

AUGUSTA (GUS) MOODY, McDonald's worker, Florida

Augusta "Gus" Moody is a cook at McDonald's in Lakeland, Fla. He has worked there over a year and makes \$9.25 per hour. Gus has two children. His hours were significantly reduced because of COVID-19.

REMARKS

Good Evening! My name is Augusta Moody. I have worked at the McDonald's in Lakeland, Florida as a cook for about a year. I make just \$9.25 per hour. Last month I was exhibiting signs of COVID-19. I was vomiting and had a high temperature. I was immediately sent home to quarantine. McDonald's did give me some paid sick leave but honestly, it wasn't enough. You see, the next month my son also came into contact with someone at his school who had tested positive for COVID. And we had to quarantine for another two weeks, only this time without paid sick leave. I work hard to provide for my family... And missing two weeks of pay has been a nightmare. Yesterday, I used my last four dollars in change to buy gas so that I could drive to donate plasma... just so I could pay rent for me and my family. Things like paid sick leave shouldn't be taken away from workers who need it. And it's just as important for workers at McDonald's franchises and corporate stores to have access to paid sick leave. The same goes for adequate protective equipment — like masks and gloves — and living wages. And while McDonald's has failed to provide these crucial protections, it's still managed to pay out nearly \$3 billion in dividends to shareholders during these last few months of the pandemic. That might sound good for their bottom line — but to be honest, by failing workers McDonald's is failing itself. McDonald's is showing the whole world that they don't care about workers like me — especially Black workers and other workers of color who have felt the worst impacts of this pandemic, including dying in disproportionately high numbers. The other day I was written up for having holes in my uniform shoes. Then, when I tried to purchase my own shoes, McDonald's told me to continue wearing the shoes with holes in them because they were a part of the uniform. I've begged McDonald's for the last six months to issue me a new pair of shoes. I'm afraid to walk in the freezer or anywhere in the store because I could end up injuring my exposed feet. McDonald's has made it impossible for workers like me to feel safe in our stores before and during this pandemic. The coronavirus doesn't discriminate, but McDonald's policies make it so that Black and brown workers are more at risk of catching and suffering from the virus. That can't be good for the company's long-term future — and it definitely is not good for us workers. So, there's a lot McDonald's needs to do to support its workers. The company may be tweeting that it stands with the movement for racial justice, but its policies show otherwise. It's time for McDonald's to pay their employees a living wage, ensure that we have workplace protections, and listen to our voices. It's going to take all of us to push the company into a better and fairer future. Thank you for listening to my story.