

March 23, 2020

# COVID-19 and YOU

## Accurate information

It is vitally important that members have access to accurate information. The best site for up-to-date and accurate information is the NS government public health site:

[www.novascotia.ca/coronavirus/](http://www.novascotia.ca/coronavirus/).

There is a CBS site with information specific to CBS: <https://www.blood.ca/en/employees>

The NS site is updated every day and often has commentary by government leaders and, most importantly, **Dr. Strang**, the head of public health in the province. As of March 22nd there were 28 cases of COVID-19 in Nova Scotia.

## Legal situation

There are employees whose services must be continued throughout this crisis. For example: health care workers (hospitals, nursing homes, home visits, blood collection), pharmacies, grocery stores, gas stations, etc.

The Nova Scotia government, on Sunday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, declared a State of Emergency because people were not using common sense and avoiding unnecessary contact.

This means:

**No groupings of more than 5 people.** This does not mean that you can't work in a building with more than 5 people. It means you cannot go to the beach, go jogging, go shopping, hold a house party, with more than 5 people. The government web site gives examples of exceptions:

"There are several groups who are essential and exempt from gathering limits. They include but are not limited to grocery stores, gas stations, and pharmacies. If possible, one person per family should be designated to do these tasks. Other groups include construction sites, health-care services, community services (e.g. child protection) and criminal justice services, and law enforcement."

**Social distancing** (more correctly called **physical distancing**) is mandatory where possible. If you are walking down the street, stay 2 metres away from other pedestrians. That's not possible when you are taking blood.

**Provincial parks, beaches, and tourist attractions are closed.** It is now trespassing to go on one of these sites.

**Entrants to NS will have to self-isolate.** Anyone coming from outside NS will be required to self-isolate. There are

exceptions which would include CBS Drivers going to and returning from PEI and NB. The government web site provides some examples:

“Nova Scotia borders will tighten to travellers and all entry points (land, sea, air) will be closely managed. Anyone entering the province will be stopped, questioned, and told to self-isolate for 14 days. Exemptions for cross-border travel include healthy workers in trades and transportations sectors who move goods and people (e.g. truck drivers); healthy people going to work (e.g. health-care workers); and people travelling into the province for essential health services (e.g. chemotherapy treatment).”

## CBS workplaces

Many employers, including CBS, have put measures in place to reduce the risk of employees becoming infected with the Corona virus.

At CBS clinics:

**Pre-screening** of donors has been implemented. Most people who donate blood know that they do not donate when they are not well.

Donors are to be **kept a prescribed distance** from one another.

**Employees on buses to mobile clinics** are spaced a prescribed distance from one another.

There will be regular **sanitizing of surfaces**.

If employees see situations which they reasonably believe to be unnecessarily risky, they should speak with a supervisor and, if necessary, notify a union representative.

If there is a reduction in services, employees will be paid their **specified hours** or their **averaged hours** if they have no specified hours, while they are not working. If there are enough qualified employees a rotation will be arranged.

If an employee has a **child or family member that needs care** they should try to arrange alternate care. It may also be that the employee can work different shifts (e.g. evening shift when the spouse gets home). If neither is possible the employee will be placed on leave with pay.

While on **paid leave** employees must be available for work (except for child care, etc. situations). If an employee gets sick then they are to notify management that they are sick (not giving the diagnosis) and will be placed on **sick leave** with deductions from their sick leave bank, until they recover and are available for work again.

Visit the Nova Scotia web site [www.novascotia.ca/coronavirus/](http://www.novascotia.ca/coronavirus/) every day for an accurate update.

### NSUPE Local 12 Executive:

Renee Karsten – President

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### Information on NSUPE:

[www.nsupe.ca](http://www.nsupe.ca)

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