

May 4, 2020

VIA EMAIL

Honourable Minister Christine Elliot
Ministry of Health
438 University Ave, 8th floor,
Toronto, Ontario M5G 2K8

Dear Minister Elliot:

Re: Pandemic Pay

Last week, LiUNA Local 3000 welcomed the provincial government's Pandemic Pay announcement as an important step toward recognizing the many risks our members face on the front lines in the fight against COVID-19. However, the list of eligible workers appears to exclude many essential frontline healthcare workers including Laboratory Staff, Phlebotomists, Sonographers, Cardiac and Diagnostic Imaging Technicians and Technologists, and other allied health workers.

Workers in every classification in hospitals, community care, shelters, residential facilities and seniors care have been redeployed and are on the frontlines today – detecting and preventing the spread of COVID-19 and treating those with the virus. All of them are putting their own lives on the line to care for others and protect the public.

Clerks, technicians, and maintenance staff are working side by side with nurses, doctors, respiratory therapists and others to stop the spread and keep us safe. They're all working long hours in dangerous conditions, under incredible stress. Yet many of them appear to have been excluded from receiving the recognition this wage enhancement provides. That exclusion is unacceptable.

What we have heard from the government, so far, suggests that some of those working in front-line health care and social services will receive this wage enhancement, while others will not. We hope this is just an oversight.

All of the men and women working tirelessly across these sectors risk their lives every day on the front lines to protect their patients, residents, and the public. Their work is vital in our united efforts to flatten the curve and protect Ontarians and they all deserve Pandemic Pay.

It has been one week since the provincial government announcement and workers and the public remain unsettled and confused by the seeming omission of many of our front-line heroes from entitlement to Pandemic Pay. We appeal to the government for clarification that the members of LiUNA Local 3000 and all staff working in hospitals and other front-line agencies are recognized and compensated for their dedication.

When the announcement was made on April 25th, Minister Bethlenfalvy said, *"These heroic workers are delivering critical services that support all Ontarians, including the most vulnerable members of our communities, often putting themselves or their loved ones at risk. They are saving lives and we owe them an incredible debt of gratitude."*

We couldn't agree more.

We call on you to clarify that the list of those entitled to Pandemic pay includes all staff working in front-line health care and social services, especially those in hospitals. Let's not leave anyone behind!

On behalf of the 8500 proud members of LiUNA Local 3000,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ann Waller".

Ann Waller
President and Business Manager