

My name is Rudaina Jabai, I work as a wheelchair attendant at BWI. My husband and I have been working there for the past 5 years. This job is very physically demanding. We can't do another job besides this one for extra income. We are paid below the minimum wage, because we might get tips from passengers. The majority of them don't give anything. We can hardly pay our bills. We do not have enough to put aside in our savings, in case our car has a problem, or to even enjoy a nice dinner outside or go to the movies. We don't even have enough to visit our relatives out of state.

Even before the pandemic, we were not able to spend our holidays with our family. We also helped our 2 sons with some of their college tuition. Besides that, the company offers us a health insurance that is very expensive. I couldn't afford to add my son to plan with the company's insurance. Now, I have to rely on Medicaid for health insurance. Having health insurance is important to me because I am diabetic and have high cholesterol. We all need health insurance that is affordable, our low income shouldn't stop us from having health insurance and having to rely on the state.

I am an essential worker, we are on the front lines risking our health, and we deserve higher wages. We are in a high risk area to contract the virus since we work in the airport. Our job requires us to be closer than 6 feet to our passengers. We try our best to take safety precautions but it is still dangerous. I take care of my elderly mother and I don't want her to catch the virus because of me. I don't want to quit my job, but I decided to work less hours than before because I want to be sure I don't spend too much time in a high risk place like the airport. This has brought down my income by a lot, and sometimes I have to ask for help from my family to pay the bills.