

## Email Update 3/6/2020

SEIU Local 668--COVID-19 and Our Members

Sisters and Brothers—

In the last few days, we've gotten a number of questions from members regarding COVID-19-- how your employers will handle this virus and what you can do to protect yourselves. As of this morning, Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup> there are two presumed positive cases of Coronavirus here in Pennsylvania. The two cases, confirmed in Delaware and Wayne counties, have been home quarantined and are under close medical care and monitoring.

Many of our members have direct contact with the general public, and we understand your concern for your own personal health as well as the health of your coworkers and clients.

This afternoon, the PA Department of Health and its Secretary, Dr. Rachel Levine, held a stakeholder's call which I participated in. The main takeaways from this update were that the Department of Health is not seeing the virus impacting any major operations across the state (so there is no need to cancel sporting events/concerts) but they'll continue to monitor the situation daily.

For office workers, they *do not* recommend buying masks and/or gloves--those are needed for our first responders and healthcare workers who are on the front lines when it comes to dealing with COVID-19. Dr. Levine continued to stress that the public should wash their hands frequently, and that, for public workspaces. it's beneficial to spray/sanitize workstations.

At this time, higher-risk individuals like the elderly and the immuno-suppressed are more likely to contract the virus. As such, the Department of Health is recommending that state and county employers do not restrict travel and do not require employees to work from home.

We encourage all of our members to take every personal precaution to keep COVID-19 at bay. This includes washing your hands with warm water and antibacterial soap for 20 seconds, sanitizing frequent-contact surfaces like doorknobs, computers, countertops and phones, avoid touching your face, and coughing/sneezing into your elbow.

COVID-19 is preventable and treatable, but only if we ensure working people are informed and protected. We encourage our members to remain calm but to be vigilant about taking care of yourself and the people around you. If you are sick, we ask you to please use your allotted sick time and stay home.

For our Commonwealth members covered under AETNA--they have indicated that AETNA will cover the copays for testing of the virus as well as the copays for a telemedicine visit. For complete information, please view this press release:

<https://www.cvshealth.com/newsroom/press-releases/cvs-health-announces-covid-19-resources-aetna-members>

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We will continue to release more information from state agencies as we receive it, but if anyone has questions or would like additional information, please reference the information provided below or send an email to [Local668@seiu668.org](mailto:Local668@seiu668.org) with direct questions.

In Solidarity—

Steve Catanese, President SEIU Local 668

PA-Specific Updates:

[www.health.pa.gov](http://www.health.pa.gov)

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>

Nationwide Updates:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

*If you or anyone you know have questions or suspect exposure, please call the PA Department of Health: **1-877-PA-HEALTH** (1-877-724-3258)*