

2020 was going to be the year. It was going to be the year I made my first international trip, which I had fully paid for and will receive no reimbursement on. It was going to be the first time I've seen some of my closest family, who live in Georgia and South Carolina, in over 2 years. It was going to be the year that I was finally out of debt and able to begin to save for my future. I don't mean to insinuate that it's been a loss of year. The year was meant for different things, different firsts. My first pandemic, my first true concern of being homeless, my first time worrying that if I had a seizure (because I'm epileptic) that the hospitals would have no room for me, also my first time unable to find toilet paper, meat or cleaning supplies. I recognize that these are all first world problems and we've become spoiled, but if you've never experienced worse, these things seem quite scary. I was fortunate enough to be quarantined for 4 weeks. This was not because I asked to be, although they said it was for my comfort. This was because my entire company received an email from HR instructing everyone to call HR if we had customers expressing that they had traveled from designated hotspots at the time. I followed this instruction and was flagged as uncomfortable at work. The following day my district manager instructed me to take the month off since I was concerned for my personal safety. I got paid a fourth of my income because of this and became behind on bills. On May 1st, all quarantined employees were informed that our return to work "was expected, but not required" and that we could not be compensated for being at home. In present day, Riverside County is one of the worst counties in California in regard to Covid-19 cases confirmed and it's confusing as to why we took it seriously to begin with if we weren't going to continue to do so until improvement was seen. I work for a cellular service company, one of the top four in the country, which is (for whatever reason) considered essential. We've been busier than ever during these "stay-at-home orders" and I can assure you less than 1% of our transactions are essential. People just want their iPhone right away and this is a profitable time for my company, which means the employees' safety is more expendable. We've been back to business as normal and have more conversations about sales goals than safety precautions already. Here's hoping for better times ahead.