



COVID-19 Bulletin 3

March 30, 2020

Dear Unifor 87-M members:

It's become clear very quickly that not one of our workplaces has been left unaffected by the coronavirus crisis. Our audiovisual colleagues at Freeman and ELC have been laid off or sent home with the wholesale cancellation of events. Our House of Commons technical/broadcast members cycle between working hard from home and being called into work to help keep government functioning. Our EC Toronto teachers are laid off or are struggling to provide online ESL instruction to international students stranded here amid a collapse in enrolment. Our Canadian Bank Note printers of passports and currency are deemed essential workers, according to their employer, and required to come in to work.

And for newspapers, magazines, radio and broadcast, the news is grim. Advertising revenue is in freefall at the same time that readership and viewership are at a record high. Editorial and support staff are working long, hard hours from home or remotely to bring Canadians the critical crisis information they need daily. Employers tell us they are pulling out all the stops to come up with options to support commissioned sales staff, whose income has taken a huge hit. Some employers such as NOW Magazine have begun laying off staff. Things are going from bad to worse, at breakneck speed.

We wish we had more information to share with you at this moment, even though we have been talking to employers constantly as we try to navigate our way through this. Two big players – Postmedia and Torstar – tell us they are working hard on support options and should be ready to present them to us this week, and as soon as we have the details, we will share them with you.

There are two takeaways here: First, things are changing very, very rapidly; secondly, all the terms and conditions of our collective agreements remain in force and any changes must be negotiated with us. Any attempt at contract-violating unilateral changes by employers will be met with swift and forceful action.

Finally, we have a very helpful Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). It is available on our website at

http://unifor87m.org/sites/default/files/file_attach/covid-19_cerb-2020.03.27-en.pdf

Stay safe. Yours, in solidarity, Paul.

Paul Morse

President

www.unifor87m.org