



COVID-19 UPDATE

Things have changed quite significantly over the past weekend, not least of which was the implementation of **The Ministers Order for Redeployment of Nurses and Health-care professionals**.

This order came into effect on March 21, 2020 at 9:20 pm and while it is a temporary order it has a significant impact on where and how we are to work in the coming days and weeks.

- Staff can now be redeployed to different locations within or between campuses.
- Staff can be redeployed to work at the COVID-19 assessment centre.
- Work assignments can be changed, including assigning non-bargaining unit employees to perform bargaining unit work.
- Changing work schedules and/or shift assignments.
- Deferring or cancelling vacations, leaves and absences regardless of whether they are established by statute, regulation, agreement or otherwise.
- Employing extra part time or temporary staff or contractors for the purpose of performing bargaining unit work.
- Using volunteers to perform bargaining unit work.
- Providing appropriate training or education to staff and volunteers to achieve the purposes of a redeployment plan.

If you have a chronic health condition or are immune compromised in some way, it is important that you speak with your primary health care provider about the risk for you and if you need to be accommodated to a unit where you will not be exposed to the COVID virus. You will need to get updated medical information to provide to Occupational health so accommodations can be made. Each nurse will be assessed on an individual basis.

If you encounter problems please contact me. My contact information is at the bottom of the page.

If you are pregnant and/or are experiencing a high risk pregnancy or have a chronic health condition, contact your primary health care provider and provide updated medical information to Occupation Health. You will be assessed on a case by case basis.

The Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists statement's say that the risk to mother and baby is related to the degree of illness

the mother experiences. Babies born to mothers who were COVID positive were not COVID positive.

ONA's position regarding PPE and the use of N-95 masks remains unchanged in that every nurse or healthcare professional screening or treating a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patient is to have access to fit-tested N-95 or better PPE. This position has been repeatedly reinforced at all levels of Government.

If you are denied access to, are shamed or intimidated in to not using the PPE you feel is appropriate please let me know immediately. Information I need is your name, the unit you are working on, who refused you access to the N-95 masks and the events around the refusal.

My contact information is at the bottom of the page.

If you are returning to Canada from international travel you are to self-isolate for 14 days. If you are being told to return to work before this isolation period is complete, let me know.

If you choose to **refuse unsafe work** your right to do so may be challenged because of the Chief Medical Officer of Health's March 13 directive that downgraded health care PPE to surgical masks.

Remember to refuse work you only need to have reason to believe you work or task may endanger you or your co-worker. Be honest and genuine and act in good faith. This is your right as an individual.

There is a process to follow. Go to:

https://www.ona.org/wp-content/uploads/ona_guide_myrighttorefuseunsafework.pdf.

As we keep moving through this crisis, continue being the professional caring nurses you are. The public respect you and appreciate you. You are their guiding light in these troubled times.

On behalf of your Union executive who are here for you and will continue to work hard for you for as long as it takes.

Thank you,

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