

COVID-19 Update: Company Personal Screening and Temperature Checks

Sisters and Brothers:

During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic we have been listening to members' concerns regarding their rights and well-being in the workplace. We want to repeat that our goal is to support efforts to minimize the risk of threats to our members' well-being, and also hold the Company to account if it is taking measures that do not comply with negotiated agreements.

The Provincial Health Officer has issued orders to employers to put in place health and safety policies and programs in accordance with existing laws and regulations and to develop a plan to ensure that the risk of transmission of COVID-19 at the workplace is minimized.

The Company has provided you information on Personal Screening and Temperature Checks. The Union has been told by the Company that it requires employees to pre-screen before entering the worksite, as set out in that Company bulletin. That pre-screening includes a temperature check and considering whether you have any of the key COVID-19 symptoms, as described in the Company bulletin.

Our advice is that current conditions, including the travel of contractors from outside the Province into Kitimat, and based on workplace regulations and current understandings of the pandemic spread, support self-screening before attending work, including a temperature check, to help minimize the risk of spreading infection through the workplace and in the community. If changing conditions change that view, including the directions and recommendations of public health and safety authorities, pandemic conditions in our community or expert guidance, we will take it up with the Company.

As a result of some concerns raised by employees to date, the Company has confirmed to the Union the following: employees will be asked before they come on site whether they have a fever of 38 or higher, and if they have not done the self-check they will be asked to do so. The Employer has confirmed with us that employees are not required to provide the list of answers to questions provided and the personal log; those are for their individual use and reference only.

The Union will to the best of its ability monitor implementation of the Company's policies and procedures to ensure that they do not result in a burden on employees that is not supported by the recommendations and requirements of public health and safety authorities, or which do not comply with our members' rights under the union contract. In that regard, if you have concerns about employer actions, please bring them to our attention.

If you have reported symptoms including a temperature at or above 38 and are staying at home and are self-isolating, and you have a question or concern about your rights in that situation, there may be action the Union can take to address these concerns to the Company on your behalf. If you have those concerns, we recommend you contact the Union.

YOUR Union at work!