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September 2, 2021

Patty Deschamps, President
Unifor Local 7
405-275 Broadway
Winnipeg, MB R3C 4M6

RE: Bell Vaccine Policy and Unifor Policies in Vaccines

Dear Sister Deschamps:

Thank you for reaching out to us on the issue of Bell's vaccine policy and Unifor's response. We recognize this is important to Unifor members. We know that so many members across the country have been living through the effects of the pandemic for almost 18 months now, both in their working life and their personal life.

The reality is that despite its promising start to vaccination, Canada is far from ending the COVID-19 crisis. Helpful campaigns to encourage vaccinations, and eliminate barriers to access, in recent months appear to have run their course. Vaccination rates are plateauing. The risks to public health for future waves of this pandemic is too high.

Over the summer, Unifor's National Executive Board engaged in an in-depth conversation about the importance of mandatory vaccinations as one of many tools available to reach the higher vaccination rates needed for a sustained and resilient recovery.

As such, it is the position of our union that organizations must utilize all of the tools at their disposal to stop the spread of COVID-19, which includes mandatory vaccination of workers, especially for those in public-facing or congregate work-settings where risk of transmission is high. This also includes regular testing, pre-screening, greater availability of personal protective equipment, and other reasonable safety measures.

You can read Unifor's [Statement on Comprehensive Workplace Immunization Programs and Mandatory Vaccinations](#) dated August 2021, as well as Unifor's [Statement on Vaccine Certificates and Considerations to Guide the Re-Opening of Canada's Economy](#) from May 2021.

I will continue to review all employer policies to ensure they meet obligations imposed by human rights legislation, including the duty to accommodate those who cannot be vaccinated for health or religious reasons. The Bell policy appears to cover off those issues.

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September 2, 2021
Patty Deschamps

From the start of this pandemic, Unifor has advocated for better support, protection and programs to help working people navigate this crisis. We have always said that it is incumbent on governments to take the necessary steps to protect all people in Canada from further spread of the virus, including children and those who are immunocompromised, enabling us all to move forward into recovery. We also believe that everyone in Canada has a responsibility, too, to protect one another.

Please be safe, and in solidarity,



Paul McKie
Area Director for Manitoba
Unifor

CC: Chris MacDonald

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