need to add their voices for political pressure calling for this arbitrary policy to be scrapped. Scientific advice is that a fuller lockdown is now needed.

Government policy is to blame for much of this. But Tube management also have a duty to take action to protect us.

If we can not travel to and from work safely, then we want management to provide staff taxis, or at the very least not discipline us if we arrive at work late because we had to let some trains go by before being able to board one safely.

## GREEN PARK JOBS TO GO?

**You would think that staffing levels on stations are as low as they can possibly go, but there are always some managers who seem to think that they can pick one or two more bones off the skeleton.**

The local Area Manager wants to replace a full-time CSM post and a part-time CSS post with a single full-time CSS post. This would, of course, displace people out of their jobs, reduce the number of staff on duty at particular times of the week, block a promotion opportunity and increase coverage problems. But hey, it would save a bit of money, so our intrepid AM remains undaunted.

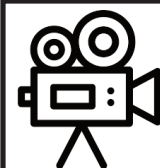
What can stop this cut in jobs? An organised fightback, that's what.

## TRAINING: CUTTING CORNERS

**Management insists CSMs, rather than accredited trainers, deliver training for station staff.**

This isn't "training", it's bureaucratic box-ticking. Regular, comprehensive refresher training is not only legally required to keep our licenses in date, it's essential to enable us to perform our jobs safely and well.

This new scheme disadvantages both the "trainee" and the "trainer", and represents a further potential attack on jobs in the Skills & Development department. LU says they're "keeping it under review": it needs to be scrapped.



## Videos

Talks from recent *Tubeworker* meetings are now online:

The story of "colour bars" on the UK railway: [bit.ly/uk-colourbars](https://bit.ly/uk-colourbars)

Fighting job cuts in the rail industry: [bit.ly/rail-cuts](https://bit.ly/rail-cuts)

## What is *Tubeworker*?

*Tubeworker* is a rank-and-file socialist bulletin, published at least monthly, written by Tube workers, for Tube workers. It is published by the socialist group Workers' Liberty, but is produced in editorial meetings open to all workers. Supporters from outside London Underground can help with public distribution.

Email us at [tubeworker@workersliberty.org](mailto:tubeworker@workersliberty.org)



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