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Dear Members:

The world today is living in unprecedented times due to the situation surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. This pandemic has created an alarming situation for all working people in Canada and around the world and that includes Local 195 Unifor members we represent in Windsor Essex. As of yet, no one has the perfect answer or magic solution to this serious virus.

Over the past few weeks, we have been listening and responding to many of our members, community and neighbors, who have expressed concerns and questions about the economic fallout of the pandemic. Your Local Union and the Unifor Organization as a whole are working using a proactive approach and are offering resources and suggestions to put forward an action plan in case of an out of control spread.

This problem is impacting all sectors of our economy: hospitality, gaming, education, retail, airlines, auto and more. We are facing massive layoffs. Health care workers, already pushed to the breaking point are preparing to bravely treat patients of this pandemic, and prevent further spread in long-term care homes. In many sectors, including transportation, telecommunications, retail and pharmacies, vital work continues and workers need protection and we are encouraging employers to cooperate with our representatives.

Local 195 and our National Union are treating this situation very seriously and have created a task force, led by National Secretary Treasurer Lana Payne to provide you with the latest information. This includes our list of demands from government to keep you healthy, and to mitigate financial hardship. In addition, our Local has an active task force trying to work with various levels of authorities, led by our brother Bob Cruise, who will put a team of individuals from our local, preferably young aged, to set and organize an action plan in case of an out of control situation in our community. We are looking to establish a crisis center. At times like this, it is easy to throw up our hands and just give up, but our organization is built differently, we are committed to pouring out our hearts into these difficulties and to do everything we can to help whoever is in need regardless of who it is be it a single parent, workers, business owner or senior.

Our position is that the federal and provincial governments and municipalities need to continue to act fast and take the proper steps and contingency plans to minimize the spread of the coronavirus before our health care system is completely overrun, and before more Canadians get sick.

Our national President Jerry Dias wrote to the federal government on multiple occasions, asking the government to address a list of key demands that would protect workers. Without the adequate response measures in place, many workers will face a difficult choice between going to work while sick and making ends meet. Collectively, we have been in constant contact with politicians and policy makers, pushing for measures to assist workers.

Unifor webpage www.unifor.org/covid19 is your one-stop hub for union information about the pandemic response. You will find [resources](#) and new, printable, [sector specific information sheets](#) along with regular updates from the task force. Unifor has adopted an all hands-on deck approach to supporting members during these challenging and uncertain times. We have worked every day to answer questions, communicate with employers, and call on governments to flatten the curve and respect working people in this time of crisis.

If you have questions, we have answers, about EI sickness benefits, work absences, in-person meetings, and refusing work, read our [Frequently Asked Questions on COVID-19](#).

For the latest public health information, contact your local health agency, listed here on Unifor [resources page](#). But for Windsor Essex residents, **If you are unsure whether you have contracted the COVID-19 virus, call your primary care provider, medical clinic or the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit at 519-258-2146 ext. 1420, or call Telehealth at 1-866-797-0000 at any time.**

Also, you can check windsorite.ca for any updates or services you need and what is open and what is closed.

COVID-19 NEWS & UPDATES

Also, we are in the process to implement software here at Unifor Local 195 to host meetings on line. It is called [Zoom](#). In order to minimize contact and continue to be connected with all our members and leaders throughout this crisis.

Unifor web site has also compiled a [COVID-19 Checklist for income replacement](#) that sets out the possible measures that may be available for income replacement events including; sickness due to COVID-19, isolation or quarantine, family care obligations, and layoff or business closures.

We do not know how this crisis will evolve. What is certain is your union will continue to monitor the situation and keep you posted on what you need to know.

Now, more than ever we have to work together to strengthen our connection, our communities, and our vision for working people in Windsor/Essex and all around Canada.

In solidarity,
Emile Nabbout
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