



MARINE WORKERS & BOILERMAKERS INDUSTRIAL UNION LOCAL 1

UNION UPDATE TO MEMBERS – March 30, 2020

The Union has been monitoring the COVID situation and in hopes to keep our members and staff healthy during this critical time and in effort to support the halt of the potential spread of the virus, the Union has temporarily closed its office to all non-staff. Furthermore, Denyse is currently quarantined, working from home after returning from Europe.

We are currently postponing some meetings and until further notice we have cancelled general business meetings.

Everyday seems to bring changes to the newly developed benefits available through the Federal government. Today, they announced more help for businesses in hopes of avoiding layoffs, by offering wage subsidy for businesses who have incurred a decline of 30% or more in revenue since the COVID crisis.

Employers would get a government subsidy to cover up to 75% of employees' current wages — for the first \$58,700 worth of salary. That means the maximum amount of subsidy would translate to \$847 per week, unless an employer tops up any salary exceeding \$58,700 from the business's own funds.

The federal government announced several changes for how federal benefits will work moving forward. Here is a summary. Payment of \$2000 per month for up to 4 months.

- CERB is available for people who lost income due to lay-offs, sickness, quarantine, caring for someone who is ill with COVID-19, or caring for a child due to school/daycare shut downs.
- To qualify, applicants must have made at least \$5000 over the last year from employment, self-employment, EI benefits, or paternity leave benefits.
- Applications will be available early April 2020 and the first payment should be received 10 days after completing the application.
- Apply online through CRA My Account, My Service Canada Account, or a tollfree number that has not yet been released.

Please refer to the Service Canada website for the most up to date information or if you have any questions regarding these benefits.

More information is available at:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-finance/economic-responseplan.html> Canada COVID-19 Economic Response Plan

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/coronavirus.html> Service Canada COVID-19 info

Service Canada: 1-800-206-7218 **due to increase call volume, avoid calling if not urgent**

CONTACT INFORMATION

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The Provincial government has announced a B.C. Emergency Benefit for Workers which includes:

- A one-time \$1,000 payment to people who lost income because of COVID-19. If you qualify for any of the EI benefits or CERB, you will automatically qualify and be paid by the B.C. government.
- Temporary Rental Supplement – up to \$500 per month towards rent for low to moderate earners, paid directly to landlords on your behalf.
- Temporary deferral of student loans and ICBC monthly payments.

Additional information is available at: www.gov.bc.ca/covid19

Right to Refuse Unsafe Work - Steps to follow for refusing unsafe work

1. Immediately report the unsafe condition to the supervisor or employer;
2. Supervisor or employer must immediately investigate and ensure any unsafe condition is remedied without delay or explain why condition is safe;
3. If still seen as unsafe, supervisor must investigate the matter in the presence of the worker and a worker member of the JOHS Committee;
4. Still not resolved, report it to your shop steward or Union office.

FOR THOSE CURRENTLY ON WCB - WCB and WCAT Updates

WCAT delays in person hearings through May 31, 2020 - WCAT is following recommendations for social distancing. As a result, it will not be conducting in person hearings until at least the end of May. Appeal coordinators will be contacting all parties with scheduled in-person hearings to discuss continuing those in-person hearings either via teleconference or written submissions.

Gradual Return To Work during a COVID19 Shutdown - WCB has announced wage continuity during shutdowns for those workers on a GRTW or Board sponsored accommodations. If an employer does not pay a worker during the shutdown, tell your members to contact WCB and they will restart wage-loss benefits for the duration of any scheduled graduated return-to-work plan and/or the period of time that the worker is unable to work due to injury or disease.

Treatment Programs during COVID19 - WCB has also announced that if a worker is engaged in a treatment program during Covid19 and they are unable to attend the program as a result of the pandemic they will continue to receive wage loss benefits. Typically, non-attendance may be a basis to suspend benefits. That will not be the case during the pandemic.