



COVID-19 STATUS REPORT

Since the first COVID-19 case was identified in Canada on January 27, 2020, postal workers, along with your local, regional, and national union representatives, have been demanding health and safety measures be properly implemented.

We are aware of problems on the work-floors, and that Canada Post was not adequately prepared for this pandemic – cleaning and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) have been in short supply. Many measures have gradually been put in place. Collective pressure from CUPW members and the recent spike of confirmed cases in Canada has resulted in a much more responsive Canada Post over the past weeks.

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT TRANSMISSION

The Public Health Agency of Canada lists two means of transmission: person-to-person (via respiratory droplets), and touching one's eyes, nose or mouth after touching a contaminated surface or object. For the second, PHAC has characterized the risk as **low**.

“...because parcels generally take days or weeks to be delivered, and are shipped at room temperature, the risk of spread is low. There is no known risk of coronaviruses entering Canada on parcels or packages.”¹

Postal workers, though, touch a lot more surfaces and objects in a workday than most people. We must therefore continue to push for better access to Personal Protective Equipment to mitigate the risk.

WHAT WE ARE DOING ABOUT IT

Health and Safety representatives, social stewards, shop stewards, and rank and file members have demanded solutions to critical issues such as social distancing protocols, staggered shifts, cleaning checklists, scaled back swipes, and the acquisition and distribution of PPEs.

Now, nearly two months after this pandemic hit Canada, we have assurances that well over 3500 postal workers are currently covered under special leave and quarantine provisions and losing no pay or benefits.

- Most members who are immunocompromised, or who have returned from travel outside the country, or who are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, or who are 70 years or more living in Quebec, or who are 70 years or more and have reason to believe they are at risk in all other regions of Canada, are all covered under special leave provisions.

¹ Source: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/prevention-risks.html>



- Workers have been assured that Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as gloves, wipes, hand sanitizer, and Plexiglass partitions will be available to workers in all groups and classifications at Canada Post.
- Workers will have the ability to alter their vacation leave if they choose and take the leave at a later date.

While helpful, those provisions don't cover all our members. Temps and OCREs who are not covering a long-term assignment may not have access to special leave for self-quarantine and self-isolation. CUPW is still working with government officials to advocate for access to these provisions or other financial supports.

As well, CUPW continues to work with members and their various employers in the Private Sector Bargaining Units (PSBUs), but changes to their working conditions are more difficult to obtain and these members' job status is often more precarious. We will continue to demand more from these employers in order to protect members.

Together, we have many challenges ahead. Obtaining the right equipment for workers to do their jobs safely should not be the challenge that it currently is. Employers have legal obligations and responsibilities to their employees. Working people have fought hard for over a century for these rights and the current crisis just emphasizes why.

Far too often, it is tragedy and crisis that bring workers together in our struggle for better working conditions. Supporting each other and taking a strong stand is essential for working people. Solidarity on the front line saves lives. Stay informed and stay safe!

In Solidarity,



Jan Simpson

National President

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