



International Union of Operating Engineers

AFFILIATED WITH THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS

LIONEL RAILTON

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MEMORANDUM

SENT BY ELECTRONIC MAIL

October 19, 2021

TO: ALL IUOE CANADIAN BUSINESS MANAGERS

RE: COVID-19 VACCINATION POLICIES IN CANADA

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Since the beginning of the pandemic, hundreds of thousands of working people have died of COVID-19 across North America. In Canada, nearly 30,000 Canadians have lost their lives, including Operating Engineers, their friends, and their family members. Countless more Canadians have survived but have been severely impacted by the lasting effects of COVID-19 on their bodies; some may fully recover while others will be permanently scarred with life-altering conditions that drastically reduce their standard of living and their ability to work. Many of those afflicted with COVID-19 are frontline workers who were infected on the job, and in some cases, subsequently spread it to their family members, friends, and communities.

No worker should ever die or be injured doing their job. No worker should ever be sickened at the workplace when measures exist to prevent the spread of disease. No partner should ever have to worry whether their wife or husband will make it home at the end of the workday. No child should ever have to die because their parent brought home a disease from work that could kill them.

Operating Engineers have been at the forefront of health and safety in the workplace. We understand, as working Canadians, that health and safety measures are paramount to ensuring that every worker returns home safe and sound at the end of the day. Over the last 125 years, we have pushed for better safety standards, greater access to personal protective equipment, resources to protect against the spread of diseases, and public policy to ban the use of toxic substances and other hazardous materials. We have made progress, but it is an ongoing process to improve workplaces to prevent further deaths, injuries, and diseases from work.

COVID-19 is a preventable disease. By getting vaccinated, you can help protect yourself and your coworkers from the likelihood of getting sick, being hospitalized, or dying from COVID-19. Vaccination is a matter of workplace health and safety; it helps protect those who are inoculated and limits the chance

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the virus can spread to others on the job. It is the most proven method for fighting back against COVID-19. There is no other solution to ending this pandemic.

It is up to every Operating Engineer to uphold workplace health and safety, and protect the health and safety of themselves, their families, their coworkers, and their communities by getting vaccinated against COVID-19 if able to do so. It would dishonour the memory of all those Operating Engineers who have lost their lives to COVID-19 to refuse to take steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Vaccination is ultimately every member's personal choice. That said, as we negotiate this pandemic, the IUOE will work to support the health and safety of all of our members collectively and their rights to attend a safe workplace. Vaccination is the path that leads to the safest workplace as it relates to preventing the spread of COVID-19.

As always, questions are welcome.

Yours Fraternally,

Lionel I. Railton, Canadian Regional Director

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