

Hello,

I just wanted to write in about how the coronavirus is affecting my life and make sure as many voices are being heard as possible.

I am a manager at Tea Bar, which is a small locally owned cafe. We do not have PTO and have a very small amount of paid sick time. For the staff's safety we decided to temporarily close 3 out of our 4 locations and had to lay off those employees (about 80% of our staff). We are keeping one cafe amount through the week, just to use the product we have on hand, and then we will be closing that as well and everyone will be laid off.

The goal of course is that this is a temporary lay off and in a few weeks we will reopen and hire everyone back. But because we are a small business and kind of get by month to month there's a really good chance that Tea Bar will have to now close some locations permanently or the company as a whole. If as a business we have no profits for two weeks, I don't think we will be able to pay the rent for our cafes. I barely make more than minimum wage and with how high cost of living is I have a very small savings account. Even with being temporarily laid off for a couple of weeks I'm worried about how I'm going to pay my rent, but I know I can scrape by for this month. But if this temporary closure then causes me to fully lose my job then I have no idea how I'll be able to buy food or pay next months rent. I know if there was a full rent freeze it would not only help me as an individual, but it would help the company I work for afford to bounce back from this and would guarantee me a job on the other side of this epidemic.

Thank you for your time,

Taylor Van Wey