



**UNITED ASSOCIATION**  
of Journeymen & Apprentices of the  
**PLUMBING & PIPEFITTING**  
Industry of the United States and Canada  
Local Union 170 – Affiliated with AFL-CIO-CFL

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March 31, 2020

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

I hope this letter finds you and your family healthy. We had some encouraging news from our Provincial Health Officer this weekend who believes that all these extreme measures may be helping in the fight against COVID-19. Let's continue to follow the social distancing and hygiene practices recommended by the Provincial authorities so that we can soon return to our normal way of life.

These are challenging times, and I urge you to be mindful of your mental health as well as your physical health. As a member of Local 170 you have access to the Construction Industry Rehabilitation Plan (CIRP), which offers a number of options to keep your mental health in check. CIRP offers long-term counselling to assist members dealing with depression, anxiety, substance use, pain management and other mental health concerns. All services are free, and also available via video conferencing. Please visit the CIRP website, email [info@constructionrehabplan.com](mailto:info@constructionrehabplan.com) or call 1-888-521-8611 for more information.

Local 170 members can also access the Member Assistance Plan (MAP) through the UA Canada National Wellness Plan. The Plan provides immediate and confidential help for any work, health or life concern. Please call 1-833-778-UAMAP (2627) or download the "My EAP" app available for more information.

We are seeing, understandably, an increase in the reporting of near misses on the jobsite. So regardless of if you are at home self-isolating, driving to work, or on the jobsite, please take the time to plan, think and be reflective of what you are doing and do it in the safest possible way.

#### **Update on Declaration Letters – Health Check**

Further to my report last week on this matter, we have been in discussions with CLR to set guidelines with respect to the self-declaration forms, also known as Health Check Forms, COVID-19 questionnaires. We have agreed to sample questions (or substantially similar questions) which we consider reasonable given the current COVID-19 pandemic. Please have a look at the sample form we have attached to this letter. Please fill out the forms if requested. If you feel that the questions being asked go way beyond these sample questions, don't let this stand in the way of performing your work. Fill out the forms and contact the union office as soon as possible. We have stressed to CLR the importance of our members privacy and have asked CLR to remind contractors of their legal obligations with respect to the collection, use and retention of our members' information. (see Attach. 1 at the end of this letter)

## **Local 170 Health & Welfare Plan Enhancements**

The Trustees of the Health & Welfare had an emergency conference call last week and approved the following enhancements to the Plan:

**Health Care Spending Account** - The Health Care Spending Account deadline (normally June 30 of each year) has been extended to August 31, 2020.

**Hour Bank and Self Payment Freeze for July 2020** – The Welfare plan normally deducts 110 hours from each member's hour bank in order to maintain welfare plan coverage for any particular month. The Trustees approved having the Trust Fund cover the cost of health benefits for members for the month of July 2020. This means that there will be no deduction from the member's hour bank for July 2020 benefits coverage. For those members who self-pay for benefit coverage – the July 2020 benefit premium (due by June 25, 2020) will be waived.

In addition, the Trustees approved at their meeting last month, the inclusion of Erectile dysfunction drugs, up to 15 pills every 3 months, under the prescription drug benefit, effective March 1, 2020.

### **Local 170 SUB Plan Payment Increase & Direct Deposit Payment**

The Trustees of the SUB Plan (four elected Union Trustees) approved a temporary increase in SUB benefit payment in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Effective April 1, 2020, SUB Plan payments will be increased to \$125 per week for a period of 8 weeks based on the current eligibility of \$40 from the member's SUB bank. The Trustees also approved online/direct deposit of SUB payments which would allow SUB payments to be deposited directly to a Member's bank account rather than having to receive a cheque. We are currently working on setting this up with the bank and will let you know when it is up and running.

See Attach 2 at the end of this letter for more information or visit the H&W Plan website at [plumbers.bc.ca](http://plumbers.bc.ca).

### **Dues payment online**

As part of our ongoing technology updates, members can now pay dues online through the members' database which be accessed through our website <http://ualocal170.com>. Go to the Members Only Tab and select Members Only Login. At this time, we are only able to process regular dues payments online. If you owe any other type of fees such as re-instatement, initiation fees, travel card dues, etc, you will need to contact the office.

### **Noon Hour Shout Out**

Join us on Friday and every Friday at 12:00 noon in acknowledging the Building Trades members who are working through this pandemic and making sure our economy keeps running. Raise a tool of the trade in respect and recognition of these efforts. We had a great response last Friday. Thank you to the members who sent us their jobsite photos and videos. Please share or send photos/videos of you and your co-workers and salute the women and men of the Building Trades. Use and follow the following hashtags: #bcbuildingtrades #canadian buildingtrades #frontline #ualocal170 #kickcovid

Fraternally,



A.D. Al Phillips, RSE  
Business Manager & Financial Secretary

*MoveUp*