



Government
— of —
Saskatchewan

Minister of Labour Relations
and Workplace Safety
Legislative Building
Regina, Canada S4S 0B3

April 6, 2020

Kelly Johnson, President
Confederation of Canadian Unions
media@ccu-csc.ca

Dear Kelly Johnson:

Thank you for your email of March 22, 2020, respecting your organization's concerns for workers' rights and well-being during the coronavirus outbreak.

On March 17, 2020, this government passed amendments to the employment standards provisions of *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*. These amendments create a new public health emergency leave, which enables employees to access unpaid time off work when directed to do so by the employer, a physician, the Government of Saskatchewan or the chief medical health officer of Saskatchewan. In addition, the amendment enables an employee to work from home during this time if approved by the employer. This new leave will enable employees to access federal programs such as Employment Insurance and the new Emergency Care and Emergency Support benefits while ensuring their jobs are protected.

Also included in this legislation were amendments to remove the requirement for a minimum employment period with the employer as well as the requirement for a physician's note during a public health emergency. As a result of these amendments all workers can access job protection while away from work due to illness or the illness of a family member.

I can assure you that the Government of Saskatchewan is continuing to work with employers and workers during this time to ensure workplaces remain safe and that everyone is aware of their rights and responsibilities.

The provincial government is establishing a financial support plan to assist individuals and business during this difficult time. One such measure is the Self-Isolation Support Program which provides \$450 per week to a maximum of \$900 in two weeks for individuals forced to self-isolate because they meet the established criteria, and are not covered by recently announced federal

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employment insurance programs and other supports. A second initiative is to establish a six-month moratorium on student loan repayments. This provides individuals with student loans with immediate relief. In addition, businesses that are unable to remit their provincial sales tax due to cash flow issues will have relief from penalty and interest charges.

A website has been launched to provide information on support for workers who have had their employment impacted by the current economic situation. Workers can visit www.saskatchewan.ca/covid19-workers for more information.

The federal government has also announced a number of measures to assist workers, taxpayers and business. The total expenditure on supports for Canadian workers and business is approximately \$27 billion, with an addition \$55 billion for businesses and households through tax deferrals. The intent of this support is to sustain people during this difficult time. More information is available at <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>.

Thank you again for bringing your organization's concerns to the government's attention.

Sincerely,



Don Morgan, Q.C.
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety