

March 16, 2020

### **UA Local 516 COVID-19 Update**

By now, you have no doubt been bombarded with media (tv, social media, email, etc) regarding the current state of affairs resulting from the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). As the situation continues to evolve rapidly, we did not want to rush the process of passing information along to our members and contractors until we had some clarity as to how the current crisis would progress and how government health officials and other organizations would be directly affecting UA Local 516, its membership, its contractors, and RTI Refrigeration Training Institute.

As with most organizations that have issued press releases so far, UA Local 516 is closely monitoring the COVID-19 situation and is following the direction of both the BC provincial and Canadian federal governments as far as recommendations and requirements go in performing our civic duty to help slow the outbreak of the virus. We are trying to get the most current information out to our members and contractors as the situation evolves, and procedural measures are defined. Please check our website [ua516.org](http://ua516.org) for the latest communications regarding COVID-19. If you are a member, please ensure you are signed up for the member email list. We are also using social media to pass along updates.

### **Local 516 Union Office**

Effectively immediately, the union office is, for all intents and purposes, CLOSED to walk-ins and in-person meetings. Most interactions and business can be handled via phone, email, and mail. We plan to continue to have a presence in the union office during regular office hours, Monday-Friday 8am-4pm, to help members and contractors via these methods. The union office can be contacted at 604.882.8212, toll-free at 1.800.729.6699, and by email at [info@ua516.org](mailto:info@ua516.org).

### **RTI Refrigeration Training School**

RTI Refrigeration Training Institute issued a release to all contacts on Friday, March 13, 2020 regarding the state of classes and the enhanced measures that are taking place to try to limit the spread of COVID-19. As of right now, classes are still on schedule. If anything changes, notification will be made to all affected parties as soon as possible.

### **Employment Insurance**

The federal government has waived the waiting period for EI for those who are quarantined due to COVID-19. More information can be found online at:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/coronavirus.html>

If you wish to self-isolate without a doctor's note, it is recommended that you call Service Canada at 1-833-381-2725.

## **Short-Term Disability**

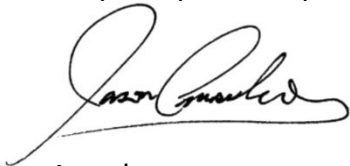
If you are covered by the Refrigeration Workers Health & Welfare Plan, Canada Life has waived the short-term disability waiting period for members who are ordered by a medical doctor or public health official to self-quarantine. This includes those that were already travelling out of country when the government issued the requirement of a 14-day self-quarantine to those returning to Canada. The Canada Life press release is posted on our website. If you have any questions, call the union office at 604.882.8212.

## **What we can do**

It is important that all of us do what we can to keep the pressure off our healthcare system at this time. Some of the best advice we've heard so far came in a video, "don't think about changing your behavior so that you don't get it, think about changing your behavior so that you don't give it to somebody else". Remember to wash your hands regularly, avoid shaking hands with others, avoid large gatherings if possible, re-schedule meetings if possible, cancel upcoming out-of-country vacations if necessary, stay home from work if you are experiencing flu-like symptoms, etc. There is no need to panic, but I understand that it helps to be prepared in the case of the need to self-quarantine. Buy what you need; try your best not to fall into the mob or hoarding mentality. Like we do as a union, our communities, province, and country will get through this tough time if we're all looking out for each other.

We will continue to monitor all updates from Health and Government Officials as the situation progresses. As further developments occur, we will endeavor to get updates out to our members and contractors in a timely and responsible manner. Be sure to regularly check [ua516.org](http://ua516.org), your email, and our social media for when these updates occur.

Fraternally and yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Amesbury", with a stylized, flowing script.

Jason Amesbury  
Business Manager  
Financial Secretary-Treasurer  
UA Local 516