



**UNITE HERE Local 75**

15 Gervais Drive, Suite 300, Toronto, ON M3C 1Y8

**Guled Warsame, President | Shelli Sareen, Secretary-Treasurer | Valrie Lue, Vice-President**

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March 15, 2020

Brothers and Sisters,

Like many of you, we have been closely monitoring the spread of COVID-19 in our community. As always, the health of our members is paramount, and we are exploring many options to ensure employers are taking the right precautions to keep you safe.

COVID-19 has had a large impact on the hospitality industry, with hotel average occupancy hovering around 20% - 30%. As more flights are grounded and people are encouraged to stay home, this number may go lower.

However, we are working hard to ensure our members don't suffer the brunt of these changes.

**We are working closely with employers to:**

**1. Provide you with additional protections**

In this uncertain time, we are pushing employers to give you more sick days, schedule more staff for deep cleaning, and other protections. We will send you updates as they become available.

**2. Protect your benefits**

We are in talks with your provider to protect your benefits in the event that you are not scheduled for some time or asked to stay home. We will provide you with more information in the coming days.

**3. Create a safe work environment for you**

If you are working, it's important that the employer is implementing health and safety measures to the highest degree. We are working with employers to remind them of sanitization tools and equipment required to create a safe work environment for members.

**4. Help you with your bills**

Local 75 Executives are meeting frequently to explore options for relief assistance, should our members need it. Being the GTA's largest hospitality union means we have a lot of power with decision-makers on all levels of government. We will lobby the federal government for additional protections for our members – including reducing the number of hours required to qualify for EI benefits.

In the meantime, if you have been quarantined or are not scheduled for some time, you may qualify to receive Employment Insurance (EI) immediately. The Government of Canada has waived the one-week waiting period for EI sickness benefits. Priority has been given for applicants who are under quarantine.

**Organize Here. Win Here. UNITE HERE!**

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If you've been told to self-quarantine, you can apply for EI to help cover some of your lost wages. Call the dedicated COVID-19 EI phone number: 1-833-381-2725 to start a claim.

Sisters and Brothers, we recognize that this is an uncertain time for everyone. We thank you for the professionalism and dedication to your work that you've shown in the last few weeks.

You – our valued member – are the backbone of the GTA's hospitality industry and we are proud to fight on your behalf to keep you and your family healthy. Stay tuned for more updates in the coming days and weeks. You can find them all at [uniteherelocal75.org](http://uniteherelocal75.org) or speak with your Union Representative.

We are committed to our 8000 members and their families, and we continue to work diligently to lessen the impact of COVID-19 on your health, safety and finances. Again, this is our top priority, and we are working around the clock to fight for you.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Guled Warsame".

Guled Warsame  
President  
UNITE HERE Local 75

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Shelli Sareen".

Shelli Sareen  
Secretary-Treasurer  
UNITE HERE Local 75

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Valrie Lue".

Valrie Lue  
Vice-President  
UNITE HERE Local 75