Union Strong Checklist
Ideas for engaging & mobilizing co-workers during COVID-19

☐ Reach Out to Every Member Now Organize a phone tree and have an “ask” ready i.e. sign a petition, attend a webinar, help collect email addresses, register to vote or just check-in—do they know where to turn for COVID-19 resources and assistance? Do they feel safe at work right now?

☐ Reach Out to Every Non-Member Organize a phone or email tree to contact non-members and encourage to stand together with co-workers. Maybe use an electronic membership card to sign up on line.

☐ Start an Electronic Petition Organize an on-line petition with your demands to the boss when you can’t get the results you want through the grievance process or other means.

☐ File a Group Grievance Lots of co-workers impacted? A group grievance might be a stronger solution.

☐ Host a Mini-Steward Training Partner with another steward and conduct a training for stewards on Weingarten Rights, or another topic. Get help from the Leadership/Steward Manual on the OPEIU website.

☐ Conduct a Virtual New Employee Orientation with new co-workers. Use an outline to make sure all information is covered. Get ideas from the New Employee Orientation Best Practices Guide at opeiu.org.

☐ Create a Short Video using your phone. Get testimonials from co-workers or document a workplace violation. Use the video to build support for a particular workplace issue or action or to build morale...or send it to the boss as part of a collective action.

☐ Establish a COVID-19 Crisis Committee to learn what’s going on at work, recommend any needed protocols and practices, provide resources to co-workers and to plan any needed group actions.

☐ Start a Mutual Aid Network to help co-workers with resources and emotional support.

☐ Host a Virtual Brown Bag with your bargaining unit and discuss issues around COVID-19 and what actions you may want to take as a group to get any unresolved needs.

☐ Survey Members Electronically about what issues are most pressing right now and get ideas for taking action.

☐ Take a Unity Break Take your break all at the same time to show your collective strength.

☐ Your Great Idea Whatever that is, figure out the necessary resources and take action!
Collective Action
Tips for Success

✓ A good issue for organizing is one that is widely felt, deeply felt, is an injustice and can be won.

✓ Start with the most interested members to discuss the issue, define it and then expand out to reach others.

✓ Build a team to work with you to involve and inform so the victory doesn’t belong to a small few.

✓ Be creative and have fun, members may be more likely to participate.

✓ Escalate—start small and gradually turn up the heat. Build up to larger actions. By starting small, you can take the high road and it gives you a chance to add to your group.

✓ Always keep members informed!

✓ Know your rights under the law and your contract concerning collective action.

✓ Plan your next steps in advance so you’re not caught off guard.

✓ Encourage people to push past their fear by empathizing and helping them to see the righteousness of the situation.

✓ Decide how many members you need to pull off your action.

✓ Decide what tactics best fit the situation. Check out Labor Notes for more ideas.

✓ Document your action and share the win!