



your voice at work

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Dental:
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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 19, 2020

VIA EMAIL: vincenzo.contrada@sobeys.com

Vincenzo Contrada
Operations Manager,
3400 56 Avenue SE
Calgary, Alberta
T2C 2C3

Dear Mr. Contrada,

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 there has been a confirmed case of COVID-19 in Canadian Refrigerated Warehouse.

The COVID-19 pandemic is not expected to be a short-term challenge, we must 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 on how the COVID-19 case situation is being handled.
2. Inform the Union Labour Relations Office and Director 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 workplaces, 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 warehouse?

We are very concerned about the safety of our members. At this time, we request your urgent attention and response to the following questions:

1. What steps have been taken or will be taken to meet AHS Guidelines? Has your approach to COVID-19 been to exceed the AHS Guidelines or meet them? Information on these Guidelines can be found at: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16944.aspx>. Please provide details of any extra steps you may have taken to ensure the protection and safety of our members?
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?
3. Have you notified employees of their rights during this situation? Please provide the details of any such communications and how this was communicated to employees. An example of communications we are looking for include how you have explained the right to refuse unsafe work.
4. Have you identified how often the person who tested positive worked in the last 14 days and which department they worked in?
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?
 - If a member has been exposed or becomes ill following a confirmed case, are you providing WCB forms and support?
 1. Has your organization contacted WCB regarding this confirmed Covid19 case?
 2. Has an Employers report of accident' been filed?
 3. Has a Physical Demands Analysis been sent with this report?
 - Are these employees still covered by benefits during this time, and for all purposes under the Collective Agreement, is any absence related to COVID-19 to be considered time worked?
6. Will you be ceasing operations at the affected worksite?
 - If so, for how long?
 - If not, please indicate your reason(s) for not doing so.
7. Have you informed your employees of their access to any Employee Assistance Programs or similar plans since you became aware of 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. If the health and well-being of employees is not the top priority of employers,

please understand that it is our view that employees should have every right to exercise their right to refuse unsafe work consistent with health and safety laws.

Furthermore, failure to comply with AHS Guidelines and Ministerial Orders under the *Public Health Act* could jeopardize your business. Such a circumstance could result in the shutdown of your business. Moreover, should there be a higher possibility of community transmission, employees may experience a paralyzing fear upon returning to the workplace. All of this impacts the present and future viability of your business and the livelihoods of our members. We take this very seriously, and we do not want this to happen.

The best way to mitigate these risks is to prioritize employee safety and to work together. In addition to the above, 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 employees the opportunity to isolate with no loss of pay, benefits, bonuses or vacation and for the warehouse to be thoroughly cleaned, sanitized and disinfected.
2. Upon reopening the warehouse, restricting flow in the warehouse through a slow and controlled reintroduction of workers.
3. Restriction of the number of people in lockers 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 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 note that our union reserves our right to file grievances on all COVID-19 related matters, and given the nature of this unprecedented crisis, we continue to treat all time limits as though they are waived. Alternatively, please consider there to be an ongoing grievance commensurate with any egregious conduct.

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

Sincerely,



Thomas Hesse
President



Richelle Stewart
Secretary-Treasurer

Cc: Ricardo de Menezes