

Date: April 8, 2020

The Honorable Steve Sisolak  
Governor of Nevada  
101 N. Carson Street  
Carson City, NV 89701

Dear Governor Sisolak:

News reports have made it clear that states will start to see a surge in COVID-19 cases in the coming weeks. Our grocery and food processing workers have been on the frontlines since the pandemic's beginning to make sure America can stay healthy and fed. We are at a critical juncture where we all must step up to do more to protect these frontline workers. UFCW local 711 has 6,800 members in grocery stores and food processing in Nevada and Utah. Time matters and getting safety protocols in place in the next few days could literally save lives. We need you to issue an executive order specifically mandating how both grocery store and food processing facilities should keep workers safe.

- **In-store safety measures:** To reduce exposure to COVID-19 for customers and employees, grocery stores and pharmacies should implement the following safety measures.
  - Limit the number of consumers in a store at any given time to 20 to 30 percent of the store's capacity. Require staff to count the number of customers entering and exiting the store and to enforce limits.
  - Provide access to handwashing facilities, including public restrooms, and allowing employees sufficient break time to wash their hands, as necessary and at a minimum every 30 minutes.
  - Provide 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
  - Provide disinfecting wipes at point of entrance for customers to disinfect carts, at cash registers and/or other appropriate locations.
  - Designate employee(s) to ensure the cleaning guidelines set by the CDC are followed.
  - Implement procedures to ensure that both employees and customers always remain at least six feet apart. Procedures should include a marked "social distancing line" which begins six feet away for all checkout counters.
  - Closure of any self-serve food stations.
  - Elimination of any open free samples or tastings.
  - Make sure safeguards are in place for deli and bakery.
  - Close self-checkout.
  - Make sure safeguards are in place for the meat counter.

- Procedures to sanitize frequent touchpoints throughout the day, including point of sale terminals at registers.
  - Employees that are sick should not report to work and if, when reporting to work exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 they must be sent home.
  - Accommodate workers who fall within the high-risk guidelines, as determined by the CDC, with lower exposure work assignments or allowing them to stay home.
  - Close for a sufficient amount of time overnight to allow for stores to be properly sanitized and re-stocked.
  - Prohibit employees from bagging if re-usable bags are presented.
  - Mandate all workers to wear personal protective equipment (PPE).
  - Provide PPE when it becomes available – masks and gloves.
  - Clearly post signs outside of the store and in the store to remind people to:
    - Have one family member shop at a time.
    - Adhere to social distancing throughout the store – not just at check out.
    - Properly discard their own PPE. Do not leave it in the stores or shopping carts.
    - Adhere to limits of people in stores.
    - Adhere to special shopping times for seniors.
    - Treat employees with respect. If they are concerned with an item being out of stock, to please see store manager.
    - Wear a face covering when shopping, ideally a mask.
- **In Food Processing Facilities Safety Measures:**
- Mandate all workers to wear PPE.
  - Ensure that social distancing processes are in place for those working on the line as well as in break and lunchrooms. People should be 6 feet apart.
  - Slow down the production line so that proper social distancing can be adhered to.
  - Make sure that social distancing processes are clear and signs in necessary languages are created and posted for employees to read.
  - Provide PPE for workers, including face masks.

Implementing these safety measures for grocery and food processing workers in the next few days will literally save lives. Please issue an EO this week requiring these measures. We are also asking you to take the following measures:

- **Child Care:** Again, thank you for allowing our essential members access to pandemic childcare. We now ask that the State of Nevada allocate Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds to provide free childcare to essential workers. The federal stimulus bill lifted the income requirements to ensure that the CCDBG program could cover workers deemed essential to ongoing state operations during this crisis.
- **Free personal protective equipment:** Workers need personal protective equipment, including masks, gloves and hand sanitizer, now. Our request here is simple: our members should be on the list of workers who receive PPE when it becomes available. Since there is no established safe exposure limit to the virus, the goal should be to eliminate exposure to the greatest extent possible – both for our members and the public.

- **Workers Compensation**: In light of the on-going COVID-19 crisis, it is likely that thousands of employees will contract the sickness while performing "essential duties." These workers should be allowed to claim workers compensation and not be burdened with high cost medical bills when government asked them to continue working.
- **Paid leave**: Leave should cover testing, quarantine, isolation, medicine and treatment resulting from COVID-19 for the worker and care for a family member, as well as sickness that may not be COVID-19 but could be indicative of symptoms related to COVID – 19.

Workers up and down the food chain have been required to work in order to ensure our homes have adequate food, supplies, and prescription drugs during this crisis. We need these workers to keep working now to ensure our food supply. Like health care workers, grocery store, pharmacy and food processing workers are essential workers on the front lines of this battle. They deserve not only our gratitude, but support so that they can continue to do their jobs.

We urge you to move quickly on the items outlined above so that workers who are keeping America fed during this crisis have the support they need.

Sincerely,



Michael Gittings  
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