



CANADIAN UNION OF POSTAL WORKERS LOCAL 730 - EDMONTON & AFFILIATES

AGITATE / EDUCATE / ORGANIZE

20.11.26 - Mandatory Mask Policy

Comrades & cousins,

After months of pretending everything is fine, the Kenney government was forced to acknowledge our escalating public health crisis by announcing improved safety measures and declaring a state of emergency on Nov 24. The question now is: will the measures be enough, soon enough, to prevent a full-scale collapse of our health system? This is of dire relevance to our members because, as the provincial government gambles with our health, the probability of our members (and all Albertans) getting infected, drastically increases. Last week 10 of our members were tested, or presumptive, C19 positive. So far this week, there have been 13 more cases announced in our area of operations.

- 11.19 - Rosedale - PO4, early packets
- 11.19 - EMPP - shift 2 cleaning staff
- 11.19 - EMPP - shift 2 maintenance (last at work Nov 12)
- 11.20 - Rosedale - carrier (on leave until working an RD Nov 15)
- 11.22 - Rosedale - day shift, depot assistant
- 11.23 - Whitemud South - RSMC wave 1 (last at work Nov 13)
- 11.24 - Whitemud South - inside worker (presumptive)
- 11.25 - Sherwood Park - RSMC wave 1 (presumptive)
- 11.25 - EMPP - shift 2 parcels
- 11.25 - Delton - 2 LC exposed to same family member
- 11.25 - Nisku - RSMC wave 2
- 11.26 - Whitemud South - LC wave 1

On Nov 23, we consulted with Canada Post on the [mandatory mask policy](#) they intended to implement in Edmonton, as well as every CPC facility across the country as of Monday, Nov 30. The last-minute Alberta government measures announced on Nov 24 supersede CPC plans in Edmonton, and eliminates any ambiguity over if CPC has the authority to enforce a mask mandate -- they absolutely do, and any non-compliance will not have a strong defense.

Exceptions & Equipment

For any assistance, contact our Health & Safety office (780-423-9000 ext 4).

1. **Medical Reasons** - If a member has medical reasons for not wearing a mask, they should get a doctor's note as soon as possible to relay to CPC. Based on the doctor's recommendation, CPC will look into accommodation options away from other workers.
2. **Religious Reasons** - If a member feels they have legitimate religious reasons for not wearing a mask, request the [religious accommodation form](#) from their supervisor, fill it out, return it to CPC management and await their response.

3. **PPE** - CPC says it is well stocked with PPE, including face coverings, and can provide it whenever requested. If any member is being refused PPE, or is being told that none are available, contact our Health & Safety office immediately.
4. **Face Shields** - CPC's position is that face shields can only be used as an alternative to a mask with medical documentation. The union objects to this, and argues that face shields provide the same function of restricting respiratory droplets as face masks. CPC said it will review and get back to us.

Picking Our Battles

Even before the new Nov 24 Alberta health measures, our opinion was that CPC had strong legal grounds to enforce a mandatory face covering policy during the pandemic. While our office will always file any grievance you submit, it is also our opinion that grievances against this policy will not be successful. We want to be honest with you on this because we want you to know that there are no solid protections in place (beyond medical or religious exceptions) to refuse a direct order to wear a mask. For those of you already wearing masks, and taking the well-being of your co-workers seriously, we sincerely thank you. If CPC is not properly upholding the health directives in place, you always have the option to use your right to formally complain, or refuse unsafe working conditions if CPC is not responsive to your complaint. Do not hesitate to contact our office with any question or concerns you have -- we are here to help.

On a final note, to uphold new health guidelines, our office will be locked and available by appointment only. Please call (780) 423-9000 to book a visit.

The struggle continues. Please stay safe out there.

In Solidarity,



Roland Schmidt
President, CUPW 730



Rashpal Sehmbly
Health & Safety Officer, CUPW 730



**PROTECT
YOURSELF
BY RESPECTING
AND PROTECTING
EACH OTHER**

