

March 29, 2021

## Thank You So Much, Local Health and Safety Representatives!

The global pandemic is now more than a year old, and we still have no certainty on how and when it will end. We have yet to see exactly where postal workers will stand in the line for vaccinations, and we must continue to take appropriate precautions for at least several more months.

CUPW has worked as closely as we can with Canada Post Corporation (CPC), to stay informed on the potential for workplace transmission, and to ensure that members – who have been exposed to the virus or have need for special leaves because of the pandemic – are looked after. And we have worked to compel CPC and our other employers to do everything possible to protect our members' health and safety at work, which is complicated and ever-changing.

In all this, our Local Joint Health and Safety Committees – and Health and Safety representatives in post offices of 19 members or less – have shouldered an extra burden, well beyond what they could have foreseen when they stepped up for this important union work.

Some local committees and representatives have been involved in procuring Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) equipment where employers were unable to find PPE quickly enough; sourcing hand sanitizer; working with local management to adapt scheduling; working with businesses to adapt delivery methods; ensuring proper signage for social distancing; responding to member concerns on the workforce; escalating unresolved issues; working on accommodations for members; floor mapping to ensure proper physical distancing; taking part in inspections and investigations; co-operating with local health authorities and government safety officers;

following and communicating public health authority guidelines; keeping crucial records up to date; talking to the members and hearing their concerns; and staying up to date on any changes to legislation, and more.

There haven't been many consistent resources and standards to make it easier: different regulations and standards apply in different provinces; PPE is not always available where and when we need it; health authorities are often overwhelmed and unable to manage all their duties and have a lot of discretion in how to handle things from case to case. As a result, nothing becomes routine; there are new challenges all the time.

Local Health and Safety reps: For all you're doing to get us all through the pandemic safely, the National Health and Safety Committee thanks you and wishes you good health.

Please reach out to social stewards or to your local executive if you're struggling – after one year of COVID-19, the fatigue is real, and your union can help you cope or assist in locating local resources to address immediate or ongoing concerns.

For all other members: please take a moment to thank the health and safety reps in your local. They've been working tirelessly to protect us all through this experience, and we need to recognize that they have saved lives doing it.

In Solidarity,

All the members of the National Health and Safety Committee

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