

# THE PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS HIDDEN IN AMAZON WAREHOUSES



## AMAZON WORKERS ARE FACING A TRIPLE THREAT TO THEIR HEALTH, INCLUDING:

- Nearly **double the national average rate** of warehouse workplace injury
- **Chronic stress** from the workload and quota system
- Risk of contracting **chronic and infectious diseases** due to lack of restroom access and inadequate COVID-19 protections

## CALIFORNIA NEEDS TO ENACT URGENT HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

Amazon's warehouse workplace policies harm health. **California needs to enact policies to uphold health and safety standards for the over 30,000 full-time Amazon warehouse workers in the state, including:**

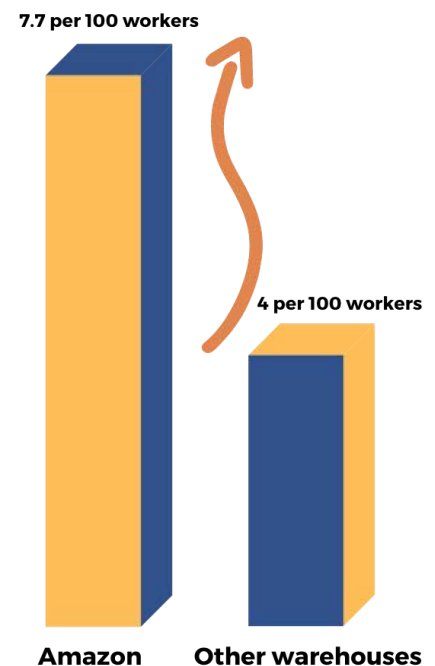
- An end to the quota system
- Ergonomic work conditions for all workers
- Greater COVID-19 precautions in the warehouse including unlimited time to use the restroom and hand-washing stations, and to sanitize workstations
- Opportunity to hydrate and take rest breaks based on worker need, not company priority



My dream job ended up being my nightmare, because I don't have my health anymore.

— Keith,  
Maintenance Technician  
4 years at LGB3, Eastvale, CA

**Amazon warehouse workers experience nearly twice the national injury rate**



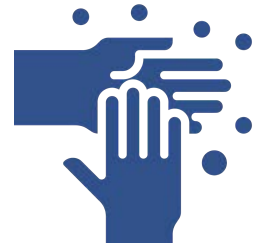
## AMAZON'S QUOTAS CAUSE INJURIES



Amazon **quotas are too high for a safe and healthy pace of work** [1]. Workers share that Amazon's quota system forces them to push beyond what's safe for their bodies, which has led to injuries, chronic pain, disabilities and fatalities [2].

# WORKERS DON'T HAVE TIME TO USE THE RESTROOM

Workers are only allowed **6 minutes of "time off task,"** aside from a 30 minute lunch break. Workers report that the closest restroom is often more than 6 minutes away from their stations. **This denies workers use of the restroom and prevents proper CDC-recommended hand washing** – which is key for controlling the spread of COVID-19 [3]. To reduce restroom breaks, workers report **restricting the amount of water they drink** – which harms health [4]. Proper hydration is critical to prevent serious illness from chronic dehydration including heat injury, urinary tract infections, kidney failure, seizures, and life-threatening hypovolemic shock [5].



## WORKERS EXPERIENCE CHRONIC STRESS

**Workers report feeling anxiety and chronic stress** due to inhumane quotas, and many experience constant fear of being fired for something as small as using the restroom. Workers are often fired without any opportunity to understand why – Amazon's computer program fires them, not a human manager or supervisor. These factors keep workers in a state of chronic stress, which **leads to countless health issues**, [6] including immune-system damage, anxiety, depression, heart disease, digestive issues, headaches, sleep and memory issues, and weight gain.

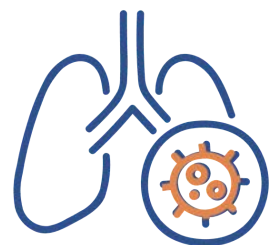


“ During this time of COVID... you don't really have time to wash your hands on a small break or lunch. No hand sanitizer around. It's all really mentally stressful and draining.

– Jennifer, Puller/Scanner, 5 months at DLA8, Hawthorne, CA

## WORKERS ARE CONTRACTING COVID-19

There were **at least 60 confirmed COVID-19 cases** among Amazon warehouse workers in San Bernardino and Riverside counties from late March-June alone, and at least 10 Amazon warehouse workers nationally have died from the virus [7]. Amazon's warehouse workplace policies and practices enable the continued spread of COVID-19 and harm workers, their families, and the state's ability to stop community spread of the virus.



**Amazon's policies are a vector for the virus – the time to act is now.**

## ABOUT THIS FACTSHEET

**Human Impact Partners (HIP)**, in collaboration with the **Warehouse Worker Resource Center (WWRC)**, conducted a health impacts study to examine the ways that Amazon's workplace practices affect worker health, safety, and well-being, specifically regarding pace of work and surveillance.

**For more information about this research, please contact:**

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**For more information on how to advocate for warehouse workers, please contact:**

Warehouse Worker Resource Center: 951-394-0236, [admin@warehouseworkers.org](mailto:admin@warehouseworkers.org)

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## REFERENCES

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