

March 23, 2020

Dear members,

**Thank you for keeping Canada connected**

Our country is facing a monumental crisis.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to infect Canadians and people around the world. Our country has moved quickly to take steps toward social distancing, a phrase many of us had never considered a month ago, but we can all easily define now.

Last week saw hundreds of thousands of workers forced off the job as waves of orders moved through provinces to end public gatherings, and to close all but essential services.

While anyone who is able to stay home is doing so to 'plank the curve', as Dr. Tam, Canada's Chief Public Health Officer, is now calling for, telecommunications workers continue to keep our country connected.

**Thank you, for your bravery and dedication to your critical work.**

We know that is not without personal risk, but through your Local Unions, and through the National Union, many employers have heard our demands and are taking steps to decrease risk and provide a safe working environment.

This looks like increased sanitizing of work stations, strict screening of customers, and personal protective equipment. To maintain communication, joint health and safety structures are being strengthened and coordinated between units.

This direct communication with employers is supported by national and provincial efforts to secure better sick leave, and to provide an urgent [package of urgent recommendations](#) designed to make income assistance more accessible, and bring more money to workers in need.

In some ways, this pandemic has increased reliance on Canada's telecom industry, and on Canadian customer services. Unifor members have stepped in as call volumes increase and shutdowns in offshore facilities have caused a spike in calls to Canadian customer support agents.

Your work is not going unnoticed, nor are you left without protection. Your union supports you.

If you have questions or concerns about your workplace, please contact a union shop steward, or your local union executive. We will continue to monitor the situation closely, and will keep in contact with more information as it becomes available.

Unifor has launched a hub for member information about the pandemic at [unifor.org/COVID19](https://unifor.org/COVID19) and encourages members to check the site regularly for updates.

In solidarity,



**Jerry Dias**  
National President



**Lana Payne**  
National Secretary-Treasurer



**Renaud Gagné**  
Quebec Director

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