

**MANITOBA REGIONAL OFFICE**

703 – 275 Broadway, Winnipeg, MB R3C 4M6

Tel.: (204) 942-0343 Fax: (204) 956-7071 / cupe.ca / scfp.ca

March 18, 2019

Dear CUPE Members:

**RE: CUPE MANITOBA COVID-19 UPDATE – CUPE CALLS ON SUPPORT FOR  
MANITOBA WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES**

---

CUPE members work hard every day to deliver quality public services that our communities can rely on across Manitoba. We want to thank all members who are working on the front lines of the current coronavirus outbreak.

At this time, we know that public services and the workers that deliver these services are more important than ever as we face a global pandemic. CUPE Local Unions and CUPE Manitoba have been monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic closely. The situation is evolving quickly, and we know that this is causing stress and confusion for our members as facility closures, school closures and service restrictions are being put in place in an attempt to curb the outbreak.

We remind CUPE members and all workers that it is the responsibility of employers to ensure the health and safety of their employees, and that you have the right to refuse unsafe work. Your union's resources and expertise are available to help you. Contact your CUPE Local Union or area CUPE office should you have questions.

Your union is working hard to protect our members' rights and to advocate for our members' health and safety – as well as your economic stability and income security during this uncertain time. **As such, CUPE Manitoba is calling on the Government of Manitoba to immediately address the following issues to support public sector workers in the fight to curb the outbreak:**

- Workers should not face loss of income due to quarantine or self-isolation measures, and incomes should be maintained for workers affected by temporary closures of schools, universities, childcare centres and recreational facilities.
- All front-line workers need access to appropriate personal protective equipment, including N95 respirators.
- Workers who have to self-isolate due to illness, travel or compromised immunity should be able to access paid leave without using sick leave banks.

.../2

**MARK HANCOCK**

National President/Président national

**CHARLES FLEURY**

National Secretary-Treasurer/Secrétaire-trésorier national

**DENIS BOLDOC, PAUL FAORO, FRED HAHN, JUDY HENLEY, SHERRY HILLIER**

General Vice-Presidents/Vice-présidences générales

- Doctor note requirements by public-sector employers should be waived.
- With schools and childcare centres closing\*, the government needs to provide substantial financial assistance for parents who cannot afford alternative care, or who need to miss work to care for a child.
- Legislation to protect the jobs of workers and waive the requirements for sick notes during the pandemic.
- Call on the federal government to expand access to Employment Insurance, increase benefit levels, and reduce eligibility requirements.
- Instruct crown and municipal utilities, banks, landlords, credit card companies and financial institutions to extend and relax mortgage, rent and bill payment requirements, loan servicing obligations, and other responsibilities facing consumers and households.

**If you are experiencing symptoms and recently traveled outside Canada or you were exposed to someone who has COVID-19, it is advised that you stay home and contact Health Links (204-788-8200 or toll-free at 1-888-315-9257) for instructions.**

Shared Health also offers an online self-screening tool:  
<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>

**\*NOTE: Parents who will be providing front-line health care or are a member of a fire, police or paramedic service and not be able to find alternative childcare while services are suspended are asked to contact 204-945-0776 or 1-888-213-4754 (toll-free).**

*For the latest news visit:*

**Government of Canada:** <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/being-prepared.html>

**Government of Manitoba:** <https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/coronavirus/>

**Shared Health** (including resources for health care staff): <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/health-providers/coronavirus-resources/>

**Employment Insurance (EI) Sickness Benefits:** [www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/coronavirus.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/coronavirus.html)

CUPE will be posting updates as they become available on the CUPE National website at [www.cupe.ca/search/COVID](http://www.cupe.ca/search/COVID). We recommend checking back regularly.