



January 19, 2022

Dear Employer,

In light of the recent surge of COVID-19 cases in the Pacific Northwest, I'm reaching out to inquire about your plans to maintain a safe workplace for our members.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic we bargained sensible safety protocols with many employers, which would we urge you to implement if you haven't already, including:

- Providing adequate PPE. Specifically, given the transmissibility of the omicron variant, making available N95 or equivalent masks for all workers in your locations.
- Contact tracing to prevent outbreaks. Immediately contacting union representatives or shop stewards to advise regarding contact tracing of any known positive case or presumptive-positive case in the workplace.
- Testing for safe return back to work from quarantine or isolation. We believe that the best practice regarding return to work for any quarantine or isolation period shorter than ten days is with a negative result on two antigen tests, taken within 24-hrs of each other. Employer should provide antigen tests to quarantining workers that they can use at home, or assist them in obtaining such tests.
- Social distancing and ventilation in work and non-work areas. (Re-)instituting staggered breaks, enhanced ventilation in public areas where guests remove their masks and eat; ventilation in non-public areas where workers remove their masks and eat.
- Widespread mask use. Maintaining mask mandates for workers and guests until COVID rates in our area have fallen to a safe level (less than 1 case per 100,000 people), regardless of whether city and county restrictions are lifted sooner.
- Training workers who need to enforce legal or policy requirements that guests provide verification of vaccination status or a negative test to enter their workplace, for example, public restaurants and bars; and management assistance with systematically enforcing both vaccine check and masking requirements for guests.

If you have not already provided us with the most recent version of your current safety policies, I would ask that you do so no later than Friday, January 28.

In addition, UNITE HERE Local 8 supports widespread vaccination and vaccine mandates as an important step for our members' safety on the job. We encourage you to offer employees additional paid time off specifically to get vaccinated and recover from side effects as we've seen this have a very beneficial effect on vaccination rates in our workplaces.

Where applicable, we ask that you provide us with the following information so we can continue conversations with our members to support their safety:

- Where mandates have already been implemented, a roster of bargaining unit members indicating who is eligible and ineligible to work under your vaccine policy
- Any planned date for implementing a mandate, or timeline for determining that date if it is not yet set, including any plans on booster requirements
- Information on what PTO will be provided to facilitate workers getting the vaccine
- Process for workers to apply for medical or religious exemptions

We believe that partnership between employers and the Union is key to maintaining workplace safety and preventing infection and are happy to discuss ways to work together going forward.

Sincerely,

Anita Seth, President