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PLEASE POST

COVID – 19 UPDATE 11

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Due to the rapidly changing circumstances surrounding COVID-19 and its impact on workers, program support criteria are subject to change. Be sure to visit www.unifor.org/covid19 to download updated versions of the fact sheets available to our members and their families.

See all Sector updates: <https://www.unifor.org/en/take-action/campaigns/covid-19-information-resources?v=custom>

Restarting the Economy: What manufacturing workers need to know

- More than 300,000 manufacturing workers lost their jobs or were put on temporary leave between February and April 2020. Most of these workers were put on leave due to pandemic related restrictions and many expect to return to their jobs once the pandemic subsides.
- Not all employers responded to restrictions in the same way. Some employers, including food manufacturing, and agri-business, remained open while others made the choice to shutter their facilities temporarily due to several factors including a decline in the demand for goods, supply chain constraints, and efforts to limit the risk of outbreak. Some workplaces were able to pivot to manufacturing personal protective equipment (PPE) and other COVID-19 related medical devices. Unifor members are currently making ventilators, masks, face shields, and medical gowns.
- Parts of the manufacturing sector are slowly coming back on-line. Employers that closed have announced gradual restarts and many facilities are in the first phase of re-opening, including in the auto, shipbuilding, and parts of the aerospace sectors. In other cases, a lag in declining demand is only now causing disruptions with production schedules, triggering a second wave of layoffs. Employers that remained open have done so with tremendous effort to redesign health and safety protocols.
- Under every scenario, employers must set the conditions that keep workers safe from the spread of the coronavirus.
- **What manufacturing workers can expect when returning to work**
- The manufacturing sector will re-open gradually. Workplaces with multiple production shifts may recall one shift at a time. Some workplaces plan to keep as many people employed as possible by implementing a system of rotating shifts and layoffs. Global supply chains have been disrupted but borders remain open for essential business travel and trade.
- Reopening in a healthy and safe manner must be accomplished through a variety of control measures ranging from engineering controls such as increased ventilation or plexiglass barriers to administrative controls such as physical distancing. When all other controls have been exhausted, the use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) such as masks, gloves, and eye protection must be adopted. Failure to use appropriate controls can lead to large COVID-19 outbreaks.
- Workers should expect to see a substantial redesign of the flow of goods and people through all manufacturing facilities. Unifor has worked closely with many of our employers to help create health and

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safety protocols that consider everything from organized entry into the building to physical distancing reminders and break time rules. These measures, when followed properly, will protect worker health and safety and business continuity.

- **What manufacturing workers should expect from their employers**
- Workers should expect substantive communication from their employers prior to returning to work. Communication should include training and instruction covering everything from screening procedures prior to entering the facility, physical distancing measures, procedures for detecting the virus, and information on what to expect inside the plant. Key expectations include:
 - Establishing and communicating return to work protocols; workers must be trained extensively on any new health and safety protocols;
 - Developing directives for physical distancing whenever possible, including entry and exit while on breaks and lunch. Many facilities have closed cafeterias and limited the use of microwaves.
 - Ensuring access to appropriate PPE and regular sanitizing of work tools and machines;
 - Ensuring facilities have been cleaned and sanitized, hot water and air chilling systems have been flushed and appropriate engineering controls have been put in place;
 - Ensuring workers are able to access a job-protected leave if they are not able to immediately return to work due to child, elder and other dependent care needs related to the pandemic; ensuring their service and seniority continue to accrue and they continue to be covered by pension and benefit plans during their leave as required by law.
- **What manufacturing workers need from government**
- Governments play an important role in the income security of workers in the manufacturing sector. Decisions around international trade in goods and services also has an extensive effect on this industry. Governments must put workers front and center in all decisions they make. Unifor's recommendations include:
 - Ensuring the income security system remains agile to meet the needs of all workers in transitory times. Employment Insurance, the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy and the Canada Emergency Response Benefit must ensure workers receive full income replacement, regardless of their individual return to work schedule;
 - Ensuring that workers receive all of the income support payments they are entitled to, and have bargained in their collective agreements, including access to Supplemental Unemployment Benefit (SUB) plans;
 - Making every effort to safely keep the border open to essential workers, business travel and international trade;
 - Ensuring adequate funding for sufficient childcare capacity and synchronizing business opening with the reopening of childcare facilities.
- **Additional Resources**
- Unifor has launched a hub for member information about the pandemic at unifor.org/COVID19 and encourages members to check the site regularly for updates.
- Subscribe to Unilink, the union's weekly national newsletter at unifor.org/subscribe and download the Unifor mobile app on your smartphone.
- **Lear Corporation Story**
- Lear's [Safe Work Playbook](#) is a leading example of how to focus on health and safety in the coronavirus era. The company quickly developed robust health and safety protocols, made them public and has served as a guidepost for other facilities as they come back online - demonstrating that mitigation and successful return to work can be accomplished hand in hand.
- Lear's Safe Work Playbook can be found at: <https://lear.com/safeworkplaybook>

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Restarting the Economy: What road passenger transport and urban transit workers need to know

- Across the country, road passenger transport and urban transit services have taken a significant hit during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- School closures have all but suspended school transportation services; domestic and international travel restrictions have decreased airport limousine services and intercity and provincial bus service; and wide-scale business closures and calls to stay home have resulted in significant drops in taxi and public transit ridership.
- This has taken a toll on our over 12,500 members in the sector on two fronts – layoffs for those who have seen service cuts or elimination of routes and, for those still working, concerns regarding personal health and safety due to frequent exposure to the public.
- As provinces begin lifting restrictions and reopening businesses, we need to ensure transportation workers feel prepared and protected as ridership increases. For those workers still waiting on their return to work (e.g. school bus drivers), access to income supports is needed so they can continue to make ends meet.
- **What road passenger transport and urban transit workers can expect when returning to work**
- Any government economic recovery plan or strategy must include access to passenger transportation services.
- Workers and community members need access to safe and reliable public transit in order to get to and from work and in order to access goods and services to help stimulate the economy. As many transit systems have remained operational during this pandemic (despite significant service reductions and layoffs), returning to full service should not be a lengthy process. The most pressing consideration will be how to keep workers and passengers safe from COVID19.
- The union has already been working closely with employers on ensuring proper protocols to keep workers safe, such as access to appropriate personal protective equipment (PPEs), instituting passenger limits on vehicles, rear boarding to maintain physical distancing and frequent cleaning and sanitation of vehicles, especially high touch surface points. Similar steps have been taken in taxis, for example, through the installation of plastic shields to protect drivers, customers, and frequent cleaning of cars and payment machines.
- For other transportation workers, for example, school bus drivers or airport limousine workers, their return to work or seeing a return to full operations is contingent upon the opening of sectors they service – schools and air travel. In the meantime, governments and employers will need identify strategies on how to reduce virus transmission with groups where masks and physical distancing is more difficult, such as young children in school buses and people with disabilities using specialized transit vehicles.
- **What road passenger transport and urban transit workers should expect from their employers**
- The focus of all employers in this sector must be to communicate openly, share information freely, listen and act on received worker input. Workers should receive training and instruction concerning virus transmission mitigation from their employer prior to heading back to work. Instructions should cover everything from processes entering the workplace, procedures to detect the virus and expectations when driving.

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- Transportation workers face a greater risk of infection due to frequent exposure to riders, while riders are also at risk of spreading the virus among themselves. Unlike other forms of transportation, like air travel, it is not feasible to test each transit passenger for symptoms of illness before boarding. As such, it is imperative that employers take all necessary steps to protect workers and riders. Unifor expects that employers:

- Develop, communicate, train, monitor and evaluate return to work and health and safety procedures in collaboration with unions and workers.
- Facilitate physical distancing on board vehicles by placing passenger limits on transit vehicles and maintaining rear boarding.
- Provide transit workers with the appropriate personal protective equipment, increased access to hand sanitizing equipment, cleaning stations, and installing plastic shields and enclosure systems where possible.
- Ensuring all transportation vehicles are thoroughly and frequently cleaned and sanitized and ensure cleaning products used are not harmful for workers and passengers.
- Encourage riders to begin wearing facemasks while onboard to protect workers and other passengers.
- Develop protocols and safety measures to deal with abusive riders in order to limit any physical interactions.

What road passenger transport and urban transit workers need from Government

- All levels of government have a role to play in ensuring Canadians have access to strong and accessible transportation networks while ensuring workers are not left behind during an economic crisis. Unifor recommends:

- Ensuring transportation workers have access to income supports through the Employment Insurance (EI) program. Many school bus drivers work part-time and do not accumulate enough hours to meet current EI eligibility criteria. All part-time and precarious transportation workers need full access to EI benefits.
- Ensure that transit agencies and operators are not excluded from special government programs (e.g. Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy program) that are meant to financially assist and support businesses and organizations during difficult times.
- Provide financial support to ensure greater inter-urban and inter-provincial bus service so that remote communities are not completely cut off.
- Providing permanent and sustainable federal and provincial funding to support operational costs for local public transit systems.

- **Additional resources**

- Unifor has launched a hub for member information about the pandemic at unifor.org/COVID19 and encourages members to check the site regularly for updates.
- Subscribe to Unilink, the union's weekly national newsletter at unifor.org/subscribe and download the Unifor mobile app on your smartphone.

Restarting the Economy: What warehousing and logistics workers need to know

- Warehousing and logistics play a critical role in the supply chain, ensuring essential goods and supplies make it to businesses, front-line organizations and into people's homes. The COVID-19

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pandemic has resulted in significant challenges in ensuring there are little to no disruptions; however, as we have seen, this is not always the case. Even the smallest of interruptions can cause bottlenecks to form throughout the chain. Warehouses have seen outbreaks of the virus amongst workers who often work very closely together. These workers, along with truck drivers and couriers, have also seen an intensification of their workloads as employers place increased pressure to make sure shipments and deliveries are being expedited.

- In order to ensure the integrity and resiliency of our supply chains, we need to ensure that workers are properly protected at all times, especially warehouse workers and delivery workers. Without protective measures in place, this can result in severe implications.
- **What warehousing and logistics workers can expect when returning to work**
- Many warehousing, storage, cross-dock operations, distribution and transportation operations have been deemed essential services by governments and as such, have continued to work since the onset of the pandemic. However, significant supply chain disruptions may have resulted in some companies in this sector to either reduce their workforce or alter their operations. Further, with a number of larger retailers actively looking to close down brick and mortar locations and focus on e-commerce, this will have implications as work duties are restructured with more warehouses transforming into fulfilment centres.
- Maintaining worker safety and keeping up with demand has been some of the key challenges faced, since many warehouses were not designed with physical distancing in mind. Further, with increased demand for online orders and deliveries, truck drivers and couriers have been feeling increased workload pressures. Again, the shift towards direct home delivery will result in drivers needing to develop and implement measures to protect themselves from greater one-to-one interactions.
- Unifor will continue to monitor these industry trends and rapidly evolving changes in our workplaces and ensure that our work processes and collective agreements continue to make worker safety and healthy working conditions a priority.
- **What warehousing and logistics workers should expect from their employers**
- Clear and open channels of communication between workers and employers is necessary to ensure health and safety of workers, especially those who work on the road, and to avoid major workplace virus outbreaks.
- Unifor expects employers to:
 - Develop, communicate, train, monitor and evaluate return to work and health and safety procedures in collaboration with unions and workers. This must include proper training and instructions in areas such as worker screening and COVID-19 symptom detection procedures prior to entering a facility, physical distancing and information on what to expect inside warehouse facilities.
 - Employers must ensure warehouse workers and drivers have access to appropriate personal protective equipment, access to sanitation stations and frequent cleaning and sanitizing of common work areas and surfaces, including break rooms and restrooms, as well as truck cab interiors.
 - Proper workplace training and orientation for new workers where there is mass hiring to keep up with demand.
 - Directives for physical distancing should be put into place on the work floor and break/lunch shifts rotated so that large groups of people are not sharing break spaces and lunchrooms at the same time. For couriers, delivery protocols, including contactless methods and payment/scanning protocols, should be established to limit one-on-one contact with customers.
 - Facilities with customer counters must ensure that public spaces are monitored and proper protocols put into place for everyone's safety.
 - Employers that have instituted pandemic pay increases and bonuses must make these initiatives permanent.
- **What warehousing and logistics workers need from government**

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- All levels of government have a strong role to play in ensuring the health and safety of warehouse and logistics workers in order to maintain the integrity and resiliency of our supply chains that millions of Canadians rely on.
- As such, Unifor proposes the following:
 - The federal government must continue working with U.S. to ensure minimal delays at border crossings so that workers and products can flow in and out promptly while also maintaining public safety.
 - Ensure that long-haul truck drivers have access to operational rest stops, including bathrooms and food service, especially in more remote areas.
 - Strong and proactive enforcement of employment standards to ensure employers are not forcing drivers to work long hours on the road and that proper rest breaks are taken. Safety regulations and worker safety should not be relaxed for the sake of shipping expediency.
 - Ensure all workers have access to paid sick days and that government income security programs are flexible and responsive to meet needs of workers in fast-changing industries.
- **Additional Resources**
- Unifor has launched a hub for member information about the pandemic at unifor.org/COVID19 and encourages members to check the site regularly for updates.
- Subscribe to Unilink, the union's weekly national newsletter at unifor.org/subscribe and download the Unifor mobile app on your smartphone.

Restarting the Economy: What hospitality workers need to know

- The hospitality sector – specifically hotels, restaurants and food services – was one of the first sectors to feel the affects of the COVID-19 crisis, and has been one of the hardest hit overall. In the accommodation segment, many hotels have opted to temporarily close or reduce room capacity. Compared to the same period last year, hotels in Canada experienced disastrous declines in mid-May in all three key performance metrics:[\[1\]](#)
 - Occupancy: -72.5% to 18.4%
 - Average daily rate (ADR): -38.8% to \$101.70
 - Revenue per available room (RevPAR): -83.2% to \$18.75
- Restaurants and food service operators are also experiencing devastating decreases in sales. According to one survey from this past March, “average same-store sales plummeted by 72% compared to the same two weeks in March 2019.”[\[2\]](#) With most restaurants either closed or converted to take out only operations, the situation for most operators has only worsened since then.
- Provinces are at different stages of their pandemic response and reopening plans, but even as formal government restrictions are lifted, the sector will only fully recover when customers feel safe as they patronize hotels, restaurants, and other hospitality operations.
- **What hospitality workers can expect when returning to work**
- The hospitality sector could take several years to fully recover from the COVID-19 crisis. The industry overall experienced close to a decade of profit making before the pandemic struck, and it will take time for consumer confidence to return. In addition, business travel and large conventions will take time to recover, as employers and convention customers reassess their budgets and financial priorities.
- Workers in the hospitality sector face a number of serious challenges. In the midst of the full quarantine stage of the pandemic, the collapse of the industry and ensuing loss of employment is the most obvious negative outcome. The union has been working hard with employers to negotiate the extension of

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benefits coverage for laid off hospitality workers, and there is more work to do in ensuring our members and non-union workers have the right to return to their jobs with their previous working conditions intact. In addition, we specifically recognize the urgent need for essential drug coverage for hospitality sector workers and others who have lost workplace coverage due to extended lay-offs, and we have been fighting to make sure government support programs address this critical need. This includes the introduction of a universal pharma-care program.

- For those who have continued to work through the crisis, there are critical health and safety challenges caused by the need for close contact with co-workers and the public. Reopening the sector will take time, and will require significant changes to operations in order to provide needed protections for workers and customers alike. It will be more important than ever for employers, the union, rank-and-file members, and Joint Health & Safety Committees to work together to develop sound, risk-based health and safety programs in our workplaces.

- **What hospitality workers should expect from their Employers**

- The hospitality sector recovery won't hit full swing until the rest of the economy is in full swing, government restrictions are eased, and consumers feel enough financial stability to resume their pre-crisis hospitality spending. In addition, customers must have confidence that hotels, restaurants, and food service operations are safe and low-risk, and that includes adequate health and safety plans for hospitality sector workers. We expect hospitality employers to:

- Participate in the federal government's Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) program, to bring workers back on the payroll, and help campaign for a CEWS program extension to better encourage employers in sectors like hospitality to take part,
- Fully participate with their employees and unions, and their Joint Health & Safety Committees, to develop and implement Return to Work protocols and revised workplace health and safety plans,
- Provide extended benefits coverage (including health and pension benefits) for employees experiencing extended lay-offs, for the duration of the crisis, and
- Provide adequate training, PPEs, and health and safety protocols to keep employees safe and protected, and maintain adequate staffing levels to ensure workers have the time to work safely.

- **What hospitality workers need from Government**

- The hospitality sector is a critical part of Canada's economy, employing millions of Canadians from coast to coast to coast. The sector's workforce includes a higher proportion of marginalized workers than the overall labour force (including women, people of colour, new Canadians, young people, and others), and so government supports for the hospitality sector provide help for those who need it most. We expect governments in Canada to:

- Recognize the urgent need for essential drug coverage for hospitality sector workers and others who have lost workplace coverage due to extended lay-offs, and revise and enhance government support programs to address this critical need – including the introduction of universal pharma-care,
- Develop and implement a universal childcare program to provide high-quality, affordable, public childcare, allowing more members of the workforce to return to work and provide for their families,
- Provide additional and extended supports (like the CERB and CEWS programs) for workers in the hospitality sector and others that face extended closures and loss of employment as their sectors face a longer ramp-up time for recovery,
- Amend federal and provincial labour laws to provide job security for workers facing extended lay-offs, allowing them to return to their previous jobs when the crisis is over

- **Additional Resources**

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- Unifor has launched a hub for member information about the pandemic at unifor.org/COVID19 and encourages members to check the site regularly for updates.
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- [1] STR Press Release (May 21, 2020). (from <https://str.com/press-release/str-canada-hotel-results-week-ending-16-may>).
 - [2] <https://www.restaurantscanada.org/resources/impact-of-covid-19-devastates-restaurant-industry/>

Unifor's website is constantly being updated as new information is provided. Unifor has many websites to direct you to for assistance.

Resources:

Unifor COVID-19 Information and Resources: <https://www.unifor.org/covid19>

Government of Canada Outbreak Update: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>

Government of Canada Income Supports for Workers/Individuals:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html>

Please also check the websites of your respective provinces for any additional provincial supports or resources that may be available to you.

BCCDC website for Health info about COVID-19: www.bccdc.ca

British Columbia Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) website: <http://covid-19.bccdc.ca/>

Health Issues: Dial 811 and follow your Provincial Protocols

Mental Health Issues: Dial 211 or access your EAP benefits:

Other useful websites with information

Federal Government Financial Support Resources:

Government of Canada COVID-19 Financial Assistance for Canadians Outside of Canada: <https://travel.gc.ca/assistance/emergency-info/financial-assistance/covid-19-financial-help>

Government of Canada Economic Plan & How to Apply for Support: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2020/03/canadas-covid-19-economic-response-plan-support-for-canadians-and-businesses.html>

COVID - 19 Employment and Social Development Canada Information Guide: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/coronavirus.html>

Canada Revenue Agency COVID-19: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/covid-19-employee-info.html>

Provincial Government Financial Support Resources:

BC Preparedness Response: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support>

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Income Assistance: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/income-assistance>

Income Assistance Offices in the Lower Mainland: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/income-assistance/access-services#lowermainland>

Health & Preparation Resources:

COVID-19: Being prepared: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/being-prepared.html>

Government of Canada Symptoms & Treatments: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/symptoms.html>

BC COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment

Tool: <https://covid19.thrive.health/?fbclid=IwAR1NzQXV3eUgFa5bSimQ2wiRpXVRMZc1LPb5fUNIDFIK1Sc7yjhcc4aB>

Health Link BC & 811: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/services-and-resources/about-8-1-1>

Other Useful Links:

World Health Organization Myth Busters: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/myth-busters>

World Health Organization Public Advice: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

Government of Canada, Community-based Measures: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/public-health-measures-mitigate-covid-19.html>

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Follow phone directory to get to your Local Rep and if not available leave a message you will get a call back.

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