

In A Drastic Move, Miami-Dade County Public Transit Workers File COVID-19 Lawsuit

Employees cite lack of action from Transit Director Alice Bravo to properly secure public transit system

April 17, 2020 – Today, Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 291, representing some 2,800 Miami-Dade County transit employees, filed an emergency lawsuit in state circuit court seeking to force Transit Director Alice Bravo to take immediate action to fix the continuing life-threatening violations of safety protocols in the public transit system. The lawsuit alleges violations of the Florida Constitution and the Miami-Dade County Code.

Key violations include:

- Failing to provide proper and sufficient masks, gloves and hand sanitizers to bus drivers, train operators and other transit employees.
- Not deeply and fully sanitizing the transit buses and rail cars during service and overnight hours.
- Not enforcing social distancing protocols on certain overcrowded buses.
- Not providing transit employees the most effective PPE from the County inventory.
- Making some employees use masks well beyond their functional timeline.
- Not enforcing passenger masking requirements – including providing free masks.

“Enough is enough. Bus operators and other transit employees are not receiving sufficient PPE, social distancing protocols are not being enforced, and some buses are dangerously overcrowded. We had no choice but to sue Transit Director Alice Bravo – lives are at risk,” said Jeffery Mitchell, president of TWU Local 291.

The urgent lawsuit asks the Court to order multiple remedial actions including:

- Providing sufficient measures to adequately clean and sanitize public transit vehicles.
- Providing adequate and sufficient PPE.
- Installing partitions between operators and passengers.
- Appointing a Safety Inspector General.

This action comes after weeks of complaints from drivers and the public about the disregard for CDC protocols and recommendations on Miami-Dade County public transit lines.

“Our transit employees are dedicated public servants risking their lives on the front lines. Our passengers are loyal and deserve the highest level of protection. It’s absurd we had to go to court to force Alice Bravo to fix these health and safety violations,” Mitchell added.

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