

Premier Doug Ford
Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier Ford,

UFCW Canada Local 1006A is proud to represent more than 20,000 grocery workers across Ontario, working on the frontlines to serve residents and families during this pandemic.

Grocery workers play an essential role in our province's response to COVID-19. They should not only be recognized for their efforts but further protected.

On behalf of our membership, and workers across the province, we urge you to take strong measures to ensure the health and safety of these front-line workers. While performing their valued service, many of our members are in contact with the public. As grocery workers perform an important function in our society, they do not have the option of working remotely. Protecting the health of the frontline workers has a ripple effect, as it ensures their families and the public are also safe.

It is critical that workers at grocery stores are provided with the proper protection to do their jobs. This includes protective measures, like masks, sanitizers, gloves and paper towels as requested and needed. It's vital that workers have access to these products so they can assist customers ensuring both worker and public safety.

While we strongly support using reusable bags, the staying power of the virus on various surfaces puts our cashiers at a greater risk to exposure and potential transmission. For now, we recommend exclusively using single-use grocery bags.

Overcrowding or large groups of people also put workers and the public at risk. Ensuring proper social distancing guidelines means limiting the number of shoppers at any given time. It is vital to take appropriate measures to ensure everyone, from the workers to the customers are protected. Allowing for more frequent breaks for handwashing will also reduce the opportunity for spread.

The public must be reminded that if they are sick, to self isolate and get help from a family member or a friend with shopping needs. Putting grocery workers at risk puts their families and the larger public at risk.

We also urge you to address the important issue of childcare for these frontline workers. Ensuring funding and easy access for paid childcare will enable them to perform their jobs during this pandemic.

It has been a time of great stress and anxiety for all. Grocery workers are an important part of our collective response to this crisis. Our ability to flatten the curve of COVID-19 will only be as effective as our commitment to the health and safety of these and all workers. When workers on the frontlines are healthy and safe, we ensure the larger public is also protected.

Sincerely,



Wayne E. Hanley
President, UFCW Local 1006A
International Vice President