

March 9, 2021

Email: LBR.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Ministry of Labour
PO Box 9206 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9T5

Letter to Minister of Labour, Hon. Harry Bains: Ensure front-line workers have the right to time off to receive a COVID-19 vaccination.

Dear Minister Bains,

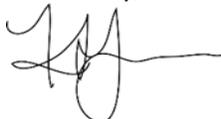
As the vaccination effort in British Columbia is ramping up, many front-line workers are anxious to receive their first dose. As you know, these workers have done a phenomenal job in helping their communities withstand the COVID-19 crisis, and they are looking forward to returning to a more normal pace of life. Given their higher levels of contact with the public, these workers must receive vaccinations in a timely fashion so they can continue to help flatten the curve on this terrible pandemic.

During elections, workers have the right to four uninterrupted hours off work to vote. This provision protects the franchise for working people, who otherwise might not be free to vote during the workday. **We ask that front-line workers in grocery, retail, industrial food, and home care be granted the right to four uninterrupted hours off work to receive their vaccines.**

It is critical that front-line workers have access to vaccination clinics when they are open and that employers cannot retaliate against them or unfairly refuse this time off. Front-line workers in these environments may not have recourse to take regular time off in the short turnaround between becoming eligible for a vaccine and receiving an appointment. The government should step in to prevent logistical barriers to vaccination for front-line workers.

The Government of British Columbia has put forward an incredible effort to vaccinate the most vulnerable people in our province. As more people gain access to the vaccine, every barrier to vaccination must be minimized to move closer to herd immunity and protect those who cannot be vaccinated. Ensuring four uninterrupted hours off work for every front-line worker to receive a vaccine is a sensible measure to keep the vaccination effort on track.

Yours truly,



Kim Novak
President, UFCW 1518

cc: Minister Dix (emailed)
Dr. Bonnie Henry (emailed)