



June 15, 2020

Memo to Unifor Local 229 members

RE: COVID 19 premium pay

Greetings,

It has been over 7 weeks since the Ford Government made the announcement to Ontario regarding the premium pay of \$4.00 per hour, plus \$250.00 lump sum payment per month for frontline healthcare workers who work over 100 hours per month.

Unifor Local 229 has been receiving a significant increase in calls and emails with questions regarding who is entitled to the premiums and when are they going to be receiving the money. We have redirected members to contact their supervisors and management teams for further information. We have also reached out to our MPPs and our National union for further clarification.

The current list of eligible workers [is posted on the government's website](#) and the May 29 government order [can be found here](#).

Early on, Unifor pushed for additional pay for critical front-line workers. On April 17, Unifor launched a video and an online petition titled "Safer Work. Better Care. Fair Pay." Unifor was in fact the first union in the province to lobby for pandemic pay for all health care workers. We have stressed that any worker subject to the emergency orders should receive pandemic pay.

The importance of a pandemic pay was accompanied by letters to the Premier and conveyed in many conversations to both the provincial and federal government. After the provincial government made their first announcement on the pandemic pay, we recognized that many workers were excluded. Our national president sent two follow-up letters to the Premier and we encouraged our members to contact their MPP's directly. Local unions posted contact information for MPPs on their Facebook pages and made every effort to encourage workers to do so.

We have seen the eligibility expanded for the pandemic pay since April because of our efforts. Last month, the government issued another expanded list, but unfortunately there were obvious eligibility gaps in the hospital sector. We met with health care local leadership on May 29 and are taking further actions to push the government to expand the pay.



This includes:

- A new letter to the Premier, calling on the government to include all the hospital and community workers who remain excluded from the pandemic pay.
- We have set up an [online letter](#) that can be customized and sent to MPPs on this issue.

This is clearly a priority issue for many of our health care and social services workplaces. We continue to push for greater inclusion of the pandemic pay and make sure that none of these important workers are left out. We encourage all our members to continue to participate in sending emails and calling our members of provincial parliament and especially to the Ministers of Health and Premier Doug Ford to demand that ALL frontline healthcare workers get what they deserve and that we get it in a timely manner. Follow the link to “online letter” above.

The government indicated that ministries would start sending funding details to employers that receive funding directly from the government and service delivery managers in the first week of June. This has not happened as of yet. The exact timing of the flow of funding will vary across workplaces and eligible employees will receive the pandemic pay through their existing payroll systems. Employers have been contacted for an update by Unifor Local 229 and most workplaces still do not have updates from the province, many employer questions have not been answered by the funders.

As part of our plan to fight back about the exclusion of many hospital workers from pandemic pay, your local union and workplace committee will be distributing stickers to wear in the workplace on Wednesday June 17, 2020.

The message on these stickers is “It takes a team to care”, and we encourage all members to wear the sticker, even those who are already included in the pay. We also ask that you share photos of yourselves with the stickers on social media. Use the hashtags **#PandemicPay** and **#ItTakesaTeamtoCare**. You may also want to tag Premier Ford @fordnation and Minister Elliott @celliottability in your post.

This is a joint effort with Unifor, CUPE and SEIU who also represent excluded members, but we encourage you to share your stickers with any of your co-workers. We will issue a joint news release for Wednesday morning that we encourage you to share.

Unifor’s position has firmly been that any worker covered by the emergency orders should be included in the pandemic pay. We also encourage you to sign our online petition at : [www.unifor.org/fairpay](http://www.unifor.org/fairpay)



Unifor will continue to provide updates as information becomes available at [www.Unifor.org/COVID-19](http://www.Unifor.org/COVID-19).

Please sign up for the union's weekly newsletter at [www.Unifor.org/subscribe](http://www.Unifor.org/subscribe) and download the Unifor mobile app on the Google Play store or the Apple App Store on your smartphone.

Please forward any questions or concerns to your workplace management and supervisor teams and copy in your stewards and unit chairs. We will continue to advocate for all our Unifor Local 229 members and our communities.

In solidarity,

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