



your voice at work

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Dental:

1.866.961.6147

Dental (meats):

1.800.667.2816

Safeway PT Benefits:

1.866.544.9686

Superstore PT Benefits:

1.866.342.3513

Pension:

1.888.811.7227

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United Food and Commercial Workers Canada Union, Local No. 401

April 14, 2020

VIA EMAIL: celio.fritche@jbssa.com

**Celio Fritche
Plant Manager
JBS Canada
P.O. Box 1888
Brooks, Alberta
T1R 1C8**

Dear Mr. Fritche,

RE: Confirmed Positive COVID-19 Case(s) in the Workplace

We are the voice and advocates of your employees as their bargaining agent. It has been brought to our attention that your company has had two (2) confirmed case of COVID-19 in the JBS Brooks facility.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic is not expected to be a short one, we must ask that you transparently work with us on the response to this serious situation. The following are examples of a coordinated approach between us that we believe is in the best interests of our members and your employees:

1. Provide regular updates to the Union Labour Relations Officer as well as the food processing coordinator assigned to your workplace on how the situation is being handled.
2. Inform the Union Labour Relations Officer and Food Processing Coordinator of the contact information of the person at AHS who has been assigned to handle the matter.
3. Set up an emergency health and safety meeting with all Union Representatives in the workplace, including our Union Labour Relations Officer, to hear their concerns, examine strategies, and engage in a full discussion on how best to deal with the situation via conference call or video conferencing.
4. Provide the Union with copies of all communications, including planned communications, to union members, stakeholders and media that you have circulated. Have you translated this communication into other languages in the plant?

We are very considered about the safety of our members. We would, therefore, like an urgent response to the following questions:

1. What steps have been taken and will be taken to meet AHS guidelines? Have you just complied with guidelines or has there been more done to protect the safety of our members? Please provide details.
2. Have you identified the possible community transmission path of this case?
 - If so, have you notified those members who may have been in contact with the originally diagnosed person? Please provide us with the names of these members (not the person who originally contracted the virus).
 - If you have not been able to determine the possible community transmission path, when would you be able to share this information with us?
 - Have you notified community leaders in the city of Brooks and the surrounding communities that your employees reside?
3. Have you notified the employees of their rights during this situation? Please provide the details of such communications and how this was communicated to employees. Examples of communications we are looking for include the right to refuse unsafe work, and the WCB process should the employee not be able to work due to the possible transmission path of this case.
4. Have you identified how often the person who tested positive worked in the last 14 days and which department they worked in? Have you notified everyone in this individual's department, area and division? Lunchrooms may also be affected.
5. Have you or AHS requested that any other employees self-isolate or quarantine due to this confirmed case?
 - If so, are they being compensated while they wait for other financial assistance that they may have access to?
 - Are these employees still covered by benefits during this time, and is their seniority being accrued or protected while they are required to be away from work due to circumstances that took place at work and were out of their control?
6. You will have received our letter from President Hesse and Secretary-Treasurer Richelle Stewart requesting that you close your plant for 2 weeks to assess the best possible strategy to protect the employees and react to Covcid-19 in the workplace. Will you be closing the workplace?
 - If so, for how long?
 - If not, please indicate your reasoning for not doing so.
7. Employees may have contracted COVID-19 and not show symptoms. Please inform us of any actions you are taking to address this issue.
8. Have you informed your employees of their access to EAP since this confirmed case?

We remind you that we are the legal bargaining agent of your employees and we ask for your full cooperation on this matter. Please understand that if our members feel as though the company is not putting the health and well-being of employees at the top of their priority, they may be within their rights to refuse unsafe work.

Also, any failure to comply with AHS guidelines and Ministerial Orders under the Public Health Act could end up jeopardizing the work that all of us do. The workplace could be shut down, or

the paralyzing fear that employees may have in returning to a workplace that has a higher possibility of community transmission, could have an impact on sales, production, and operations. The Union does not want this to happen, and our members do not want this to happen – the best way to mitigate these risks is to prioritize employee’s safety and to work together. We ask that you take the following measures to ensure the safety of everyone, including the public:

1. Pause operations for at least two (2) weeks and allow all employees the opportunity to isolate with no loss of pay, benefits, bonuses or vacation and for the plant to be thoroughly cleaned, sanitized and disinfected.
2. Upon reopening the plant, restricting flow in the plant through a slow and controlled reintroduction of workers and processing of animals and dramatically reduced chain speed
3. Restriction of the number of people in locker rooms, lunchrooms, hand washing stations and public areas at any point in time.
4. Ensure adequate and proper PPE for all employees including face shields, masks and any other needed equipment
5. Appropriate social distancing on the production floors and all public areas as well as installation of plexiglass shields, screens or curtains to separate employees
6. Putting up signage
7. Ensuring employees have financial assistance if they are ill or under isolation
8. Fully and strongly implementing AHS directives on social distancing and PPE

Please do the right thing and help us keep our members safe.

Sincerely,



Thomas Hesse
President



Richelle Stewart
Secretary-Treasurer

Cc: Jason Miller, Labour Relations Manager – Jason.miller@jbssa.com
Matthew Lovell, Vice President of Labour Relations – matthew.lovell@jbssa.com