



Government
— of —
Saskatchewan

Minister of Labour Relations
and Workplace Safety

Legislative Building
Regina, Canada S4S 0B3

May 4, 2020

Garry Burkart
Secretary Treasurer
Saskatchewan Joint Board Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union
gburkart@rwdsu.sk.ca

Dear Garry Burkart,

During this uncertain time, we are grateful for all of our grocery and retail workers who are continuing to assist citizens in receiving the goods they need. I appreciate the concerns you raise as these businesses continue to operate amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

On March 26, the chief medical health officer issued an order that outlined a variety of mandatory practices and directives including social (physical) distancing in the workplace. All grocery and retail workers, that are considered allowable in the province, must comply with the order. If a critical public service or allowable business service is unable to maintain two-meter distancing, other measures such as self-monitoring of personal health or supervision by infection prevention and control officers or occupational health and safety in the workplace will need to be applied. Allowable businesses must also ensure their occupational health and safety guidelines are up to date and in force to prevent the transmission of respiratory illnesses.

Recently our government released guidance for grocery stores outlining a number of key recommendations. This included sanitation of commonly touched areas, encouraging customers not to use their own bags or reusable containers, ways to promote physical distancing and ways to calculate the maximum number of people in the store at any given time. In addition, there is information for staff on hand hygiene and other key actions. I feel these guidelines are a good way to ensure the safety of staff and of the customers they serve.

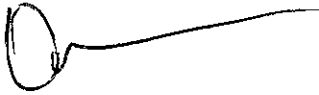
I note, you are asking that we mandate a wage premium for frontline retail staff. We understand some employers are voluntarily providing a supplement in recognition of these workers providing an essential service during this pandemic period.

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Thank you for raising your concerns on behalf of your members. It is critical that everyone continue to take action to support the health and safety of our citizens and those who are serving them. Information for all citizens continues to be available at www.saskatchewan.ca/COVID19. It is our hope that retailers and others are using the information located on this website to take the appropriate actions for their employees and the citizens they serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a circular loop followed by a long, horizontal, slightly wavy line extending to the right.

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