



FYI



| PLEASE POST |

Date: September 18, 2020

To: All Local 803 BCGEU Members working in the Downtown Eastside

Re: Covid – 19 cases in the Downtown Eastside

As you know, the number of cases of Covid-19 around the province has been consistently increasing in the last number of weeks and months. In recent weeks we have become aware of an increase in cases of Covid-19 circulating in the Downtown Eastside.

Your Union wants to ensure that you are taking all the necessary precautions to stay safe while doing the important front line work that you do.

The most current information available indicates that the COVID-19 virus is most commonly spread when in close contact with an infected person through:

- respiratory droplets;
- close, prolonged personal contact; and
- touching an infected area, then touching mouth, nose or eyes before washing hands.

Our advice to members continues to be that if you are unable to maintain two meters of physical distance with co-workers, clients, or members of the community while performing your duties you should be wearing a medical mask and eye protection. This includes when your duties may require you to directly administer medication such as Naloxone or provide first aid.

If you are required to directly administer medication or first aid to a person who has been diagnosed – or symptomatic – with COVID-19, PPE requirements should increase to a medical mask, eyewear, gloves, and gown.

Your Employer should be providing you with the necessary PPE to complete your work safely. Your union has been in regular contact with WorkSafeBC in relation to COVID-19 issues and your employer is still obligated to meet their core Workers Compensation Act and their Occupational Health & Safety responsibilities during this outbreak



If proper PPE is not available, is being denied to you, or if you have specific questions about COVID-19, please direct your inquiries to your union representative (your Joint Health and Safety Committee member or a steward). If you cannot reach one of these union representatives, please email ohs@bcgeu.ca.

If at any time you feel that the work you are performing is unsafe, you or any other member can exercise your right to refuse unsafe work using the following process:

Step 1: Inform your immediate supervisor or employer you are refusing unsafe work as per Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) regulation 3.12. The employer must investigate your concerns and make it safe for you. If the employer disagrees with your belief that the work is unsafe, go to step 2.

Step 2: The employer must include a union rep or OH&S rep to investigate your concerns. If no rep or OH&S person available, then the worker gets to choose another worker to assess the situation. If the worker still believes the work is unsafe, go to step 3.

Step 3: The worker and employer together call WCB to inform them of a refusal of unsafe work. WCB is expected to investigate without undue delay and assess and make their determination. In the meantime, the employer can assign you to a different task while the investigation is ongoing. Only when WCB says it is safe to resume the refused work should you carry out the work.

For updated information please refer to:

<http://covid-19.bccdc.ca/>
<https://www.bcgeu.ca/covid>

The officers and staff of the BCGEU are incredibly proud of the work you are doing to provide services to those who are the most vulnerable in our society.

In Solidarity,

Masoud Aminzavvar
Local 803 Chairperson - Community Health Services (8)

