



# Carpenters' District Council of Ontario



## SPECIAL MESSAGE

### TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE CARPENTERS' UNION: WORKING DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS NOW MORE THAN EVER – SAFETY FIRST

You have no doubt heard that the Government of Ontario has declared a state of emergency. At least for now, the Government has indicated that this state of emergency does not extend to an across the board shutdown of all construction sites.

Despite this, the Union's position is that the health and safety of our members is the most important thing during this time of crisis. Things are changing by the day and even by the hour and we will do our best to keep you all updated.

What we can tell you right now is that none of our members should be working in conditions that are unsafe. Therefore, if your site is continuing to operate, we are urging you to keep the following in mind.

**ALL OF THE DIRECTIONS AND PROTOCOLS CONCERNING COVID-19 AND SOCIAL DISTANCING APPLY TO YOU, YOUR FELLOW WORKERS, YOUR EMPLOYERS AND YOUR JOBSITES.**

If your worksite is one where it is impossible for you to practice the advised social distancing (including remaining at least 6 feet away from any other person), it may not be safe for you to continue to work at the site. Unsafe conditions could include working in close quarters (like a low-rise residence) with other individuals (fellow carpenters or other trades), using a hoist/elevator with a number of individuals (which has or has not been properly disinfected between uses), or gathering in any other confined area (including meeting in site trailers for safety talks).

In addition, if you do not have access to first aid stations (for example, because your site trailer is closed), clean washrooms with adequate hand washing facilities, or other recommended PPE, your workplace may not be safe for you to work at.

Whether or not it is actually safe to work is going to vary from jobsite to jobsite. In this crisis there is only one clear rule which is – **health and safety comes first**. Therefore, if you are being asked or required to work in conditions which you think may be unsafe, for any of the reasons outlined above or for any other reason, we are urging you to:

- **stop work;**
- **get yourself to a safe place;**
- **tell your immediate supervisor that you have stopped work for safety reasons;**
- **PHONE YOUR UNION REPRESENTATIVE RIGHT AWAY** (who will be able to give you further advice).

More than ever, it is important that we all do our part to “flatten the curve” and try to minimize the spread of the virus. This means avoiding contact with anyone displaying the symptoms of COVID-19 and avoiding gatherings. Practice heightened hygiene, including washing your hands regularly with soap and/or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. **All members should be wearing gloves (especially if sharing tools, etc).**

**DON'T TAKE ANY CHANCES WITH YOUR HEALTH OR THAT OF YOUR FAMILY. YOU OWE IT TO YOURSELF AND TO YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS.**