

NEWSBREAK

UAW Local 6000



Michigan's Best

Volume 35 - No. 3

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APRIL 2020

INSIDE

All information in this edition was current as of the printing of this publication.

See Information on COVID-19

throughout this edition

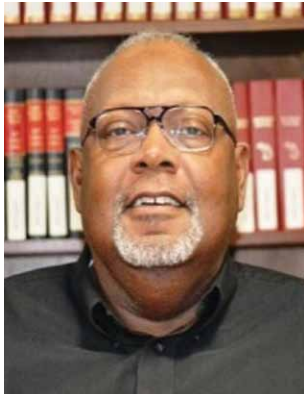
- Managing Anxiety
- Member Benefits
- Federal Legislation
- State Employee Benefits
- Union Member Hardship Assistance

In keeping with social distancing requirements due to COVID-19, ALL DISTRICT MEETINGS are CANCELLED until further notice.

Look for us on...



WORKING THROUGH A PANDEMIC



EDWARD MITCHELL
Local 6000 President

As you might imagine, we are all concerned about the current situation with the Coronavirus (COVID-19). I understand that you are all concerned about the current crisis. The Union is doing all we can to address your concerns. We have been working directly with the Governor, through International President Rory Gamble, to address your issues and concerns.

Most of our members are working from home; however, because of the nature of the work and the need to provide critical services to people of the State of Michigan, some of our members still have to go to the office. For those who still have to report to their worksites, we are diligently working to make sure you have the tools necessary to work in safe and healthful work environments.

Our biggest challenge is making sure the Employer provides Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), in accordance with the CDC guidelines, and that the facilities are cleaned in accordance with CDC guidelines. We have had to file several grievances over this issue. Be



assured that the Union is doing everything within our ability to make sure our members are safe.

Specific departmental issues are addressed in this issue of the *Newsbreak*.

We have had members pass away from the virus and several members are hospitalized with the virus. My condolences go to the families of members who have passed away, and I continue to pray for the members and their families who have contracted the virus.

This issue of the *Newsbreak* is dedicated to issues and concerns surrounding the COVID-19. Please keep up to date by visiting the Local's website at www.local6000.org or following the Local on Facebook. District and Building meetings are discontinued during the crisis.

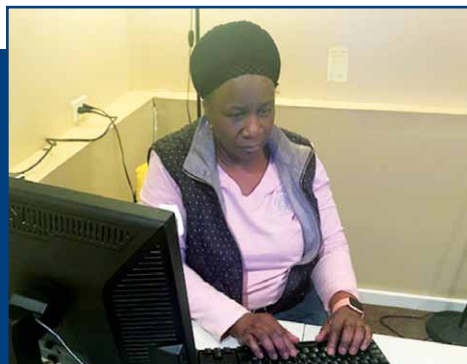


Can we talk? STILL ON DUTY

by Miya Williamson,
Financial Secretary Treasurer

UAW Local 6000 staff and Executive Board wish to thank and applaud our members who have been deployed to work from home and those who are declared critical infrastructure workers and remain in the workplace. We know it is difficult and we are mindful of the sacrifice required of each of you during the COVID-19 crisis. Please know that you are in our prayers and we stand with you and continue to fight for and protect you in the worksite.

If you need assistance in any way, please reach out to your worksite Steward, Local Representative, or call the Local at 800-243-1985. Please review our website, Facebook page and Hotline for updates. Always remember that you are "Michigan's Best" and that *This State Works Because You Do!*



NORMA ROSS, DHHS Madison Heights



WANDA KEITH, DHHS Hamtramck



COLETTE GILEWICZ, DHHS Gratiot/7 Mile

UAW LOCAL 6000
P.O. Box 40720
Lansing, MI 48901-7920



Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Manage Anxiety & Stress

Stress and Coping

The outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) may be stressful for people. Fear and anxiety about a disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Coping with stress will make you, the people you care about, and your community stronger.

Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations.

How you respond to the outbreak can depend on your background, the things that make you different from other people, and the community you live in.

People who may respond more strongly to the stress of a crisis include:

- Older people and people with chronic diseases who are at higher risk for COVID-19
- Children and teens
- People who are helping with the response to COVID-19, like doctors and other health care providers, or first responders
- People who have mental health conditions including problems with substance use

If you, or someone you care about, are feeling overwhelmed with emotions like sadness, depression, or anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or others call:

- 911
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA's) Disaster Distress Helpline: 1-800-985-5990 or text *TalkWithUs* to 66746. (TTY 1-800-846-8517)

Stress during an infectious disease outbreak can include:

- Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones
- Changes in sleep or eating patterns
- Difficulty sleeping or concentrating
- Worsening of chronic health problems
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs

People with preexisting mental health conditions should continue with their treatment and be aware of new or worsening symptoms.

Additional information can be found at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) website.

Taking care of yourself, your friends, and your family can help you cope with stress. Helping others cope with their stress can also make your community stronger.

Things you can do to support yourself

- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
- Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep, and avoid alcohol and drugs.
- Make time to unwind. Try to do some other activities you enjoy.
- Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.

Call your healthcare provider if stress gets in the way of your daily activities for several days in a row.

Reduce Stress in Yourself and Others

Sharing the facts about COVID-19 and understanding the actual risk to yourself and people you care about can make an outbreak less stressful.

When you share accurate information about COVID-19 you can help make people feel less stressed and allow you to connect with them.

Learn more about taking care of your emotional health.

For Parents

Children and teens react, in part, on what they see from the adults around them. When parents and caregivers deal with the COVID-19 calmly and confidently, they can provide the best support for their children. Parents can be more reassuring to others around them, especially children, if they are better prepared.

Not all children and teens respond to stress in the same way. Some common changes to watch for include:

- Excessive crying or irritation in younger children
- Returning to behaviors they have outgrown (for example, toileting accidents or bedwetting)
- Excessive worry or sadness
- Unhealthy eating or sleeping habits
- Irritability and "acting out" behaviors in teens
- Poor school performance or avoiding school
- Difficulty with attention and concentration

See **MANAGE ANXIETY** on page 12



Welcome to Local 6000, YOU make us STRONG!

MEMBER DEPT.

ADAMS, JANENE	DOC
ALVARADO, MIGUEL	LEO
ARKUSKI, MELISSA	DHHS
BAKER, ANGELA	DHHS
BARTON, SARA	DHHS
BEARINGER, ASHLEY	DHHS
BELL, NICOLE	DHHS
BLACK, ALLEN	DOC
BRAGG, COURTNEY	DNR
BREHMER, JULIE	EDU
BRUNDIDGE, KIARA	DHHS
CHAMPINE, MIRIAM	DOC
CHAPMAN, JENNIFER	DHHS
CHOWDHURY, ARIFA	SOS
CLEM, MITCHELL	DHHS
COCHRAN, CARMEN	DHHS
DANIELS, DANYELL	DHHS
DICKENS, DAITIA	DHHS

DIEPSTRA, DOMINIQUE	DHHS
DIACOVO, NATALIA	DOC
DUCHENE-DORTON, STEFANIE	SOS
EBERT, DANIELLE	DOC
EDGECOMB, KARI	Attorney General
ERNEST, NICOLE	DHHS
FELDPAUSCH, MARISSA	DHHS
FRISCO, ANGELA	DHHS
GEIER, ERIN	DHHS
GOINS, LADENA	DHHS
GOLL, MELINDA	DOC
GRAUMANN, ALYSSA	DHHS
GREENING, ZACHARY	LEO
GRULKE, AMIE	DHHS
GRYCKI, AMANDA	DHHS
GUARNEROS-CASTILLO, GENESIS	DHHS
HOUSE, MARK	LEO
HUTCHINS, EBONI	DHHS
HUTSON, ASHLEY	DHHS
INGLE, KATHRYN	DHHS
JACOBS, THERESA	TRSY
JAMES, KRISTIN	DHHS
JOHNSON, AMY	DOC
JULKS, RACHELLE	DHHS



KATO, CAITLIN	DOC
KING, DESIREE	SOS
KNEVEL, ANNE	DOC
KOLARIK, AMY	DHHS
KUUTTILA, EMILY	DHHS
LAWSON, STACY	DHHS
LEHMAN, AUSTIN	DHHS
LUCAS, JAMIA	DHHS
McCOLLUM, CHRISTINA	DHHS
McCOY, SHAWN	DHHS
McVAY, SHANNON	DHHS
MEHI, ANTONETTE	LARA
MOHAMED, ABRAHAIM	LEO
MORGRET, HEIDI	DHHS
PARDO, TRACY	STATE POLICE

PORTER, ANGELA	LEO
RADER, MARLA	DHHS
RANDALL, KARYN	DHHS
REAVES, ANGELA	SOS
ROBINSON, TA'NAY	DHHS
ROSS, RAVEN	DHHS
SAINT AUBIN, BRADLEY	TRSY
SAINTPIERRE, SAVANNAH	DHHS
SHELL, EMILY	DHHS
SIBERT, GRETA	SOS
SMITH, DORIS	AGRICULTURE
SMITH, MONIQUE	DHHS
SMITH, SHELBY	DHHS
STARMAN, ERICK	DOC
STEBBINS, HEATHER	DHHS
STRAYER, MICHELLE	LEO
STRODE, CIREA	DHHS
WALKER, JESSICA	DHHS
WATSON, KENDRA	DTMB
WIERMAN, MORGAN	DHHS
WILLIAMSON, TARA	EDU
WILSON, CHERYL	EDU
WOLF, JORDAN	DHHS
WOODS, KATLYN	DHHS

RECORDING SECRETARY UPDATE

by Charlene Yarbrough

Annual Leave Donations

I have been receiving questions on Annual Leave Donations and am providing a brief summary on requirements to meet the guidelines for Annual Leave donations. Please refer to *Article 39, Section L* in the Primary Agreement for more details.

To begin with, the hours in the Central Bank are donated hours from you, the members. When people are nearing their annual leave cap and can't get approval for time off, rather than lose that time, they usually donate it to the Annual Leave Bank. Only annual leave may be donated and a minimum of four (4) hours with the maximum of forty (40) hours annually may be donated. Any UAW member is eligible to receive from the "bank" as long as the following requirements are met:

- To be eligible to receive Direct Annual Leave Donations, you must successfully complete your initial probationary period and face a financial hardship due to serious injury or prolonged illness of the employee or their immediate family as defined in *Article 40, Section B*. Form(s) can be submitted directly to your Human Resources Office, or you can email to Emma Jackson at e.jackson@local6000.org. Joint approval to request time from the UAW Annual Leave Bank is required by both the Union and Management.

- The receiving employee must exhaust all leave credits, and must be on an approved Medical Leave of Absence (MLOA). However, the Office of the State Employer (OSE) issued guidelines in 1996 as to what they consider a hardship; "To qualify as facing a financial hardship, an employee has to be off the payroll for a minimum of forty (40) consecutive hours. If the employee has leave credits but it is anticipated that the employee will exhaust the

leave credits and be off the payroll for forty (40) hours, leave credits from the bank can be used to avoid a loss in pay." The Union does not agree with this requirement, but approval of the request must come from Management.

- Once the employee returns to work they are no longer eligible for donated time. Donated time must be used consecutively, not intermittently.

For the majority of our members, being off payroll for eight (8) hours is a hardship let alone the forty (40) hours management requires. An employee is not eligible to receive leave from the bank if the employee is covered by LTD or Workers' Compensation. However, an employee is eligible to receive time from the bank to cover the fourteen (14) day waiting period for LTD.

If an employee does not have LTD, they may receive a maximum donation of thirty (30) work days (240 hours) in whole hour increments per calendar year.

There are provisions in the contract for a direct transfer of annual leave. This can occur when the donator designates who is to receive the time, and the same requirements to receive apply. Direct donations must be within a department. There are forms for both the Central Bank and Direct Transfer of annual leave on our website at www.local6000.org. Unfortunately, we have more requests for time from the bank than we have members donating.

If you have any questions, please contact Recording Secretary Charlene Yarbrough at (800) 243-1985, Ext. 337, or Emma Jackson at ext. 215.

6000 VICE PRESIDENT UPDATE

by Kelly Barnett

Every Organization Has a Chain of Command

Your first line of defense is your Steward. Every Steward is assigned a District. If they are a Job Steward, they can only be assigned to assist employees in the same building/worksites. If they are a Chief Steward, they can only be assigned to their Steward District. Stewards cannot cross jurisdictional lines. If you have a specific issue regarding your Steward, you should contact Financial Secretary-Treasurer Miya Williamson, who is responsible for the Stewards.

When your issue cannot be resolved by the Steward, you should contact your Local Representative. Every Local Representative is elected based on their geographical area. A Local Representative cannot cross jurisdictional lines as a result. If your issue cannot be resolved by the Local Representative, you can contact Vice President Kelly Barnett, who is the supervisor for all Local Representatives.

When your issue cannot be resolved with an Officer or Appointed Staff, you can contact President Ed Mitchell.

Remember that an answer you don't like doesn't make it wrong. If you attempt to bypass the chain of command, you will be redirected back to the appropriate person. We are here to service the membership. That doesn't mean we will always agree. It does mean we will work to the best of our ability to ensure that your contractual rights are not violated.

Good Morning Director Washington,

I am writing to you on behalf of the employees represented by UAW Local 6000 who are working for Michigan Department of Corrections. Many of whom are your critical infrastructure workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is with a heavy heart that I send this email to you due to the story below, which quotes MDOC Chris Gautz stating that the employees had to have brought the virus into the prison system.



"For the prisoners that have it, they were (likely) getting it from staff who were bringing it in," Gautz said. "Because, obviously, our prisoners aren't out in the community or doing international travel." What was the purpose of this statement!?! What did the department get out of that!?!

<https://www.mlive.com/public-interest/2020/04/first-michigan-prison-employee-dies-from-coronavirus-24-others-test-positive.html>

We all know that prisoner visitation didn't officially stop until March 13, 2020 when the department issued its press release. Furthermore, prison transfers didn't officially cease until recently. SPDOC 2020-29 didn't go into effect until late last week. How can the department blame this on its employees!?! The department has created yet another Health and Safety issue for UAW and its employees during these unprecedented times. You have put these critical infrastructure workers at risk by blaming them for illness and deaths that they took no active part in.

Our employees put their lives on the line everyday. Even more so now that they are exposing themselves to COVID-19 during every Home Call, Employment Verification, Prison Classroom, Healthcare kite, etc. The supervision standards haven't been decreased, yet you blame them. They don't have all the Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) that others have because the department has chosen to say that it is not required by CDC guidelines, yet they are in the field or behind prison walls with daily exposure.

This is not a time to divide people. It is a time to show leadership, take responsibility and help the employees of MDOC to come together as a family and weather the storm. Your administration must do better.

– Kelly Barnett, Vice President, UAW Local 6000

DHHS UPDATE

DEPARTMENT of HEALTH and HUMAN SERVICES

by Colette S. Gilewicz, Gratiot-Seven Mile District

I am one of 12 workers who are still reporting to our worksite each morning. Usually, the building is full of people, the lobby is crowded, and the phones are ringing constantly. Now, the lobby has been closed completely, and no clients are allowed in the building.

It is eerily quiet. Since you don't hear your co-workers around you talking to their clients, you can hear the rare sound of a copy machine printing out a form to be scanned rather than the constant hum of the machinery. There isn't anyone being paged on the overhead.

The clients who do call are in more distress than usual. Their daily pattern of living has been turned completely upside down, and they are turning to us for guidance and reassurance that things will get back to "normal" eventually.

I try to help as best I can, but for the homeless mother with 2 little girls who had her SER approved for relocation but now the landlord refuses to let her move in, there is little I can offer. Some extra food stamps and the promise of a stimulus check isn't much to hold on to.

DHHS UPDATE

DEPARTMENT of HEALTH and HUMAN SERVICES

by Jim Walkowicz, Primary Bargaining Chair

Know Your Rights

As we are in the midst of the Coronavirus pandemic, some of our Union-negotiated benefits are more important than ever, so it is important that people know their rights.

All Local 6000 members should have recently received their new contract book in the mail. (If you did not receive it, please call the Union office to get it sent out to you again.) As members are facing tough decisions regarding their health or the health of their family, some of the most important sections in our contract now are the leave time provisions. These can be found in Articles 16, 36, 39, 40 and 50 of the contract.

Article 16 outlines Medical Leaves and FMLA leave time (along with other types of Leaves of Absences). Article 36 explains some examples of when Administrative Leave could potentially come into play (for example when the "governor or his/her designated representative" order a building to be closed).

Articles 39 and 40 explain your rights to use Annual and Sick Leave, while Article 50 references Parental Leave, Family Care Leave, and School/Community Participation Leave.

State workers may have heard the announcement from the Governor in January, that the State intends to offer paid parental leave. This is not in place yet. The Union was going to be having meetings with the State about this, but this is temporarily sidetracked due to the coronavirus pandemic.

All of the Contract sections cited above are unique, and cover different circumstances. It is important for everyone to know which sections apply in different situations.

If you believe your rights have been violated, you need to talk to your worksite Chief Steward or Job Steward. If you do not have one, you need to contact your Local Representative.

New Benefit "Emergency Paid Sick Leave"

It was announced on April 1st that we have a new leave available to most State workers. It is called

Emergency Paid Sick Leave. This is in addition to all of our contractual leave rights previously listed.

For those eligible employees who work full time, you will get 80 hours of this Emergency Paid Sick Leave time, to be used strictly for Coronavirus-related issues. The time must be used no later than December 31, 2020.

Not all State workers will qualify. The exceptions include some who are labeled healthcare workers or first responders.

For those eligible, there are 6 reasons you can use this leave:

1. An employee is subject to a federal, state, or local quarantine or isolation order related to Coronavirus.
2. An employee is advised by a healthcare provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to Coronavirus.
3. The employee is experiencing symptoms of Coronavirus, and is seeking a medical diagnosis. *For these first 3 reasons, an eligible employee is entitled to 100% pay. For #4-6 below, the person is entitled to 2/3's pay.*
4. An employee is caring for an individual as described in 1 or 2 above.
5. An employee is caring for their minor child whose school, or place of care, or day care center is closed or unavailable due to Coronavirus precautions.
6. An employee is experiencing any other substantially similar condition as specified by the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services.

This leave is outlined in Civil Service Regulation 5.10. You can see the exact language by going to the Civil Service web site to see if you are eligible. Your HR office should be able to help answer questions on this new leave. This leave is a result of the law passed by the Federal government in March.

If you fall into one of the groups who are exempted from being eligible for Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL), you are eligible for COVID-19 Premium Pay. UAW Local 6000 signed an agreement on this April 3, 2020 (see article on page 9).

Questions or comments? I can be reached at 313-999-9418 or walkowiczj@aol.com

SERVICES Local 6000 MEMBERS

Benefits Representative
NICOLE JONES, Region 1A
MIKE MCWHIRTER, Region 1D
are available at the Local to help with benefits questions.

- Toll Free 800 Line -
will answer questions and refer members to the proper person for assistance on **Mon-Fri, from 8 to 5, at 1-800-243-1985.**

Health & Safety Representative
NICOLE JONES
is available at the Local for assistance with health and safety issues.

EAP Representative
MIKE McWHIRTER
is available at the Local for help with substance abuse, marital, emotional and personal problems.

NEWSBREAK

THE VOICE OF MICHIGAN'S PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

UAW Local 6000 Michigan's Best

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LOCAL 6000 EDITORIAL POLICY

The mission of this paper is to strengthen the democratic efficacy of the Local Union members by providing timely, pertinent and accurate information about the decisions and activities of Local Union 6000, the relevant affairs of the State and Federal governments, and the national and International Union movement. The paper is also the voice of the members. We welcome articles from members. While we welcome your contributions, we ask that they be constructive. All articles should contribute positively to the welfare of this Union and its members. We will accept a thoughtful discussion of all related issues in the letter column, and reserve the right to reply to those that seem to reflect a misunderstanding of the Union and its policies.

We ask that you keep your articles brief. We reserve the right to edit all articles. We look forward to hearing from you. The news and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of Local 6000 or the International UAW.




MEMBER BENEFITS


Your complete guide to Union Plus money-saving programs







DISCOUNTS

Auto Buying Service: Get upfront pricing from dealers when buying a new or used vehicle. Receive additional union member-only benefits. Visit unionplus.org/autobuying. 

Everyday Discounts: Save on local shopping, dining, and services including auto care, grocery coupons, movie tickets, and more. To register, visit: unionplus.org/discounts.

Flower & Gift Discounts: Save 20% on flowers and gifts. Call 888-667-7779  or visit unionplus.org/flowers.

Union Plus Store: Discounts on union pride apparel and items for the home, visit shopunionplus.org. 

Wireless Discounts: Savings are AT&T, the only nationwide unionized wireless carrier. Available to new and existing AT&T customers. Go online to download a coupon to take to an official AT&T store at unionplus.org/att.   

ENTERTAINMENT & TRAVEL

Car Rentals: Save up to 25% on vehicle rentals

- **Avis** 800-698-5685, ID# B723700
- **Budget**..... 800-455-2848, BCD# V816100
- **Dollar**..... 800-800-4000, CDP# 3042236
- **Hertz** 800-654-2200, CDP# 205666
- **Payless Car Rental**..... 800-729-5377, PDN# A071900
- **Thrifty** 800-847-4389, CDP# 3042238

or visit unionplus.org/carrentals

Entertainment Discounts: Save on theme parks, movies, theater tickets, sporting events, dining and more. Visit unionplus.org/entertainment.

Travel Center: Get deals on car rentals, entertainment, and find union hotels. Visit unionplus.org/travel.

HEALTH

Medical Bill Negotiating Service: FREE assistance negotiating bill reductions with physicians, hospitals and other medical providers. Visit unionplus.com/billnegotiator.

Vision, Dental, Prescription & Hearing Savings:

- **Vision Insurance Plans** – plans as low as \$5 per month, plus FREE Discount Vision program with \$50 eye exams, 35% off frames, and more
- **Dental Discount Plans** – save 20% to 50%, includes crowns and root canals
- **FREE Prescription Discount Card** – save up to 65% off the retail price on brand name and generic drugs
- **FREE Hearing Discounts** – save on diagnostic services, including hearing exams, and hearing aids



To learn more, visit unionplus.org/healthsavings.

INSURANCE

Pet Insurance: Receive a 5% discount on insurance premiums. Choose your own licensed vet. Flexible plans that allow you to choose your coverage, deductible and co-pay amount to find the premium that works best for you. For more information, visit unionplus.org/pets.

HOME

Budget Truck Rental: For local moves ave 20% on Budget Truck Rentals. To learn more, visit unionplus.org/budgettruck.

Mortgage Program: The Union Plus Mortgage Program offers competitive interest rates on a wide range of mortgage options, plus special benefits including hardship assistance for union members. This program is available to active and retired union members, their parents and children. Visit unionplus.org/mortgage.  

Real Estate Rewards: By working with pre-screened real estate agents, members can earn \$500 for every \$100,000 in home value after closing. Cash back not available in all states. Call 800-284-9756 or visit unionplus.org/realestate.

Save My Home Hotline: Free, confidential counseling, available 24/7, to help union members facing foreclosure. Call 866-490-5361 to speak to a HUD-certified counselor, 24/7, or visit unionplus.org/savemyhome.

Moving Discounts: Exclusive discounts on interstate moving, packing and in-transit storage through North American Van Lines. Visit unionplus.org/movingvans or call 888-813-9595, and reference your Union Plus discount.




LEGAL & EDUCATION

Free College: Union members and their families can earn an Associate Degree with NO out-of-pocket cost. Classes are offered through Eastern Gateway Community College, a public, non-profit school in the University System of Ohio and is regionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. To learn more, call 888-590-9009 or visit unionplusfreecollege.org.

Legal Services: Choose from two levels of legal savings: a prepaid legal plan with full coverage on a wide range of services or free access to a discount legal plan. To learn more, visit unionplus.org/legal.

Scholarships: Members and their children can apply for Union Plus College Scholarships with cash awards of \$500-\$4,000, \$150,000 awarded annually. Visit unionplus.org/scholarships.

MONEY & CREDIT

Credit Cards: designed for union members, featuring competitive rates and U.S.-based customer service. Learn more and select the card that's right for you, visit uawcard.com or call 800-522-4000.   

!Credit approval required. Terms and conditions apply. See www.unioncardapply.com for details. Union Plus Credit Cards are issued by Capital One, N.A., pursuant to a license Mastercard International Incorporated. Capital One, N.A. is not responsible for the ??? of this message and/or any of the other third party products/services mentioned.

Credit Counseling: Get a free budget analysis and money management advice from an accredited, non-profit counseling program, call 877-833-1745 or visit unionplus.org/creditcounseling.

*Message and data rates may apply depending on your cell plan. You can opt out of our text service at any time by replying STOP to any message that you receive.

See all of your money-saving benefits at unionplus.org

For a complete list of benefits, visit unionplus.org/uaw

Stay Up-To-Date on Union Plus Benefits and Discounts:

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Go to unionplus.org

 Follow on Facebook
facebook.com/unionplus

 Get mobile text benefit alerts*
Text UNION to 22555

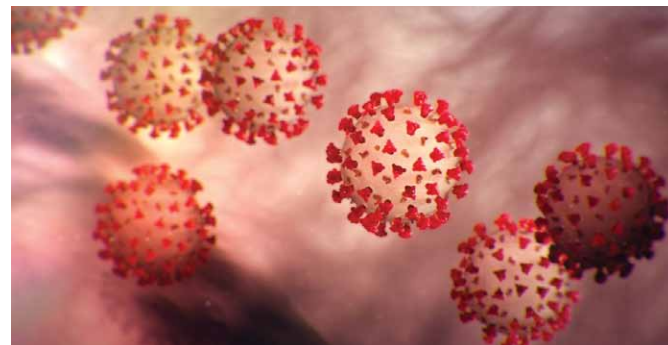
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THE U.S. RESPONSE TO COVID-19: What's in Federal Legislation and What's Not, but Still Needed

by Shawn Fremstad and Eileen Appelbaum (March 26, 2020)

This document is based on the two COVID-19 bills enacted by Congress to date – the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act (C1) and Families First Coronavirus Response Act (C2) – and our best understanding of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) (C3). This is not a comprehensive summary of all provisions in the three bills, but does include most major funding increases (\$1 billion or more) and very large programs. We will continue to refine and update this document as more information becomes available. For a comparison of the Taking Responsibility for Workers and Families Act, legislation introduced by Democrats in the House of Representatives on March 23, 2020, and the CARES Act, see this explainer by the Progressive Caucus Action Fund.



PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

WHAT'S IN

Until 12/31/2020, up to 12 weeks of paid leave for employees who are “unable to work due to a need for leave to care for their child because the school or day care has been closed or the child care provider is unavailable due to a public health emergency.” (C2)

Pay must be equal to at least two-thirds of regular pay, but employers do not have to pay more than \$200/day and \$10,000/total per employee. Employers not required to pay during the first 10 days of leave. (C3)

Does not apply to private businesses with 500 or more employees. (C2) Notably, does not apply to large chains that employ 500 or more employees overall, but fewer than 500 per physical outlet (e.g. Starbucks), even though these same chains are eligible for new forgivable loans to “small” businesses to maintain payroll (see Small Businesses and Nonprofits on page 7).

DOL may exempt businesses with fewer than 50 employees. (C3) OMB can exclude any or even all executive branch federal employees. (C3)

Provides tax credit against payroll taxes owed by employers to cover the cost of required leave. Leave pay also available to self-employed via tax credit. (See Business Tax Provisions on page 7.)

WHAT'S NOT, BUT STILL NEEDED

Paid leave should not expire on 12/13/2020.

Paid leave should be extended to include employees who meet any of the following conditions:

- 1) are unable to work because they are caring for themselves, subject to a quarantine order or have been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to coronavirus concerns;
- 2) are caring for family member, including an adult child with a disability, who meets above conditions; or
- 3) are employed by private businesses with 500 or more employees.

Eliminate DOL authority to exempt businesses with fewer than 50 employees.

Eliminate OMB authority to exclude federal employees.

PAID SICK TIME LEAVE

WHAT'S IN

Until 12/31/20, up to 80 hours of paid sick time for employees who are unable to work or telework due to a need for leave because the employee is: 1) subject to quarantine or isolation order (or caring for someone who is subject to quarantine or isolation order); 2) has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to coronavirus concerns; 3) is experiencing symptoms of coronavirus and seeking a medical diagnosis; 4) caring for their child if their school or day care has been closed, or the child care provider is unavailable, due to coronavirus precautions. (C2)

Must be equal to at least two-thirds of regular pay, but employers do not have to pay more than \$511/day and \$5,100/total per employee. For paid sick leave taken to care for someone else, employers do not have to pay more than \$200/day and \$2,000/total.

Same employer exclusions as Paid Family and Medical (above).

Provides refundable tax credit against payroll taxes owed

by employers to cover 100% of the cost of required leave. Leave pay is also available to self-employed via tax credit. (See Business and Self-Employment Tax Provisions below.)

WHAT'S NOT, BUT STILL NEEDED

Full pay should be provided to workers using paid sick time for any of the allowable purposes.

Employers with 500 or more employees should not be excluded from the requirement to provide paid sick time leave.

DOL and OMB exemption authority should be eliminated.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

WHAT'S IN

General: \$1 billion in emergency grants to states to provide and process unemployment insurance, including 100 percent federal funding for extended benefits in states with a 10 percent or higher unemployment rate. (C2)

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA): Provides unemployment assistance for certain workers who are ineligible for regular UI (part-time, self-employed, independent contractors, limited recent work history, and others) from 1/27/20 to 12/31/20. Paid at one-half of state average benefits plus \$600/week. Excludes individuals who have ability to telework with pay, or are receiving sick leave or other paid leave benefits. Provides up to 39 weeks of benefits (cap includes weeks worker received regular UI or extended benefits). (C3)

Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (PUC): Through 7/31/20, \$600/week increase in regular UI and PUA benefits. (C3)

Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC): Additional 13 weeks of UI (beyond number of weeks, typically 26, each state provides).

Short-Time Compensation (STC): For states that currently have STC programs – providing a pro-rated unemployment benefit for employees of employers who reduce work hours instead of laying off workers – 100 percent of benefits are federally funded through 12/31/20. For states that begin STC programs, 50 percent of benefits are federally funded, and \$100 million is provided to states to help implement STC programs. (C3)

WHAT'S NOT, BUT STILL NEEDED

Immigrant workers without SSNs should be able to claim PUA.

UI benefits should be either disregarded or treated as “earned income” in means-tested programs, including SSI and SNAP.

STC: All states should be required to establish STC programs. Only about half the states currently have operational STC programs.

ADDITIONAL INCOME SUPPLEMENTS

WHAT'S IN

One-Time Cash Payment: \$1,200 payment per eligible adult and \$500 per eligible dependent child under age 17, reduced by \$5 for each \$100 each filing unit's income exceeds applicable phase-out threshold (\$75,000 for individuals, \$112,500 for head of households, and \$150,000 for joint filers). Taxable income not required to claim benefit, but must have a work-eligible social security number (SSN) and not be a dependent of another tax filer. Payment

based on 2019 tax return, if filed, or 2018 return. (C3)

SNAP: No employment and training requirements until a month after the COVID-19 emergency declaration is lifted. In states that have declared an emergency or disaster, USDA must provide, at state request, emergency allotments to SNAP households (but must not exceed applicable maximum monthly allotment). (C2)

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP): \$900 million. (C3)

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF): No provisions.

WHAT'S NOT, BUT STILL NEEDED

All low- and middle-income people should receive this one-time payment, including adults claimed as dependents, 17-18-year-olds claimed as dependents, 19-23-year-olds in school full time and claimed as dependents, and immigrants who file taxes using Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers (ITINs). Early estimates are that 21 million dependents are excluded and several million people in immigrant households (including many U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents) are excluded.

The benefit should be paid directly to people who are income-eligible based on information available to the federal government (e.g., people receiving SSI and SNAP), and a simplified application process should be available for people who would not normally file a tax return

SNAP: SNAP beneficiaries should be allowed to use SNAP benefits for household and sanitary items, and to provide groceries and other household items online. An additional unrestricted minimum-income benefit should be provided to all SNAP households.

TANF: As with SNAP, TANF provisions that restrict access and eligibility, including work requirements, time limits, and requirement to sign-over right to child support, should be waived.

HOUSING

WHAT'S IN

Homeless Assistance Grants: \$4 billion, Individuals and families whose income does not exceed 50 percent of area median income (HUD “very low” income limit) considered “at risk of homelessness and eligible for homeless prevention.” (C3)

HUD public housing and rental assistance: \$1.25 billion for tenant-based rental assistance, \$685 million for the public housing operating fund, and \$1 billion for project-based rental assistance. (C3)

Native American Housing Programs: \$300 million (C3)

Foreclosure Protections: Prohibits foreclosures of federally backed mortgage loans for 60 days. Up to 180 days of forbearance for borrows of a federally backed mortgage loan who has experienced a financial hardship related to COVID-19. Provides up to 90 days forbearance on multi-family properties with federally backed loans. Borrowers receiving forbearance may not evict or charge late fees to tenants during forbearance period. (C3)

Eviction Protection: If a landlord's mortgage on rental property is insured or assisted in any way by HUD or various other federal entities, the landlord may not evict tenants or charge fees or penalties for 120 days starting on day of enactment. (C3)

continued on next page

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WHAT'S NOT, BUT STILL NEEDED

Dedicated funding should be provided for emergency rental and mortgage assistance, beyond homeless assistance, and limitations on foreclosure or eviction should be extended to non-federally assisted housing.

Funding for HUD public housing and rental assistance is insufficient to meet existing unmet need among eligible households.

HEALTH CARE CAPACITY

WHAT'S IN

State, Local, and Tribal Government: \$150 billion Coronavirus Relief fund that will provide state, local, and tribal government with additional resources to address the pandemic. (See State, Local, and Tribal Government Relief section at bottom right.) (C3)

Hospitals: \$100 billion for a new program to provide grants to hospitals and other entities to cover unreimbursed health care related expenses or lost revenues attributable to the coronavirus health emergency. (C3)

Strategic National Stockpile (Medical Supplies): \$16 billion for supplies of pharmaceuticals, personal protective equipment, and other medical supplies. (C3)

CDC: \$4.3 billion for federal, state, and local public health agencies to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus, including \$1.5 billion to support states, locals, territories, and tribes in their efforts to conduct public health activities, including: purchase of personal protective equipment; surveillance for coronavirus; laboratory testing to detect positive cases; contact tracing to identify additional cases; infection control and mitigation at the local level to prevent the spread of the virus. (C3)

Rural Hospitals and Health: \$185 million to support rural critical access hospitals, rural tribal health and telehealth programs. (C3)

VA: \$15.85 billion in order to support an increase in demand for VA services specific to coronavirus. (C3)

Military Hospitals: \$1.5 billion for expansion of military hospitals and expeditionary hospital packages to alleviate strain on both the military and civilian healthcare systems. (C3)

Defense Production Act: \$1 billion to increase the production rate of personal protective equipment and medical equipment. (C3)

WHAT'S NOT, BUT STILL NEEDED

Funding is insufficient and too restrictive. (See below)

ACCESS TO TESTING, TREATMENT, AND PREVENTION

WHAT'S IN

Private Insurance Coverage: Private insurance plans must cover testing for COVID-19 and any future vaccine without cost sharing. (C3)

Medicaid: Increases federal Medicaid funds to states and territories by increasing the FMAP percentage for each state and territory by 6.2 percent, but no increase in match for ACA expansion population. To receive FMAP increase, states must provide coverage without cost-sharing for COVID-19 testing and testing-related services during the emergency period. (C2)

Community Health Centers: \$1.32 billion (C3)

WHAT'S NOT, BUT STILL NEEDED

Private insurers should be required to cover treatment without cost sharing or out-of-pocket costs.

Coronavirus treatment and future vaccines should be covered at no cost for the uninsured. Emergency Medicaid should be expanded to include testing and treatment of COVID-19.

Should provide requirements or incentives to expand Medicaid (in states that have yet to expand), even temporarily, to provide coverage to low-income adults who are uninsured, including those who lose employer-provided coverage.

CHILD CARE

WHAT'S IN

Child Care and Development Block Grant: \$3.5 billion in additional funding. (CV3)

Head Start: \$750 million. (C3)

WHAT'S NOT, BUT STILL NEEDED

Funding is insufficient to ensure child care centers are able to remain in business.

WORKER PROTECTIONS, SAFETY AND SUPPORT

WHAT'S IN

Aviation Worker Support: \$25 billion in aid to passenger airlines; \$4 billion in aid to cargo carriers; \$3 billion for airline contractors. Must be used exclusively for employee wages, salaries, and benefits. (CV3)

OSHA: No provisions.

Employment and Training: \$345 million for dislocated workers assistance. (CV3)

WHAT'S NOT, BUT STILL NEEDED

OSHA: OSHA should be directed to promulgate an Emergency Temporary Standard on Emerging Infectious Diseases to protect health care workers.

Insufficient protections for employees of industries receiving aid (see below).

BUSINESS AND SELF-EMPLOYMENT TAX PROVISIONS

WHAT'S IN

Payroll Credit for Required Paid Sick Leave:

Provides a credit against the payroll (OASDI) tax imposed on the employer for each quarter equal to 100 percent of the qualified sick leave wages paid by the employer as required by Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (see above). (C2) Credit may be refunded in advance. (C3)

Payroll Credit for Required Paid Family Leave:

Provides a credit against the payroll tax imposed on the employer equal to 1200 percent of the qualified family leave wages paid by the employer as required by Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act (see above). (C2) Credit may be refunded in advance. (C3)

Credits for Sick Leave and Family Leave for Self-Employed Individuals: Provides refundable income tax credits for self-employed individuals who would be eligible for Emergency Paid Sick Leave and Emergency Family and Medical Leave (see above), if they were employees of an employer. (C2)

Employee Retention Credit: Provides a refundable payroll tax credit for 50 percent of wages paid by employers to employees during crisis. Employers must have fully or partially suspended operations due to the crisis, or have seen gross receipts decline by more than 50 percent compared to the same quarter in 2019. (C3)

Employer Payroll Tax Deferral: Employers may defer payment of payroll taxes from passage of Act to 12/31/20, with 50 percent to be paid by 12/31/21 and remaining 50 percent by 12/31/22. To hold Social Security trust funds harmless, Treasury will transfer funds from the general fund to replicate to the extent possible the transfers which would have been made by employers. (C3)

Other Business Tax Cuts: Other business-related tax provisions (including modifications of net operating loss rules, an increase in the net interest) will provide about \$38 billion in tax cuts to businesses over the next ten years. (C3)

Tax Cut for Wealthy Real Estate Developers: Suspends limitations on use of real estate losses to reduce taxes on profits from other investments, a tax cut estimated to cost \$169.6 billion over the next decade. (C3)

WHAT'S NOT, BUT STILL NEEDED

Federal government should impose an excess profits tax. Tax cuts for wealthy real estate developers are unrelated to pandemic and bad as a matter of public policy.

INDUSTRY AID

WHAT'S IN

General: \$500 billion (with \$46 billion reserved for airlines, air cargo carriers and "businesses critical to national security") to the Treasury to provide loans, loan guarantees and aid to eligible businesses, states, and municipalities. (C3)

Any agreement between Treasury Secretary must include following provisions: 1) no stock buybacks or dividends until 12 months after loan no longer outstanding; 2) no executive pay increases for 2 years; 3)

limits on golden parachutes (no more than double 2019 compensation), and 4) until September 30, 2020, existing employment levels must be maintained "to the extent practicable" and not reduced by more than 10 percent (only applies to airlines, air cargo carriers, and "businesses crucial to national security"). For businesses that are not airlines, air cargo carriers, or "businesses crucial to national security," Treasury Secretary may waive restrictions on buybacks, dividends, and golden parachutes upon a determination that is "necessary to protect the interests of the Federal Government."

Until September 30, 2020, certain businesses receiving aid must maintain existing employment levels "to the extent practicable" and may not reduce employment levels by more than 10 percent.

Mid-sized businesses (500 to 10,000 employees) seeking assistance must certify that they will not offshore or outsource jobs for the term of the loan and two years after completing repayment, not abrogate existing collective bargaining agreements for same period of time, and remain neutral in any union organizing effort for the term of the loan.

Oversight: \$25 million in funding for Special Inspector General for Pandemic Relief. Establishes Congressional Oversight Commission. (C3)

WHAT'S NOT, BUT STILL NEEDED

Businesses that receive these funds should be required to maintain employment at existing employment levels (no 10 percent reduction). Treasury Secretary should not be able to waive restrictions on buybacks, dividends and golden parachutes. To ensure these requirements are binding, businesses that fail to comply should be required to pay a substantial financial penalty.

Employee protections that apply to mid-sized businesses should also apply to larger businesses. Businesses receiving assistance should be required to remain neutral in any union organizing effort for two years after completing repayment.

The Special Inspector General and the Congressional Oversight Commission do not have any enforcement powers, and cannot provide meaningful oversight of the funds to be disbursed by the Treasury Secretary.

SMALL BUSINESSES AND NONPROFITS

WHAT'S IN

\$349 billion for loans to small businesses (500 or fewer, or meet current SBA size standards), certain nonprofit organizations with 500 or fewer employees, and businesses in the accommodation and food sector that employ not more than 500 employees per physical location (e.g., Starbucks). Loan may equal up to 250 percent of an employer's average monthly payroll. Loan forgiven if employer maintains payroll, up to amount borrower spend on payroll, mortgage interest, rent and utility payments. Retroactive to 2/15/20. (C3)

\$10 billion for SBA emergency grants of up to \$10,000, and \$17 billion for SBA to cover 6 months of payments for small businesses with existing SBA loans. (C3)

WHAT'S NOT, BUT STILL NEEDED

Funding likely insufficient to meet need.

STATE, LOCAL, AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENT RELIEF

WHAT'S IN

Coronavirus Relief Fund: \$150 billion, including \$3 billion reserved for tribal governments, and \$3 billion for District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands, Guam, Northern Mariana Island, and American Samoa. Funding for states (\$139 billion) is distributed based on population, with all states (but not DC) guaranteed at least \$1.25 billion. Funds may only be used for unbudgeted response to crisis. (C3)

Medicaid Funding: See Access to Testing, Treatment, and Prevention above.

Community Development Block Grant: \$5 billion for states and local governments. (C3)

Community Services Block Grant: \$1 billion for Community Action programs to provide assistance and services to low-income (up to 200 percent of federal poverty guideline) people.

COVID-19 RESPONSE from page 7

Education: \$30.75 billion for an Education Stabilization Fund for states, school districts and institutions of higher education for costs related to coronavirus. Includes \$13.5 billion for elementary and secondary education, 90 percent of funds to local educational agencies; \$3 billion for governors to allocate at their discretion; \$14.25 billion for higher education emergency relief for institutions of higher education. (C3).

WHAT'S NOT, BUT STILL NEEDED

Funding is likely insufficient, and restrictions on use limit effectiveness in responding to large declines in state and local revenue.

Additional, less restricted funding, including a larger FMAP increase should be provided to states and local governments.

Education: Funding likely insufficient. No direct funding for hotspots, connection devices and mobile wireless service through the E-Rate program to ensure all students have access to online instruction.

TRANSPORTATION

WHAT'S IN

Transit Infrastructure Grants: \$25 billion. (C3)

Airports: \$10 billion in grants-in-aid to airports. (C3)

Amtrak: \$492 million for Northeast Corridor Grants and \$526 million for National Network Grants. (C3)

ELECTIONS

WHAT'S IN

\$400 million for states to help prepare for the 2020 elections. Funding can be used, among other uses, to increase the ability to vote by mail, but includes no requirements that ease access. (C3)

WHAT'S NOT, BUT STILL NEEDED

Federal government should require states to provide no-excuse absentee voting, at least 15 days of early voting, and allow online voter registration.

STUDENT LOANS

WHAT'S IN

Requires Secretary of Education to suspend all payments on federally held student loans through September 30,

2020, with no accrual of interest. (C3)

For workers whose employers pay part or all their student loans, up to \$5,250 in repayments are excluded from income for federal income tax purposes. (C3)

WHAT'S NOT, BUT STILL NEEDED

Suspension should also apply to commercially held FFEL and Perkins loans (1.2 million borrowers).

Does not include any student loan debt cancellation.

Relatively few people struggling to pay student loan debt have employers who pay that debt for them.

OVER-THE-COUNTER DRUGS

WHAT'S IN

Provides 18 months of market exclusivity to makers of new OTC drugs. (C3)

WHAT'S NOT, BUT STILL NEEDED

Provision is unrelated to COVID-19, and included at request of large drug manufacturers.

Acknowledgements: The authors thank the staff of the Congressional Progressive Caucus Center.

State of Michigan Employee Telemedicine Benefit Chart

Telemedicine visits allow you to meet with a US board-certified doctor online using a video-chat tool. It can help treat minor illnesses such as colds, sinus or respiratory infections, sprains, or rashes, making it perfect for times when your primary care physician is unavailable or leaving the house is difficult. Online doctors can even send prescriptions directly to your pharmacy.

As part of the COVID-19 public health response, telemedicine copays are being temporarily waived by all insurance carriers.

Note: Telemedicine and online healthcare does not replace your relationship with your primary care physician.

Health Plan	Contact Information	Additional Information
State Health Plan PPO: Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBSM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AmWell Mobile App bcbsmonlinevisits.com 	<p>Internet access is required for this service.</p> <p>Behavioral Health/Substance Abuse visits are covered under telemedicine.</p>
Blue Care Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AmWell Mobile App bcbsmonlinevisits.com 	<p>Internet access is required for this service.</p> <p>Behavioral Health/Substance Abuse visits are covered under telemedicine.</p>
COPS Trust (MSPTA Only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teladoc Mobile App teladoc.com/coronavirus Phone: 800-835-2362 	<p>Teladoc access will be available 4/1/20.</p>
Health Alliance Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AmWell Mobile App hap.amwell.com Phone: 844-733-3627 	<p>Internet access is only needed for virtual visits requiring visual diagnosis. (Must use HAPMi code.)</p> <p>Telemedicine is not available for Behavioral Health/Substance Abuse visits.</p>
McLaren Health Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtuwell Online virtuwell.com Phone: 877-440-1001 	<p>Treatment plans are uploaded to a Virtuwell profile you must create after a nurse practitioner reviews a brief questionnaire you complete. You will be contacted if additional info is needed. Internet access is only needed for virtual visits requiring visual diagnosis.</p> <p>Telemedicine is not available for Behavioral Health/Substance Abuse visits.</p>
Physicians Health Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AmWell Mobile App php.amwell.com Phone: 844-SEE-DOCS 	<p>Members must use service key PHP for the \$0 telemedicine copay. Internet access is only needed for virtual visits requiring visual diagnosis.</p> <p>Behavioral Health/Substance Abuse visits are covered under telemedicine.</p>
Priority Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spectrum Health Now priorityhealth.com Phone: 844-322-7374 	<p>Spectrum Health Now is available online through a member's Priority Health account. Internet access is only needed for virtual visits requiring visual diagnosis.</p> <p>Behavioral Health/Substance Abuse visits are covered under telemedicine.</p>

DOC UPDATE DEPARTMENT of CORRECTION

by Kim Williams, MDOC Liaison, UAW Local Representative 1A

3 Organizational Grievances Have Been Filed

Organizational grievances concern issues that are affecting employees on a statewide basis.

The Grievances Concern:

1. *The Employer failing to follow CDC guidelines for all employees;*
2. *The Employers failure to provide Personal Protective Equipment for all employees; and*
3. *Having to conduct substance abuse testing in the field.*

Other issues are being investigated to see if an organizational grievance is warranted.

Some grievances have been filed at the worksite and facility level by Stewards and Local Representatives. I received 80 emails yesterday alone! I have conferenced several times with Vice President Kelly Barnett, Financial Secretary/officer over MDOC Miya Williamson, and UAW Health & Safety Rep. Nicole Jones to pool our knowledge and formulate plans of response.

I have also been in contact with Jonathan Patterson, HR Director for MDOC, several times to pose questions and get answers to the members' questions.

I've Been Sent Home:

Anyone who is sent home due to failing a screening, or to quarantine after being in close contact with a prisoner, employee at work, or for exhibiting symptoms should contact their steward or local representative.

I've Tested Positive and It's Work Related:

Submit a Workman's Compensation Claim, and contact your HR Department.

Praying and working for everyone's safety!

COVID-19 Premium Letter of Understanding

I am sure by now many have heard that all of the employees from the following facilities are exempt from the benefils under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act: DOC facilities, DHHS facilities, Juvenile facilities, and VA Hospital facilities.

For those exempted employees, the following Letter of Understanding has been signed by UAW President Ed Mitchell and the Office of the State Employer. An employee who is (1) working as a critical infrastructure worker under Executive Order 2020-21, as extended, and (2) in a position as a health care provider or emergency responder exempted by the employer from leave entitlements as authorized by bills 3105 and 5102 of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, is eligible.

The COVID-19 premium is up to \$750 per pay period. The premium is prorated based on the regularly scheduled hours worked under 80. An employee who works 80 regularly scheduled hours receives \$750.

Payment for the premium will be made as soon as administratively feasible gross-pay adjustments. This letter of understanding is effective upon approval of the Civil Service Commission and will remain in effect until the earlier of the expiration of the federal leave provisions of the FFCR or the expiration of Executive Order 2020-21, as extended.

HEALTH & SAFETY UPDATE

By Nicole Jones, H&S Representative

Greetings My Union Brothers and Sisters,

In this unprecedented time, it is very important that we empower Management to follow our UAW Bargaining Agreement, Civil Service Rules and CDC Guidelines.

If they are not following these, please start filing grievances and

filling out incident reports. You can email those incident reports to njones@uawlocal6000.org.

Our membership's safety is more paramount now than ever. Please stay vigilant and please stay focused. If you are in doubt, you are more than welcome to call me at (586) 214-1921.

COVID-19 Premium Pay Contrary to popular belief, this is NOT HAZARD PAY!

by Kelly Barnett, Vice President

On Friday, April 3, 2020, the UAW Local 6000 Bargaining Team voted to sign a Letter of Understanding with the Office of the State Employer titled "COVID-19 Premium Pay."

Let's start at the beginning. On March 18, 2020, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act was signed into law. This Act allows an additional 80 hours of sick leave to all employees, except those who are deemed exempt. Within this Act, each state was given the ability to exempt employees.

State of Michigan has exempted all the following, despite classification: all prison personnel, all State hospital personnel, all juvenile detention facilities and all veteran hospital personnel. None of these individuals can use sick leave as outlined in the above act. It is not enough to be considered a critical infrastructure worker.

You must *also* be a health care provider or emergency responder exempted by the employer from



leave entitlements as authorized by §§ 3105 and 5102 of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. You are only considered a health-care worker or emergency responder if you fit the above criteria.

This does *not* mean that you work from home, work in the field, or work at the office during the COVID-19 Stay at Home Order.

Why does every MCO employee get it? Because every MCO employee works in the prison.

The Letter of Understanding will remain in effect until the earlier of the expiration of the federal leave provisions of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act or the expiration of Executive Order 2020-21, as extended.

Honoring Those We've Lost

UAW Local 6000 Wishes to express our sincere condolences to the families of those members who've passed away. The Chaplain's Committee stands ready to provide comfort and solace in your time of need.

- Warren Johnson.....DHHS Oakland County
- Rosetta Brown DOC Wayne County
- Harriet Cutright DHHS Wayne County (Retired)

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**Caroline Ross,
Chairwoman,
Statewide Retired
Workers Chapter**

**UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE,
ALL MEETINGS & ACTIVITIES
FOR THE UAW LOCAL 6000
RETIRED WORKERS
ARE CANCELLED!**

On March 24, 2020, Governor Whitmer signed the Executive order: "Stay Home, Stay Safe" that directs all non-critical businesses to temporarily close, and all Michiganders to stay home or six feet away from others (social distancing measures recommended by the CDC) for at least the next 3 weeks.

Sisters and Brothers, our world has changed with the arrival of COVID-19. We have entered into a very historical and life-changing moment, and we are all feeling the effects of our new

reality. Our entire nation has shut down, except for essential services. The coronavirus has triggered a down-turn in our economy, unprecedented job losses of roughly 10 million to 15 million, causing severe hardship to families and negatively impacting our 401(k)s. The virus is causing overwhelming stress on our medical facilities. As of April 1, Michigan has recorded 7,615 cases and 259 deaths from the virus.

Based on current statistics, those at high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are people aged 65 years and older. It is extremely heart wrenching that the coronavirus pandemic has disrupted our normal lives, but perhaps none is as cruel as the separation of seriously ill patients and their loved ones.

These next few weeks are going to be tough, as we abide by the Governor's orders! Social isolation can lead to feelings of loneliness. We are independent souls, insisting on "taking care of ourselves." We are also social beings and need the interaction with our family and friends. But it

is necessary for us to stay home in order to protect everyone.

As we go through this trying ordeal, the isolation could increase our anxiety and stress. Call daily, text, or communicate on the internet with family and friends. Another choice is to use the time to do those projects that you just didn't have time to complete, or start spring cleaning. But, keep busy!

In an effort to keep seniors safe and ensure that they are able to get needed staples, some grocery stores have established 7:00-8:00 a.m. specifically for seniors to shop. You might wish to take advantage of the delivery programs offered, as some stores deliver for free and others may charge up to \$10. Call your market to find out what is available.

If you experience a financial hardship and need assistance, please call United Way 211. The helpline is available by phone, text or live chat 24 hours a day to connect people with the resources they need in times of crisis. Other resources you might contact are your local Commission on Aging and various churches.

By now, you have received your 2020 Census forms. If you have not responded, please take this time to complete the forms. This year, you can respond in one of three ways: online, by phone, or by mail. When you respond to the Census, you'll tell the Census Bureau where you live as of April 1, 2020.

Responding to the Census is

not only your civic duty, it also affects the amount of funding your community receives, how your community plans for the future, and your representation in government. Specifically, data from the 2020 Census provides the basis for distributing more than \$675 billion in federal funds annually to communities across the country to support vital programs – impacting housing, education, transportation, employment, health care, and public policy.

They also are used to redraw the boundaries of congressional and state legislative districts, and accurately determine the number of congressional seats each state has in the U.S. House of Reps.

Reminder: If you have questions about your BCN Advantage benefits, you are invited to contact Keri Rust, Insurance Benefits Analyst, at 1-517-284-0085 or call 1-800-505-5011 and/or Kelsi Sawdy, BC/BS at 1-517-325-4006

Please contact the Office of State Employer (OSE) with any changes in your status, especially your current address. You may be missing updates from ORS if your address is not correct. Whenever bulk mailings are done from Local 6000 (including: *Newsbreak*, election ballots or other notifications), the address list from OSE is used. If your address is not current you may be missing important notification. Call OSE with any changes. Do not miss any future notifications.

ATTN: All Retiring UAW EMPLOYEES



Doug Gravelle, CFP
Investment Professional



Michelle Gravelle, CFP
Investment Professional

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- NEWSBREAK
- UAW Local 6000 website: www.local6000.org
- UAW Local 6000 Retired State Employees (Facebook)
- UAW Local 6000 Retired Workers Region 1-A (Facebook)
- UAW Local 6000 Michigan's State Employees (Facebook)



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CHAPLAINCY NOTES

by Sheila Stribling, Chaplaincy Chair

On Wednesday, February 6, 2020, the privilege to attend the Southwest DHHS vendor fair chaired by Aspaceia Fisher was afforded to the Chaplaincy Committee. Our mission as stated in the UAW Constitution Article 41 Section 2, "It shall be the duty of each member to render aid and assistance to brother or sister members in cases of illness, death or distress, and in every way acquit her/himself as a loyal and devoted member of the International Union."

We shared grief and caregiver support information, which was provided by The Hannan Center NextShift program and also from Senior Event Coordinator Ms. Danna of the Hartford Village Manor. The event was well attended by DHHS UAW members. Great products and information was made available.

If you would like your Chaplaincy Committee to attend your event/group function, please contact the Local.

Chaplain Sheila Stribling minding the vendor booth



Aspaceia Fisher, DHHS, and Chaplain Sheila Stribling



One of the many event vendors



Social Media It Can Get You Disciplined or Fired

By Kim Williams, 1A Local Rep.

With most employees working from home, due to the COVID-19 emergency, it is worth reminding everyone that as long as you work for the State, "big brother and big sister" are watching! Working remotely doesn't mean you are invisible. Don't let your anger and frustration boil over into your social media posts.

Employees shall not behave in an inappropriate manner or in a manner that may harm or adversely affect the reputation of the Department or the State of Michigan with conduct unbecoming a State employee. These two work rules appear in every department's handbook. They cover behavior on and off the job.

What do these things have to do with Facebook, Twitter, etc.? Let's see.

Employees can be fired for behavior that occurs on their own personal time, using their own personal phone and computer. All of us should have heard about someone's personal views being found posted on a social media platform. This "truth" caused embarrassment to the employer and the person(s) are fired. Bad-mouthing your department (whether they deserve it or not), expressing your disgust at how they handled whatever, your anger over that policy or how stupidly the department handled that incident, even on your own time with a personal computer, can result in you being disciplined or fired.

For those who like to argue "I have free speech rights and I can do/say whatever I want to on my own time," that's a nice argument if you can afford it. You can still get fired and the employer will probably contest your unemployment.

Everyone who has a State computer, cell phone or laptop has agreed not to use those things for personal use.

Are you thinking at this point "how could anyone find your posts, because everything is protected and you don't friend anyone you work with, and you don't use your real name?"

Have you ever found out information from someone's media post that they did not want you to know, or did not suspect you knew? For many users "yes" would probably be the answer.

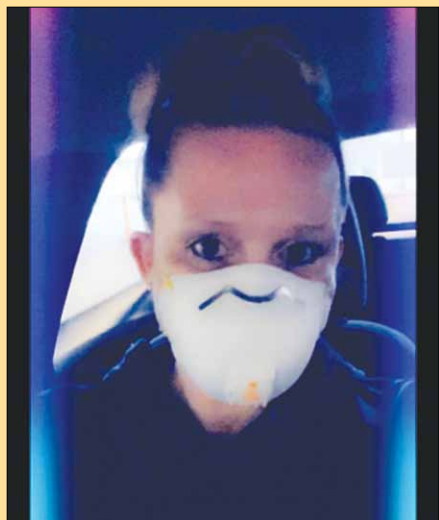
No one knows *all* of the people someone else knows. Add to that every system has identifiers that can be traced back to someone or some business.

Follow this simple rule to avoid all the drama and loss of pay – Don't put *anything* on social media that you would not want the world, especially your employer, to know about.

Social media is a *public* forum, not a confidential diary or scrap book, and there is no such thing as delete! Once you unleash the beast, there is no putting it back in the cage! All the privacy settings in the world can't ensure that the wrong person(s) won't end up with your information.

The State has retrieved many deleted documents/pictures from hard drives. How do I know this? Take a guess.

Just a reminder: WORK YOUR REGULAR HOURS ONLY! Working remotely doesn't mean working more hours, skipping breaks or foregoing lunches.



GENA JORGENSON



SAMANTHA SLONE

UAW Local 6000 Heroes

Gena Jorgenson and Samantha Slone are out in the field doing their jobs for the citizens of Michigan. These two UAW Local 6000 heroes are Child Protection Investigators. They are on the front line protecting children and assisting vulnerable families. They power through the pandemic because people are at risk and in need.

We are so proud of them both and all the other amazing members in our union serving Michigan.

Stay safe and healthy!

– Ray Holman, UAW Local 6000 Rep.